FROM REVOLUTION TO RUIN: A PRELIMINARY LOOK AT RWANDA’S FIRST
TWO PRESIDENTS, GRÉGOIRE KAYIBANDA AND JUVÉNAL
HABYARIMANA, AND THEIR ADMINISTRATIONS

A DISSERTATION IN
English
and
The Social Science Consortium

Presented to the Faculty of the University
of Missouri-Kansas City in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

by

STEPHEN E. CHILDRESS

M.A., University of Missouri-Kansas City, 2000
B.F.A., Herron School of Art, Indiana University, 1969

Kansas City, Missouri
2015
FROM REVOLUTION TO RUIN: A PRELIMINARY LOOK AT RWANDA’S FIRST TWO PRESIDENTS, GRÉGOIRE KAYIBANDA AND JUVÉNAL HABYARIMANA, AND THEIR ADMINISTRATIONS

Stephen E. Childress, Candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree
University of Missouri-Kansas City, 2015

ABSTRACT

This paper brings together primary and secondary materials from a vast number of sources related to the first two presidents of Rwanda, Grégoire Kayibanda and Juvénal Habyarimana, in a preliminary look at the men and their administrations. Using a critical realist methodology, a rounded picture of the two presidents results, and the following findings, in particular are presented: the genocide was not an inevitable aspect of Habyarimana’s policies, and would not have occurred without the RPF invasion; the effect of literacy on the illiterate Rwandan society, from its introduction at the start of the twentieth century, had a profound impact on the socio-political and economic system, and the culture—an impact that has not been adequately recognized per se; the rhizomic nature of the Rwandan social and cultural matrix carried through even the dramatic shift from a chiefdom to independence and a constitutional republic; the questionable nature of Rwanda as a legitimate nation-state under the First and Second Republics; the reason why the single-party government system was chosen and why it failed both presidencies; and the
impossible demands on the first presidencies to build an entire State infrastructure from the
ground up in the period of a few years.

KEYWORDS: Rwanda, Tutsi, Hutu, the Church, literacy, Kayibanda, Habyarimana, Hutu Movement and independence, ubuhake, MRND, one-party state, umuganda, animations, multipartyism, RPF, akazu, Hutu Manifesto, militias, Arusha Accords.
The faculty listed below, appointed by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, have examined a dissertation titled “From Revolution To Ruin: A Preliminary Look at Rwanda’s First Two Presidents, Grégoire Kayibanda and Juvénal Habyarimana, and Their Administrations,” presented by Stephen E. Childress, candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy degree, and certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

Supervisory Committee

Stephen Dilks, Ph.D., Committee Chair
Department of English

Daniel Mahala, Ph.D.
Department of English

James Sturgeon, Ph.D.
Department of Economics

Shannon Jackson, Ph.D.
Department of Sociology

Mathew Forstater, Ph.D.
Department of Economics
## CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ................................................................................................................................. iii

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS ....................................................................................................... ix

LIST OF TABLES ...................................................................................................................... x

LIST OF MAPS ......................................................................................................................... xi

LIST OF ORGANOGRAMS ...................................................................................................... xii

PHOTOS ................................................................................................................................... xiii

GLOSSARY ............................................................................................................................... xiv

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ........................................................................................................... xxii

PREFACE .................................................................................................................................. 1

PART ONE

Chapter

1. INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................. 10

2. RESEARCH METHOD ......................................................................................................... 14

3. DISCLAIMER ....................................................................................................................... 18

PART TWO

4. Underpinnings of Rwandan Identity: ‘Tutsi’ and ‘Hutu’ Populations / Socio-Psychological Effects Of The Hutu-Tutsi ‘Divide’ / Socio-Political Structure From Habyarimana’s Grandfather’s Time / No Village Pattern / Northwest Region Semi-Autonomous .............................................................. 19

5. Habyarimana’s Grandfather / Father / Habyarimana’s Early Years .................. 42

6. Kayibanda’s Early Years / Léon Classe Institute / Catholic Action and the Start of the “Hutu Movement / Office of School Inspection” / Kinyamateka as Political Platform ....................................................................................................................... 64
7. The Bahutu Manifesto / Beginnings of PARMEHUTU Party / New Parties and the 1959 Elections / The Peasant Revolt (The Muyaga) and the Violence of Toussaint Rwandaise) / Communal Elections ............................... 102

PART THREE

8. Habyarimana: University / Officer’s School ................................................................. 172


PART FOUR A: HABYARIMANA AND THE 2ND REPUBLIC; THE FIRST PERIOD (1973-75)

11. Following the Coup d’État: the CPUN ........................................................................ 266

PART FOUR B: HABYARIMANA AND THE 2nd REPUBLIC: THE SECOND PERIOD (1975-90)

12. The MRND Party / Umuganda / Animations / Jurisprudence ...................................... 280

13. Economic Ills and the Growth of an Inegalitarian Society—the Urban-Rural Dichotomy ............................................................................................................................ 312

PART FOUR C: HABYARIMANA AND THE 2nd REPUBLIC: THE THIRD PERIOD (1990-94)

14. Challenges to Habyarimana and the One-Party State / The Akazu / Mobutu’s Influence / La Baule / Aggiornamento / The Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) ........................................................................................................ 358

15. Brief Look at the RPF and Why They Invaded / The Hutu Ten Commandments / The 1991 Constitution / Multipartyism / ID cards ....................... 414

16. Youth Militias and the Fomentation of Violence / The Church at the End of 1991 / Opposition Parties Form Coalition ......................................................... 442

17. RPF Violates Cease-Fire Agreement / RTLM / New Coalition
ILLUSTRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Depiction of Necessary Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Visual Rendition of the Notion of Habitus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Outcomes from Relationship Between the State and Traditional Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Codere’s System Analysis of Pre-Independence Rwanda (A) Compared with the MRND’s One-Party Regime 1974 – 1994 (B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Population Density of Kigali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>UN Human Development Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>DRC’s Coltran Trade, c. 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Habyarimana Buying Arms (Cartoon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Rawson’s Memorandum to State 18 March</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Habyarimana’s Grandparents, Parents, Siblings (as of 2013)</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Consultative Councils (Instituted under Belgium’s 10-year Plan for Economic and Social Development, 1950)</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Examples of 11 Hutu Respondents in Codere’s 1960 Study of Peasant-Farmers</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Comparison of First and Second Republic Primary Objectives</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How the Practice of Umuganda in Rwanda Has Evolved</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Informal Workforce in 3 Developing Regions of the World</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Distribution of Credit by Economic Sector</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Employment in Rwanda by Principle Economy 1985</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. GNP per Capita Rwanda vs. Neighboring Countries</td>
<td>347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Support for the Structural Adjustment Program in Rwanda</td>
<td>404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. 1991 Institution Directors by Region of Origin</td>
<td>434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Biggest RTLM Shareholders</td>
<td>490</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## MAPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Distribution of Sites with Early Domestic Cattle</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Habyarimana’s Ancestral Region</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Habyarimana’s Primary and Secondary Schools, and Catholic Missions, c. 1937-57</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Kayibanda’s Home Area</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Prefectures During Habyarimana’s Presidency</td>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Francophone Africa 1990</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Gisenyi and Ruhengeri Massacres</td>
<td>458</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## ORGANOGRAMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organogram</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Belgium Government Structure in Colonial Rwanda</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Precolonial Socio-Administrative Structure</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Regional to Local Level Government Hierarchy 1974</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. MRND Governing Structure 1973-78</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Three Organograms Showing Major Changes in Rwanda’s Socio-Political Structure, 1900-1985</td>
<td>374</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## PHOTOS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photo</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Kayibanda</td>
<td>260-61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Habyarimana</td>
<td>262-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Interahamwe and RPF/Kagame</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Successive Rwandan Presidents Promoting <em>Umuganda</em></td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GLOSSARY

APROSOMA  
L’Association Pour le Promotion des Masses Bahutu – created around 1957 by Joseph Gitara, one of the signatories of the Bahutu Manifesto, was a stridently anti-Tutsi party, to the left of Kayibanda’s MSM party.

animations  
Compulsory participation in large-scale shows of allegiance to Habyarimana and the MRND/State, through dance, song, skits, and poetry/oratory. Conceived as ‘support’ for the unpopular umuganda.

aggiornamento  
A spirit of open-mindedness and change, usually modernization; Habyarimana’s 1989 declaration concerning his acceptance of multipartyism.

akazu  
An informal and relatively fluid group of power brokers in and around the government that was made up primarily of people from the north, who were considered to pull the strings of political appointments and to influence policy, and to control the most valuable parastatals and other business opportunities. Also associated with the Hutu Power movement and philosophy—which was against the democratization of the government via the Arusha Accords, and which drove the perpetrators of the genocide.

Amasasu  
Created early in 1992 within the Rwandan army by diehard officers zealously wanting to hunt down the RPF; they handed out weapons to the CDR militias and MRND extremists, and assisted the newly-formed death squads (zero network).

BBTG  
Broad-Based Transitional Government – pushed forward at Gbadolite September 1991, by the RPF and the coalition of opposition parties, amended at Arusha July 1992, and finalized in the Arusha Accords of 1993; to end the single-party government of Habyarimana’s MRND and to institute democratic reforms, especially multipartyism and power sharing.

CDR Party  
Coalition pour la Défense de la République -- started in March 1992 by Jean Bosco Barayagwiza and Hassan Ngeze (who published the notorious Ten Commandments of the Bahutu); the CDR, the military, and extremist elements of the MRND threatened to make fierce reprisals against Habyarimana if he
allowed certain concessions to the RPF during his negotiations to end the war, the CDR, particularly, being vehemently opposed to the BBTG.

**cellule**

The largest unit within the secteur, with about 1,000 persons, headed by a *responsible* and an elected committee of five people.

**Chajusong**

North Korean leader Kim Il Sung’s idea that the popular masses must rise up and “remodel their destiny independently and creatively”, meaning, as in North Korea’s case, that the country had been overlain with ‘foreign’ structures and ideas, and new, indigenous ones were necessary. This philosophy dovetails in essence with the Afro-centric idea of the ‘60s and ‘70s, that countries needed to slough off their colonial trappings and get back to their African roots.

**colline**

The smallest unit in the government system, comprised of a group of families connected by close proximity on a *colline* (hill), and controlled by centrally-appointed administrators, chiefs, security agents, policemen, and local party cadres of all kinds.

**commune**

The largest unit within the préfecture. There were 145, each having 40,000 to 50,000 residents, and overseen by a burgomaster.

**CNS**

Commission Nationale de Synthèse – set up after the *aggiornamento*, its function was to determine what ‘democracy’ meant in the eyes of the populace at large and then to prepare an outline for a new constitution.

**CPUN**

Committee for Peace and National Unity – a temporary government composed entirely of military personnel, set up after the 1973 coup d’état.

**évolués**

The Hutu intelligentsia, during the Belgian colonial period, who would become the spearhead of the anti-mwami (monarchy), independence movement.

**FAR**

Rwandan Armed Forces.

**Hamitic hypothesis**

John Hanning Speke’s 1863 hypothesis that everything of value found in Africa was brought there by the Hamites, allegedly a branch of the Caucasian race, and that the Tutsi
were representative of that branch coming from the general area of Ethiopia, as opposed to the Hutu, who were indigenous to ‘black’ Africa, and therefore inferior.

Hutu Traditionally, and up to the 1990s, the majority peasant-farmer population of Rwanda, who lived in a particular socio-political and cultural habitus. They generally occupied the position of client in the cattle leasing arrangement (though this arrangement was not ubiquitous among Hutu, and many Tutsi were also clients of other Tutsi) until that system’s end after independence.

Hutu Manifesto The declaration written by the leaders of the Hutu Movement at the end of the 1950s that demanded the dissolution of the mwami system (also called the ‘monarchy’) because of its disenfranchisement of the Hutu, and the end of the Belgium administration’s support of the monarchy. It was part of the movement toward a republican form of government, and one of its drafters was Grégoire Kayibanda, the first elected president of independent Rwanda.


IDPs Internally displaced persons – citizens driven from their homes by dire circumstances, and made refugees.

*igikingi* Land held by a cattle-owning lineage, granted by the king or another political official. (immigrants to the region who received land from lineages holding ubukonde land would become land clients –abagereerwa—and they would be expected to contribute certain food products to the donor lineage as a form of rent.

*Interahamwe* Youth militia initially seen as a kind of loyalist activist group in the service of the MRND ideology, with a plan to use it in an urban civil war. Initially used for recruiting, and for harassing opposition parties’ functions, but they became more aligned with the extremist CDR party and Hutu Power followers, growing more violent at the end of 1993 and the beginning of ’94, with killings and destruction of property. Were used by the perpetrators of the genocide to man roadblocks and to kill.

---

Inyenzi

Groups of Tutsi exiles coming from among those who fled the violence surrounding the move to independence, and who launched attacks on Rwanda in an effort to regain power.

Juche

The means by which Chajusong moves forward: through the decisive role the masses play in building the new society.

Kangura

A bi-monthly based in Gisenyi (Habyarimana’s stronghold) set up to counter the negative press against the administration, and which eventually became mouthpiece for Hutu Power.

Kinyamateka

Catholic Church’s news publication in Rwanda, founded in 1933 and written in Kinyarwanda, was meant to be read out loud to assembled illiterate peasant-farmers, and became the major organ through which Kayibanda disseminated his ideas in the ‘50s, but which, by the ‘80s, was becoming outspoken against Habyarimana’s administration’s failures and use of violence.

Kinyarwanda

Native language of Rwandans.

kubohoza

Intimidation of party members in order to force them to join another party.

La Baule


L’Ami

Catholic periodical in French, founded in 1945 to offer a “Christian perspective on the complex questions of Rwandan social and political life”, was pro-Belgian and anti-communist, and aimed at the Rwandan elite.

MDR Party

Mouvement Démocratique Républicain – formed from 18 June 1991, presented themselves as reformers, at core genuinely seeking to address the problems of state. Historical links with Kayibanda’s MDR-Parmehutu, so its power-base and geographical center was Kayibanda’s—the south-central area.

MRND

Mouvement Révolutionnaire pour le Développement – the national party that Habyarimana created in 1975 for a one-party State.
MSM  Forerunner of the PARMEHUTU Party.

mugaralu The client in a cattle leasing arrangement.

mwami Ruler (roughly translatable as ‘king’, but not in the European traditional or historical sense), having a ‘court’, or council (batware) and vertical socio-political system of chiefs and subchiefs.

OAU  Organization of African Unity.

OCIR-CAFÉ Office de Cafes – government organization controlling the coffee industry.

Operation Noroît French troops sent to support Habyarimana’s FAR troops repel the RPF invasion.

PARMEHUTU Parti du Mouvement de l’Émancipation Hutu – was Kayibanda’s Hutu Movement organ, leading to independence and a republican government. In 1960 they added MDR (Mouvement Démocratique Républicain) to their party name, and this MDR title (by itself) was resurrected, when Habyarimana’s allowed multiparty politics toward the end of his presidency, to represent as a party the disenfranchised south-central part of the country, and became the main contender against Habyarimana’s MRND. PDC Party Created by Jean-Népomuscène Nayinzira, wanted to create dissent within the Catholic community but, because it was in opposition to Habyarimana it was not recognized by the Internationale Démocrate Chrétienne, and had difficulty attracting many followers.

PL Party A center-right, urban-based party, led by Justin Mugenzi and the Tutsi, Landouald Ndasingwa, which had the support of the private sector and hence the Tutsi group. “had been created under the instigation of President Juvénal Habyarimana by a group of businessmen; this party had for its mission to collect economic experts who could recommend a capital-intensive management of the country.

préfecture The largest administrative unit within the country, presided over by a prefect (similar to a governor). There were 10 in Habyarimana’s government (see Map 5).
<p>| <strong>PSD Party</strong> | A center-left party, led by Frédéric Nzamurambaho, and attracting teachers, public service employees, and the liberal professions; drew its support from the area south of the MDR influence, around the university town of Butare, the country’s second largest city and center for intellectuals, and where the largest community of Tutsis lived. |
| <strong>RADER</strong> | Rassemblement Démocratique du Rwanda – formed just after UNAR, was a mainly Tutsi, but multi-ethnic pro-Belgian party, representing accomplished administrator’s families, and liberal Tutsi thinkers who were against racial extremists. |
| <strong>RANU</strong> | Rwanda Alliance for National Unity – first called the Rwanda Refugee Welfare Foundation, it was a Tutsi refugee organization operating from Uganda and Kenya, suing for repatriation. Frustrated with inaction, they renamed themselves the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), as a politico-military entity bent on invading Rwanda. |
| <strong>rentier class</strong> | Agents collecting unearned income. |
| <strong>RPF</strong> | Tutsi-based organization coalesced around the goal to repatriate all Tutsi refugees back into the country and to install a democratic government. See: RANU. |
| <strong>RTLM</strong> | Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines – started as propaganda tool to counter the RPF’s broadcasting station, and in response to the opposition parties’ insistence that the government radio station, Radio Rwanda, take a different stance. |
| <strong>Rwabugiri</strong> | Late nineteenth century mwami who centralized rule of Rwandan territory (c. 1860-1895). |
| <strong>SAP</strong> | Structural Adjustment Program – an ‘adjustment’ package imposed on underdeveloped countries by the World Bank and the IMF that attempts to address under-achieving economic/political systems. |
| <strong>secteur</strong> | The largest unit within the commune, each having approximately 5,000 people. |
| <strong>shebuja</strong> | The patron in a cattle leasing arrangement. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SORWATHE</td>
<td>Société Rwandaise pour la Production et la Commercialisation du Thé – government organization controlling the tea industry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thermidorian syndrome</td>
<td>A reaction against the upheaval of change, as experienced in a revolution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRAFIPRO</td>
<td>Travail, Fidélité, Progrès – was a cooperative begun in 1956 as a feeder for Burgeoning Hutu businessmen and politicians. Eventually taken over by Kayibanda and his associates in a regionalist move.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutsi</td>
<td>A confusing and somewhat fluent term from at least the seventeenth century, that became rigid under mwami Rwabugiri’s rule to mean the small number of elite who were most often the patron in the ubuhake contract, and who existed in a particular socio-political cultural milieu (or habitus) disdainful of the ‘working’ class peasant-farmers, and usually made up the warrior class and the vast majority of chief and subchief positions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twa</td>
<td>A pygmoid people, making up a miniscule percent of the population, and who occupied a fringe position in society (will not be considered in this paper as an influential part of the large socio-political movements).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ubuhake</td>
<td>Cattle leasing arrangement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ubukonde</td>
<td>Land which had been cleared and settled by the lineage occupying it or their ancestors (i.e., land which had not been received from a political authority, and which and been occupied for many years by the same lineage). In the north, Hutu-owned lands often leased out for usufruct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uburetwa</td>
<td>A corvée dating from precolonial times, hated because of denoting low status and consisting of menial labor, imposed almost exclusively on Hutu land-holders, which was later generalized by the Belgians into a tax consisting of one day of labor per week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ujamaa</td>
<td>Swahili word for ‘socialism’, and was Tanzanian president Nyerere’s villagization program from 1967 focusing on self-sufficiency, but failed miserably by 1985.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>umuganda</td>
<td>A camouflaged corvée instituted by Habyarimana in 1974; it is a compulsory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>form of community service that was traditionally and originally an organic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>community-developed system of mutual aid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>peace keeping mission for the period when the BBTG was supposed to be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>initiated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAR</td>
<td>Union Nationale Rwandaise – was the Tutsi response to APROSOMA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero Network</td>
<td>An organization of death squads by extremist elements in the MRND and the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>akazu, in response to the RPF invasion, and who wanted to derail the BBTG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First, and above all else, this thesis wouldn’t have been possible without the unstinting support of my wife, Angha Sirpurkar, a respected professional in her own right.

Second, I must give a handshake to Dr. Steve Dilks, who took on the work of committee chair, made sure I got through the doctoral process, and is genuinely dedicated to education. Also, thank you to Dr. Daniel Mahala, Dr. James Sturgeon, Dr. Mathew Forstater, and Dr. Shannon Jackson, for agreeing to be on my committee, and for considering my work worthy; and a special recognition to Dr. Sturgeon for getting the interdisciplinary program off the ground and making the Social Science Consortium an invaluable addition to cross-fertilization scholarship, and for giving me the chance to design and teach a new course on genocide. Additionally, my gratitude goes to Dr. Randall Roorda, whose belief in an autodidact made possible my entrance into the doctoral program. Drs. Mamadou Niang and Moira Ferguson were also important in their early support. And a posthumous thank you to Dr. Carol Koehler, a member of my committee who passed away before I completed my Ph.D.

Finally, I want to thank the Graduate Studies Department at UMKC for having helped me fund my research through several fellowships and awards.

A very special thank you to Connie Mahone, Manager of Student Services for many years, for working her incomparable magic in order to get me through the often seemingly impossible red tape of course requirements, grade changes, and everything else that at times created large headaches. Her retirement from UMKC will leave a significant gap.
PREFACE

A person’s life consists of a collection of events, the last of which could also change the meaning of the whole, not because it counts more than the previous ones but because once they are included in a life, events are arranged in an order that is not chronological but, rather, corresponds to an inner architecture.

— Italo Calvino¹

History is one of the most prevalent disciplines between nations and races. Common people want to know it. Kings, Leaders seek it emulously ... It offers ground for meditation, for an effort to find an access to truth, for a subtle explanation of the causes and the origins of the facts ... Thus, history finds its roots in philosophy.

— Ibn Khaldun²

This preliminary study of Rwanda’s first two presidents germinated in the immediate aftermath of the 1994 genocide, which galvanized me to do research on the mechanisms underlying the path to genocidal events. When I began reading what was accessible regarding the Rwandan massacres, that reading quickly turned into months and then years, and I was struck by a particular gap in the literature: little was being said about the leader of the country, Juvénal Habyarimana. It was at this juncture that I began considering looking into Habyarimana’s role in the country’s development during his presidency.

Then, in 2004—ten years after the genocide—the first³ written treatment of Habyarimana appeared: Eugène Shimamungu’s *Juvénal Habyarimana; L’Homme*

---

³ There was Barahinyura’s *Le Général-Major Habyarimana, Quinze Ans de Tyrannie et de Tartuferie au Rwanda*, of 1988, but it treated a very narrow period in Habyarimana’s life, starting with his coup d’état to power in 1973. It was not a biographical essay, but a vituperative attack on the president essentially centered on his regime’s murder of
Assassiné 6 Avril 1994. It wasn’t a full-throated biography so much as an unalloyed paean by a Hutu expatriate to the Hutu leader, a subjective text in the service of countering the role of the current Tutsi president in office, Paul Kagame, who had led the Rwandan Patriotic Front in its successful military invasion in 1990, then its takeover of the country in 1994. A more balanced and nuanced examination of Habyarimana, especially as he existed as a Rwandan in the socio-political, economic, and cultural milieu of the country, was needed, especially with a consideration of the historical context of his personal development and presidency. Even as I complete this preliminary investigation of Habyarimana, in 2015, there hasn’t been another focused treatment of him.¹

Similarly, but to an even greater degree, Kayibanda’s life has received little attention outside of Paternostre de la Mairieu’s 1994 biographic tome of admiration, Toute ma vie pour vous, mes frères! Vie de Grégoire Kayibanda, premier Président élu du Rwanda, which does contain much factual information about the First Republic president as it follows him from his childhood to his murder, and is a valuable source regarding his private journals, but it fails to examine the president’s weaknesses and failures, especially those that led to his administration’s failure and his deposition in the 1973 coup.

In the above two regards, my dissertation begins to address an important gap about these two leaders and their roles in creation and development of a new African country. It also has the purpose of engaging a dialogue about them; all of the primary and most of the secondary texts carrying information about Habyarimana and Kayibanda are in

¹ Verwimp, a respected researcher, makes what I consider to be dubious assumptions about Habyarimana’s presidency and policies in his “Peasant ideology and genocide in Rwanda under Habyarimana” (2000), and gives little idea of the man and his life (which, admittedly, is not his aim).
Kinyarwanda and French, and for the wide audience that doesn’t read either of those languages, this treatment in English is intended to help make access to information about Habyarimana and Kayibanda more easily available.

A dialogue about Habyarimana is sorely needed not only because so little, up to this point, has been written, but because the scattered fragments that have been written are inevitably paired with the genocide or with the shadow group called the *akazu*, which presumably consisted primarily of members of Habyarimana’s wife’s relatives. Habyarimana’s supposed role in or relationship with this ill-defined group is largely undocumented, and obscures the man and his life. This paper, by prying Habyarimana loose from hearsay, over the *full course* of his life, allows a comparatively new, or at least more neutral, portrait to be constructed across various social levels and time frames, with all the contradictions that pertain.

An enlarged dialogue about Kayibanda is also necessary as an elaboration within the stream of Rwandan history, especially as he and his Hutu Movement were instrumental in and responsible for the momentous shift from the milieu of colonial socio-political and cultural disruption and change to independence and a new State. This paper hopes to at least place Kayibanda and Habyarimana next to each other for the first time in the flow of Rwandan history in a way that will represent a holistic, rather than a bifurcated, or compartmentalized, picture of the country’s development.

The two consecutive presidents represent a particularly unique struggle to break free—not from a repressive colonialism, as most other sub-Saharan countries did—from the precolonial *mwami* system. This is not to suggest that the Belgian administration of the
country didn’t have an impact—it and the Roman Catholic Church were the two prime and indispenisible catalysts for Kayibanda’s and the évolués’ emergence—but the small number of power holders from the minority ethnic Tutsi population had controlled the country from at least the seventeenth century, and their inequitable patron-client system had become onerous by the beginning of the twentieth century; it was this system that Kayibanda and his educated associates successfully labored to overthrow and, once overthrown, to prevent from recurring, which morphed into an underlying paranoiac watchdog mentality running through both presidents’ reigns. Still, it isn’t clear to what degree Habyarimana considered the in-country Tutsi a threat to his administration, as compared to the many Hutu power factions, office seekers, and military officers, whom he had to appease in order to stay in power and to keep his person safe.

This paper also raises the consideration of the deep effect that the introduction of literacy had on Rwandan society and on the two presidencies, which has been largely overlooked or not given its due. It was a requisite tool in the consciousness raising among the Hutu majority population by Kayibanda’s Hutu Movement, that led to voting out the Tutsi monarchy, and in the 1980s fueled and gave voice to people’s discontent with Habyarimana’s one-party state system. I have tried to give an indication of the changes accruing from the populace being able to read and write, especially in the development, for the first time, of a Hutu intellectual class.

This paper, also for the first time, asks whether Rwanda should be considered a legitimate nation-state, from independence through Habyarimana’s reign, because it did not have the requisite infrastructure, and because it simply couldn’t exist without
substantial external support. The two presidents’ struggles with the massive, and in many cases intractable, problems of the sudden leap into the expectancies of statehood are another aspect of Rwandan history that hasn’t been adequately addressed, or given the weight it deserves.

The question of why a one-party state was chosen by both presidents is also addressed, with a new look at the possibility that Habyarimana, for example, was possibly influenced by his old friend Nsekalié’s admiration of North Korea’s Kim Il Sung’s *Juche* ideology and policies. The unworkability of the one-party state, in the case of Rwanda, is also approached, resulting in some realization of how unprepared both Kayibanda and Habyarimana were for being presidents, both finding themselves out of their depth and being case-book examples of the Peter Principle, where their performance before being president—in the case of Kayibanda, being a great organizer for a movement against an unequal system, and for Habyarimana, being an effective military commander of a small, underequipped army—was not adequate for promotion to the higher, different, much more demanding and complex role (especially concerning the increasingly grave problems of overpopulation and the need for economic solutions beyond subsistence agriculture).

Part of the reason for their failures as presidents, and presented in this paper, comes from yet another consideration that has been largely overlooked in the literature on Rwanda—the rhizomic\(^1\) nature of Rwandan’s socio-political, economic and cultural dynamic as it moves “underground-like” through events, such as independence and the

---

\(^1\) I first came upon the “rhizomic” concept in Bayart (2009).
attempted formation of a democratic republic, and impinges on and entangles those events in its own irrepressible ways.

The subject of this dissertation was chosen for several reasons, foremost because it was the agency of the two presidents that largely created the First and Second Republics—the history of the country would have been completely different without Kayibanda and Habyarimana at the helm, so it is logical that they figure prominently and as a through line that helps connect events. I also felt it was necessary to try to approach the ‘Rwandan’ character of the country’s history through the personages of the two central figures—how they affected and were affected by the socio-political and cultural environment.

This paper’s president-centered, historical-linear form is also geared to reaching as wide a readership as possible without losing scientific methodology and a veracity that is subject to peer review; it is factual without being quantitatively over-laden, offering enough empirical data to form the basis for well-formed hypotheses about the way agency at different social levels emerges. It must be kept in mind that I haven’t had at my disposal the wealth of primary and secondary texts that, for example, the famous Africanist Basil Davidson had for his work on Nkrumah, yet even that fine study didn’t analyze Nkrumah’s failure to develop his country. As well, this dissertation does not purport to be an Africanist’s work, but is the attempt by an eclectic and interdisciplinary researcher to begin to understand something about the first two presidents of a fledgling country, while incorporating and condensing a great deal of disparate and thin information in presenting that understanding. In that sense, it is not a biography, *per se*, but a focus on the two most
important individuals in the fifty-year history of Rwanda—from the late 1940s until the
Arusha Accords—in order to try to determine their impact on events and vice versa.

It is also an attempt to show the continuity and contiguity between their two
administrations, not in the fullest possible terms, because there isn’t enough space and time
available for such a treatment in this paper, but in a fashion that allows the reader a
condensed picture of Rwandan socio-political history over the country’s most disrupting
period caused by a majority segment of the population and its leaders, who for several
hundred years held no significant power.

There are, in fact, several ideas for papers embedded in this dissertation, which
time has not allowed to follow up: 1) The massive effect of the sudden introduction of
schools and of literacy on a previously illiterate society, reaching into every corner of
people’s lives: for example, the move toward gender equality, girls suddenly being on a
relatively equal footing in the classroom, and eventually becoming members of the public
administration; the profound psychological shift of large segments of the population, who
had been long relegated to the unequal and often onerously-low status in the client-patron
system, to a feeling of deserving heretofore unrealizable opportunities and basic respect,
including serving in the military, owning one’s land, being able to vote, getting an
education, and being employed in public and private sector jobs; 2) The absolute necessity
of a working legal system in the development and sustenance of a State entity, both in the
socio-political and economic spheres; 3) The question of whether Rwanda constituted a
viable State from its inception to the genocide, since it hadn’t been able to develop an
entrepreneurial class or a viable infrastructure, and couldn’t survive without substantial
foreign aid, because its rentier class served little more function than to live off peasant-farmer labor. The case could be made that the country’s administration had moved little beyond the chieftainship/mwamiship system it supposedly replaced and so vilified; 4) The place of a one-party state in a country like Rwanda, with its unique topography that prevented the natural development of villages and towns, and the roads and markets to connect them, along with the resultant political structure to manage them, and its relation to the fact that almost no other new sub-Saharan African State chose a democratic system; 5) The rhizomic elements in Rwandan society that ran through the independence movement and the two presidencies, causing certain structures and agency that entangled both Kayibanda and Habyarimana (and, later, President Kagame, as well, in spite of his destruction of some of its elements); and 6) The terribly difficult problem of bringing an ancient subsistence-agricultural country—with a thoroughly hilly terrain on which mechanized farming methods cannot be used, or large land holdings constructed—into a twentieth-century international economic community in a ridiculously short period of time: compared to the thousands of years it took Europe to reach its present economic systems and capabilities, new African countries are faced with, and have been expected to, become modern States in the space of a few decades. The problems Kayibanda and Habyarimana encountered cannot be overstated, yet the criticisms of their reigns are couched more in Eurocentric considerations than in the overwhelming “Rwandan” problems they had to grapple with; one could almost say that it is remarkable that the Rwandan State survived at all.
Such are the major points touched on in this paper. And it differs in much of the literature on African presidents, and on Rwandan socio-politics, in its attempted neutral presentation of the two presidents and their agency; I have tried to keep the hermeneutic theorizing to a minimum. There will be some disgruntled specialists who will argue that I haven’t presented enough new evidence about Kayibanda or Habyarimana, but I would reiterate that the purpose of this paper is to bring together all the information I could glean from the myriad texts available (that I had access to), and to consolidate that disparate and unconnected (and often misleading) information into a factual account and preliminary examination of the two most important persons in recent Rwandan history, in a timeline that would serve to give a readable sense of that history and add to the knowledge of the country, as well as provoke a dialogue about it that escapes, to some extent, the overbearing concept of a genocidal society and country that has come to dominate. I would hope that this work will be of some use to textbook writers (such as Collins, in works like his *History of sub-Saharan Africa*) and course designers, as an accessible reference to a certain period of African history.
PART ONE

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In this preliminary look at the first and second presidents of Rwanda my intent is to lay the groundwork for a wider investigation into the underlying elements that formed the Rwandan state in 1962, and the socio-political and economic structures and ideologies that created and governed the following 32 years that ended in genocide and the dissolution of the Hutu Republic. It is not an attempt to elaborate an idea of a linear series of events leading to the 1994 genocide; rather, it is an enquiry into the underlying structures and agents—with a focus on the two presidents as primary agents—responsible for significantly influencing the nascent state’s development. Kayibanda and Habyarimana had the unique opportunity to steer a budding country along various socio-political paths (as did many African rulers in the 1960s), and the choices that they made are the primary interest this study.

The two presidents’ lives were both truncated by their being murdered—Kayibanda died at 52, and Habyarimana at 57, Kayibanda in power for eleven years, and Habyarimana for twenty years. For nearly a third of a century their governments were marked by bouts of political violence, a severe over-population problem (in a land-locked diminutive country predominantly made-up of hills that largely prohibited mechanized farming or the use of animals for tillage), a primitive infrastructure inherited from a chieftainship system that was wholly inadequate for providing basic state services such as health care, a viable
legal system, and education beyond the primary level, or for establishing a national economy. Additionally debilitating was the thoroughly corrupt inherited administration and the demands by former power holders for rents, exacerbated by their constant jockeying for office, which included trying to destabilize or destroy those in their way. The problems facing the installation and performance of a first-time presidency and a ‘democratic’ republic were staggering and, one could easily argue, insurmountable. Kayibanda failed, and his legacy to Habyarimana was not a particularly enlightened or helpful one: a one-party state, little improved over a chieftaincy, a large foreign debt without the national or economic improvements to show for it, and a fractured national party based on regional bias.

Habyarimana, a professional military man (as were many African leaders, the army being more efficient and disciplined than other state entities), took over the reins of a one-party state and ruled relatively benignly for most of his tenure. He was finally undone by his inability to address the serious demands for repatriation by the Tutsi diaspora, and by the growth of a literate citizenry who, through their representatives, were voicing unavoidable socio-political demands, pressing for multi-party politics, a more transparent administration, and for the amelioration of a long list of grievances and human rights issues. Habyarimana waffled on these demands, as he did on the Tutsi refugee problem, and it was his inability to act in a timely and effective manner that prompted the October invasion from Uganda by the Tutsi-led Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), and led to the loss of control of his MRND party radicals because of his knuckling under to the RPF’s excessive and unwarranted demands at the Arusha Peace Conference, which provoked
militant factions supported by the military into initiating nation-wide massacres of all Tutsis in a slash-and-burn operation designed to eliminate an entire population and thus ‘defeat’ the enemy by leaving them with an empty country as the spoils of their victory. However, the genocidal event is not a subject for this paper.

This paper is concerned with the trajectory of Kayibanda’s and Habyarimana’s lives, but does not carry a preconceived notion of their possible connection to the genocide. In fact, when examining the arc of their governance, relationships, and speeches, there are no indications that either held a genocidal perspective. Habyarimana’s death before the genocidal actions leaves him in an historical limbo. It cannot be proven that he was involved in any kind of genocidal plan, even though he was aware of a death list drawn up against top-level individuals—Hutu as well as Tutsi—who were regarded as ‘threats’ to national security, for political reasons more than for being actual menaces.

This study is an attempt to create a preliminary history of the lives of two African men who came from very humble beginnings as farm boys, to reach the most powerful post in the country. There is the frustration, however, of having to make up front the disclaimer that at the present time it is impossible to retrieve enough information about Habyarimana as needed to give an adequate picture of the man. When his government fled from the RPF they destroyed or took with them volumes of invaluable documents. Moreover, Habyarimana has scarcely been mentioned in the literature on Rwanda. He exists as a shadow figure in the voluminous writings on the genocide and on Rwandan country studies, a disproportionate number of which are concerned with economics, the Roman Catholic Church, or issues of ethnic conflict, with others focused on the nascent
government’s postcolonial development and its impact on the traditional socio-political structure. Secondary texts offer little from which to paint even a cursory picture of Habyarimana’s character, of the psychological and philosophical factors underlying his presidency.

Also, the majority of people who knew Habyarimana have died—from natural causes, or have been killed, while many others have proven (at this time) inaccessible for interviews due to being held without access in prisons in Mali and Benin, or have gone into hiding to avoid prosecution or assassination. And, besides the fact that Habyarimana can’t be interviewed, and that very few (and superficial) interviews of the president were conducted, he left nothing in writing concerning his thoughts on government, politics, economics, society, or his meetings with other heads of state. Lastly, this being a doctoral dissertation, time and money were extremely limited. Taken together, these several ‘roadblocks’ have forced this paper to be an initial ‘probe’ into Habyarimana’s life, with a fuller treatment to follow as more interviews, texts, funds, and time become available.
CHAPTER 2
RESEARCH METHOD

The research methodology for this paper has been guided by a critical realist philosophy (as outlined in my paper cited below\(^1\), and as is illustrated in Figure 1), in an

---

Figure 1: Depiction of Necessary Relationships

---

\(^1\) Childress, online at: http://studo.umkc.edu/idsc/JIDR/JIDR%202008/JIDR2008_Final_Childress.pdf.
effort to elucidate the various and many levels of social agency and their emergent properties, within and outside Rwanda, that were contingent to Habyarimana’s life. This multi-leveled and eclectic approach can also be fruitfully connected with Bourdieu’s notion of *habitus*¹ (see Figure 2), in as much as the subject operates among a particular collection of unconscious, learned, and shared nodes of beliefs (taken as self-evident universals) and agency with others, which form a social framework of interconnectedness of agency and identity (the field), as part of the greater social world.

---

¹ *Habitus* is an agent’s taking on a position in a “field” (i.e., acquired organization of perception, thought and action) developed in response to encountered objective social conditions. Social structures are thus instilled correspondingly into the subjective, mental experience of the agent. Habitus can be likened to socialization—however, it does not only work at the level of conscious modes of discourse, but is deeper, more pragmatic and pre-reflexive. My minimal understanding of *habitus* is not intended to reflect Bourdieu’s exceedingly complex and dense concept. For more on his notion of *habitus* see Bourdieu (1976, 1984).
Habitus contributes to the reproduction of society by regulating and generating social practices. It is class oriented, and in Habyarimana’s case this is particularly revealing, because he reached the pinnacle of power not as an évolué (an educated elite), but through the military, a profession and position not commonly associated with the upper class in the West, but often consisting of the richest and most powerful figures in much of Africa south of the Sahara, and in non-developed countries around the world which are dominated by military regimes, directly or indirectly.

The habitus of which Habyarimana was a part necessarily included and was inseparable from the military, the Church, and a network of entrepreneurs and powerful men engaged in various levels of monetary transactions, involving legitimate business deals, as well as the ubiquitous world of graft and corruption. The conditions of this social life ‘capture’ the participants in the sense that they reproduce these conditions rather than others. It is this subjective ‘field’ of the habitus that both regulates and is regulated by Kayibanda and Habyarimana and the other social agents of the habitus in which they operated. Figure 1 gives a picture of a necessary set of relationships according to a critical realist perspective as applied in a rigorous examination of society, which can be used to help recognize the forms and operations of various types of habitus, and which are used in this paper to examine and attempt to elucidate, to a necessarily limited degree, the particular habitus each of which Kayibanda and Habyarimana were a part, amidst the larger social context.

Additionally, the idea of social evolution toward complexity, especially as driven by technology, of which literacy is a major part, has been enormously helpful in regarding
the larger picture of Rwandan change, from the beginning of the twentieth century through Habyarimana’s government. Literacy acquisition had a profound effect on Rwandan society in a surprisingly short period of time: from the White Fathers’ mission schools’ proliferation in the early 1920s, public awareness engendered by the ability to read was responsible for the successful independence movement in 1959, and just 30 year later the push for multi-party politics. The importance of technology, and the indispensability of literacy (in all of its communicative forms), is brought home in the statement by Ken Baynes that the Industrial Revolution depended on the ability to make images on paper1.

The other significant technology responsible for change was a cash economy, introduced in the 1920-30 period by the Belgians under the authority of their trusteeship of the country. The impact of money on a barter culture was transformative, as well as disruptive, and in conjunction with the 1962 government’s privatization of land, and demographic pressure, led to an abusive system of land purchasing by wealthy non-farmers.

CHAPTER 3
DISCLAIMER

Because the 1994 genocide overshadows everything concerning Rwanda, it is necessary to address this “blanketing” with a disclaimer of sorts. This examination of Kayibanda’s and Habyarimana’s lives was not carried out with the intent of proving innocence or guilt related to the 1994 genocide, but with trying to understand how a nascent East African state and its government were initiated and managed over a 32-year span, until dissolving amid the RPF invasion and ending with Habyarimana’s assassination. It is important that I warn against any possible misreading: an interest in the Rwandan state government under its first two presidents, specifically in the hope of building historical veracity, does not make an academic researcher in any way an apologist for a government’s or an individual’s actions. It would be absurd to confuse or conflate a writer of a scholarly work of history with his subject. One writes about actors, big and small, because of their impact on society, whether for good or for bad, and a well-researched portrait of their lives can help shed light on the complex dynamics of society;¹ and without a well-documented account of Rwanda’s First and Second Republics, there is a corrosive gap in Rwandan, African, and world history. Despite impediments, this paper is hopefully a beginning ‘corrective’ to the paucity of information regarding the first two presidents of an embryonic African nation.

¹ Diamond (2005a: 17) makes a similar point: “What use one makes of a historical explanation is a question separate from the explanation itself. Understanding is more often used to try to alter an outcome than to repeat or perpetuate it. That’s why psychologists try to understand the minds of murderers and rapists, why social historians try to understand genocide, and why physicians try to understand the causes of human disease. Those investigators do not seek to justify murder, rape, genocide, and illness. Instead, they seek to use their understanding of a chain of causes to interrupt the chain.”
PART TWO

CHAPTER 4


Underpinnings of Rwandan Identity: ‘Tutsi’ and ‘Hutu’ Populations

The two populations—Hutu and Tutsi—figure fundamentally and conspicuously in every aspect of Kayibanda’s and Habyarimana’s lives, as well as in the development of the country and in the lives of every Rwandan, from Mwami (king) Rwabugiri, at the end of the nineteenth century, up to and through the 1994 genocide. It is necessary, then, to provide a brief overview of the origins of these two populations at the beginning of this study in order to help establish and illuminate the social milieu which existed during the two president’s grandfather’s time, from the 1880s, into the colonial period at the beginning of the twentieth century and their births, in 1924 and 1937 respectively.

Although there have been many attempts and guesses, some disingenuous and ideological, at placing “Hutu” and “Tutsi” in some historical framework, either political, racial, feudal, or otherwise, Vansina’s observations appear to be exceedingly trustworthy in terms of representing the most recent, thorough and objective scholarship. Important in his

1 “A Tutsi identity was shaped in relation to the wealth and power associated with royal and later government status and institutions, while a Hutu awareness developed in relation to this other identity group and as a result of a situation of subordination. This insight implies that ‘internal components and the interrelations among ethnic categories vary over time’, and that power and the perceived nature of (the proximity to) power constitute an important factor in understanding these changes.” (Ingelaere, 2010: 283). Also, see Newbury and Newbury (1999: 313; 31). C. Newbury (1988: 51). Pottier (1995: 39) relates that “Overt ethnic friction may have been non-existent at the turn of the century, but the ethnic divisions and ‘obvious hatred’ toward the Tutsi overlords, according to Grogan and Sharp (1900: 119) were well entrenched by 1898, the time the Germans began to colonise Rwanda.”
findings is the mutability and complex history of the two terms. For example, “Tutsi” was an endonym used by a small number of herders before the 1600s, then came to commonly designate a “political elite within that fraction” after the founding of the Nyiginya kingdom in the mid-seventeenth century. “Hutu”, by contrast, did not describe, early on, a particular population, but was used by the elite to describe loutish behavior, including even Tutsi servants. Vansina believes the menial Gakondo corporation are probably the first group to have been designated as “Hutu”, followed by the Budaha, who were “servants in charge of supplying provisions and services to the court”. All people who lived outside the kingdom, as well, were called “Hutu”. Within the military, by the middle of the eighteenth century, “Tutsi” designated a combatant, and a noncombatant was called “Hutu” because they served the army. This relational framework appears to be the context in which the first institutionalized oppositional use of the terms developed.

As most noncombatants happened to stem from lineages of farmers, the elite eventually began to call all farmers “Hutu” and to oppose this word to “Tutsi”, now applied to all herders, whether they were of Tutsi origin or not.  

---

2 Three corporations served the ideological foundation of the kingdom (c. 1700), ensuring the continuity of ritual life by providing services to the king, the court, and the ritualists: “corporations of menials, corporations for the service of the official herds, and military corporations composed of young men chosen from the families of distinguished herders who were dependents of a local lord.” (Vansina, 2004: 58).

3 C.f. Pottier (2002: 13) holds that “For the period up to 1860 . . . historians know next to nothing about how the terms ‘Twa’, ‘Hutu’ and ‘Tutsi’ were used in social discourse; whether these terms denoted social or physical classifications, for instance, is simply unclear.”

4 In Africa, the development and spread of cattle, as well as that of agriculture, is ancient, and predates the formation of Hutu-Tutsi identities and the Kingdom of Rwanda; how and when cattle and farming first arrived in the Rwanda region is not known. “African cattle were domesticated during the tenth millennium BP by delayed return Saharan hunter-gatherers in unstable, marginal environments where predictable access to resources was a more significant problem than absolute abundance. Pastoralism spread patchily across the continent according to regional variations in the relative predictability of herding versus hunting and gathering. . . . The earliest African food producers were mobile herders, not sedentary farmers. Herding developed in marginal areas, and then spread patchily across the Sahara and to the south as climatic conditions deteriorated. . . . Although complex strategies for plant use developed early in Africa (c. 17,000 BP), plant domestication was late (after 4000 BP), and occurred in many different environments. (Marshall, 2002: 99, 100).

5 Vansina, ibid: 58.
This distinction spread across the kingdom with the armies. In addition, the view of foreigner as “Hutu” spread to include the farmers north (Habyarimana’s ancestors) and west of the central kingdom, effectively deepening and sealing the concept of agriculturalist as “Hutu”, the exception being the marginal districts in the northeast, east and south, which were herding communities, and so were considered as both Hutu and Tutsi. In the mid-nineteenth century, “the distinction between chief of the long grass and chief [sic] the land again institutionalized a division between Tutsi herders and Hutu farmers”.  

Newbury finds evidence that ethnic identities became prominent among lineages during Rwabugiri’s reign (c. 1860-1895) and the creation of a centralized government:

> With the arrival of Rwabugiri and his chiefs, classification into the category of Hutu or Tutsi tended to become rigidified. Lineages that were wealthy in cattle and had links to powerful chiefs were regarded as Tuṭsi; lineages lacking these characteristics were relegated to non-Tutsi status.

Lemarchand, as well, emphasizes the central role of cattle ownership (Map 1), pointing out that when we try to understand the social stratification in Rwanda it is important to note that an attribute of being designated one of the Tutsi population was to be successful enough to be a lender in the cattle leasing arrangement, *ubuhake* (or patron-client system closely connected the welfare of the Hutu client with the Tutsi patron. The former provided services to the latter in exchange for protection and advocacy at the Mwami’s court. Nor was *ubuhake* limited to a Hutu-Tutsi relationship; in some regions the custom may have been more prevalent between Tutsi... a traditional Rwandan was not merely Hutu or Tutsi. Family, clan, and lineage ties were often more determinative, whether on the local hill or in the often vicious succession struggles at court. In light of this relative fluidity in the pre-colonial period, the subsuming of all identities under the supposed dualist struggle of Tutsi lord and Hutu serf is one of the most regrettable legacies of European colonialism.” (Carney, 2011: p. 22).
relationship,\textsuperscript{10} where the patron is called the shebuja and the client mugaragu), whereas being designated a Hutu implied being without the resources to operate in and maintain a lender’s position. (Although, Hutu could become Tutsi, and Tutsi sometimes remained Tutsi while being a client of another, more powerful, Tutsi).

For a Hutu it [ubuhake] involved at least a year of full-time servitude doing physical and menial work followed by years of part-time service at corvée labor of two days out of five, later on, one day of seven. . . . “Ubuhake was, therefore, an economic-political institution for the Tutsi who received its major economic benefits and made use of its political possibilities . . . and which “granted them all the social riches of nobility and high position with all their ensuing political opportunities while . . . for the Hutu it was an economic institution without political uses or benefits . . . that gave them little more than social existence as a Rwandan.” . . . “In addition the Tutsi monopolized the offices of the royal court and the civil and military administration with only rare and minor exceptions.\textsuperscript{11}

Linden offers another input into the nature of a Hutu/Tutsi distinguishing identity, from the point of view of land holding, proposing that a true patron-client relationship grew out of ubukonde\textsuperscript{12} (Hutu-owned lands in the north leased out for usufruct) as farmers’ lands were usurped by the king, rendering the now-landless ‘serfs’ at the mercy of Tutsi power holders:

Land was alienated and marked out. The client was allowed two years in which to cultivate, sending the occasional calabash to the patron, then had to provide the landowner with two days labour in the sowing season . . . and during the May sorghum harvest . . . By usurping the position of local lineage heads by sheer force,

\textsuperscript{10} In the most general sense, clientelism can be viewed as "a more or less personalized relationship between actors (i.e., patrons and clients), or sets of actors, commanding unequal wealth, status or influence, based on conditional loyalties and involving mutually beneficial transactions." (Lemarchand, 1972: 69).

\textsuperscript{11} Codere (1973: 18-19).

\textsuperscript{12} See Mamdani (2002: 65-66) for comparison of ubukonde (lineage control over land), igikingi (pasturage) and ubureetwa (a form of clientship).
or by interfering in land disputes and litigation, the chiefs came to control more and more land, exacting crop dues and labour from the unprotected serfs.”\footnote{Linden (1977: 10-16).}

Map 1: Distribution of Sites with Early Domestic Cattle
Rwabukumba also emphasizes the land contract, suggesting the patron-client relationship would have developed sometime after the nineteenth century, as the narratives he collected from the second half of the eighteenth century led him to this consideration:

The meticulous study of these chronicles tells us nothing about the relations between Tutsi and Hutu, or, more widely, on the relations of dependence. We know only, having proceeded to the monographs of the hills, that the first waves of land-clearers contained as many Hutu as Tutsi.14

Rwabukumba, in examining the reasoning behind Hutus entering into client-patron contracts, summed up the two forms of personal subordination that developed as follows:

Why, once they had established income from land, did Hutu make ties of personal dependence? Less to obtain a cow from their patron than to escape corvée labor: never, in fact, did a Hutu client do agricultural work for his patron, even if it was his land patron. If he managed to be a good client, he was exempt from corvée labor. . . . When a Hutu enjoyed relative success through his land and pasturage, he looked for the protection of the leader of the army into which he was incorporated to defend him against the greed of the lord of his hill.

At the death of Rwabugiri, in 1895, personal subordination thus knew two forms. The one form, recent and generalized, was based on control of the land by a minority, itself dependent on the court. So, every Rwandan, Tutsi or Hutu, underwent, to preserve the usage of their land, the requirements (differing according to their social status) of a land patron. The other form, born at the beginning of the 19th century and bound to the ownership of cattle, turned out much more restrictive and constituted a network the shape of which was determined by land dependence.15

Meanwhile, the German protectorate (1897-1916), followed by the Belgian mandate, then trusteeship (1922-1959), continued to imagine that “Hutu” was a special

---

14 From chronicles of the second half of the eighteenth century, in Rwabukumba (1974: p. 11). “My name is Semahe, son of Rwangabo, Rugwabiza, Cyajumba, Nyanzu, Ruremezi. I will stop there. We are Abaremezi from Abanyiginya. Ruremezi came first to Nyaruhengeri, with Bahinge. He cleared the forest. There was at that time a law which allowed people to clear the forest, to live there and to allow relatives to live there. When destitute people came, we allowed them to settle there, and they became as brothers. Rugwabiza, my grandfather, had cows obtained through his daughters’ dowries, and cows acquired from bartering beans. He was no one’s client, but he had put himself under the protection of the leader of the army in order to have his properties and goods guarded. Only my father, Rwangabo, had a patron, a Tutsi who was called Rindiro. But it was Rugwabiza, my grandfather who was the first to know a land chief, for whom he had to do work, or pay services in food. (Rwabukumba (ibid: 11).

15 Rwabukumba (ibid: 24-25).
racial designation (following the racial theories that J. H. Speke’s book had promoted\textsuperscript{16}), and to assume that this label was accepted by the indigenous populations.\textsuperscript{17} The celebration by the colonists of the Tutsi aristocratic class, who were called by some “black Europeans” because they were tall, slender and graceful, with aquiline noses and straight hair, became extended to all Tutsi, under the mistaken assumption that they were universally part of a political elite, yet those who actually exercised power “accounted for less than 10 percent of all Tutsi”.\textsuperscript{18}

The Hutu insurrection that broke out from 1897 to 1899 in the small districts in the northwest part of the country, where Habyarimana’s grandparents lived, was driven by the resistance to having any Tutsi in their midst (which presence would signal a beginning of subservience to the central court). This is a particularly significant event, as Vansina points out,

because it proves without any ambiguity not only that the population at this time was conscious of a great divide between Tutsi and Hutu, but also that the antagonism between these two social categories had already broken in the open. One can therefore summarily reject the views of those who attribute the distinction between Tutsi and Hutu as well as the engendering of their mutual hostility to each other to the first Europeans. The Europeans merely adopted a practice they found

\textsuperscript{16} John Hanning Speke (1863, \textit{The Discovery of the Source of the Nile}). “The "Hamitic Hypothesis" was widely held among colonial administrators and missionaries. This hypothesis held that "everything of value found in Africa was brought there by the Hamites, allegedly a branch of the Caucasian race. . . . Speke was a great propagator of this hypothesis in the interlacustrine region: when he discovered the kingdom of Buganda with its sophisticated political organization, he attributed this civilisation to a race of nomadic herdsmen related to the 'Hamitic' Galla. Pastoralism and its attributes thus received an aura of cultural superiority ((Sanders, 1969:521, 528-530). And, “The attractiveness of this theory for the Europeans was that physical qualities (the Nilo-hamitic physiognomy) could be linked to mental and intellectual capacities: the 'Hamites'—in Rwanda the Tutsi—were born rulers and entitled to a past and a future almost as honourable as their European "cousins" (Linden, 1977:2). Collaboration with the Tutsi could thus be easily supported ideologically.

\textsuperscript{17} Newbury & Newbury (2000: 839): “Hutu” were never a homogeneous group, not in historical, social, or cultural terms. Despite the differences among Hutu, however, the “dual colonialism” of central court administrators, under the suzerainty of first German and then Belgian rule, brought an awareness of shared exploitation within the expanding powers of the state.

\textsuperscript{18} On the reasoning behind these figures, see Helen Codere (1973: 70).
on the spot and the terminology they used to express it derived from the speech of the local elites.19

Potentially significant, too, because it happened in the district where Habyarimana’s grandparents lived, and while we have no record of their consideration of these events, there is no doubt that they were aware of the existence of a Hutu-Tutsi distinction and the negative correlation it carried. They do not, however, seem to have harbored any prejudice toward the Tutsi, according to one of their grandsons.20

Adding another dimension to our consideration of how the opposing identities of Hutu and Tutsi materialized is the question of uburetwa.21 By the time Habyarimana’s grandfather was a young man, in early 1900, in addition to the exercise of the unequal patron-client ubuhake contract, there was the onerous imposition of a mandatory work tax called uburetwa, which only Hutu owed because of their tenure of arable land, and only

---

19 Vansina, 2004: 138. See Vansina (op. cit.: 198), where he systematically illuminates the history of the Rwandan people, thereby putting to rest the Eurocentric prejudice of ethnicity created by the colonists, and the ideologically formulated racist propaganda propagated after independence by the Hutu génocidaires: “As we can see from the above examples, “There never were successive immigrations of Twa foragers [a pygmyoid people, comprising about 1% of the population], Hutu farmers, and Tutsi herders since these social categories were only slowly developed as a means of labeling persons who were in the country. The settlement history of Rwanda is actually very ancient and quite complex.” Sellström et al (1996: 12) also point to hardened Hutu/Tutsi definitions before the colonial impact: “Rwabugiri’s administration (1860-1895) imposed a harsh regime on the formerly semi-autonomous Tutsi and Hutu lineages, confiscating their lands and breaking their political power. Rwabugiri amplified feudal labour systems, in particular the uburetwa, . . . He also manipulated social categories, and introduced an "ethnic" differentiation between Tutsi and Hutu based on historical social positions. Polarization and politicization of ethnicity thus began before the advent of European colonialism.” Also see Newbury, 1988: 82.

20 Personal communication.

21 Pottier (2002:13), “Uburetwa, the hated corvée labour service through which populations regained access to the lands they had lost to Rwabugiri, was the central institution; it was restricted to Hutu.” And Viret (2010: n.p.): “Though the Belgians abolished several existing tributes, including those in cattle and foodstuffs in 1924, such as imponoke, indahukirano and abatora *(Reyntjens, 1985: 132), it also generalized uburetwa (a tax consisting of one day of labor per week), and considerably increased its base to all able-bodied adult men in the Rwandan territory. They also created akazi, the requisition of men for unpaid labor in public works. This taxation policy was integrated into the ethnic framework through which the colonial power considered society, and only the Hutu population was subject to uburetwa *(Newbury, 1988: 141). In 1949 all Rwandans had to redeem the value of the uburetwa they owed for the annual cash amount of 19.50 francs **(Newbury, 1988: 146; Reyntjens, 1985: 137). Until it was abolished in the aftermath of World War II, the desire to evade uburetwa constituted one of the main motives for the departure of emigrants into exile: 425,000 Rwandans left the country, heading to Uganda and Tanganyika *(Reyntjens, 1985: 141).” For more on uburetwa, see (Newbury 1978: 21, 1988: 13; Vidal 1969: 399; Chrétien 1985: 150), enjoyed freedom from uburetwa *(Czekanowski 1917: 270–1; Iliffe, 1987: 62; Jefremovas 1991a: 68; Newbury 1988: 140; Reyntjens 1985: 133–4; Rwabukumba and Mundagizi 1974: 22).
Hutu were obliged to perform the menial work required by the chief of the land. This was in stark contrast to the less humiliating obligations of the chief’s Tutsi client[s], and resulted in a brewing revolt among the Hutu as a result of years of being exploited. Pottier also points to uburetwa as an example of Hutu and Tutsi identities taking on a strong ethnic character before colonial influences, citing Czekanowski’s research in 1907-08 that led him [Czekanowski] to remark that “the Tutsi ruled Rwanda as a conquered territory in which uburetwa was the core of subjection”.22

In summary, the earliest appearance of the notion of “Hutu” could have stemmed from certain early concepts of polite social behavior, as well as designating a servant, from which meaning “Hutu” was expanded to mean “servants in charge of supplying provisions and services to the court”, thus by the middle of the eighteenth century, when the military had reached a significant size, “Hutu” meant those noncombatants who served the army. From early on, “Hutu” also meant ‘foreigner’, and this view spread to include the farmers north (Habyarimana’s ancestors) and west of the central kingdom, effectively deepening

---

22 In Pottier, 2002: 13. Iliffe,1987: 60-64 gives the following bleak picture of uburetwa: “...the crucial issue for most Hutu in pre-colonial Rwanda was access to arable land. This was controlled by Hutu lineages until King Rwabugiri (1860-1895) ... asserted Tutsi control over arable land, first at the centre of the kingdom and then, increasingly, in its newly conquered peripheries. Tutsi chiefs gradually broke the autonomy and solidarity of Hutu lineages, leaving the elementary families vulnerable to exploitation. The chiefs gained direct control over unoccupied land and indirect control over occupied lineage land, which they asserted by demanding tribute in return for the right of continued occupation. The tribute was paid partly in kind and partly in labour on the chiefs’ fields. In the most fully dominated regions, this corvée, known as ubuletwa, amounted to two days’ work in every five ... Ubuletwa was imposed on the holding rather than the individual, so that a landholder with no other adult male in his family might find it especially difficult both to meet this obligation and to grow his family’s food. ... The wholly landless man became a day-labourer (umucancuro) cultivating for another from dawn to noon in return for a day’s food, conventionally defined as a basket of beans. Those slightly better situated combined a proportion of day-labour with a plot of land inadequate to provide independent subsistence. [according to Dr. Vidal’s informant]: The wife had no clothes and must go and cultivate to obtain a used cow-skin. The day-labourer was a pauper who cultivated for everything: milk, clothes, food. He ate no matter what: a goat which had died suddenly, an aborted heifer. ... They were the very lowest people in the society. ... The day-labourers were despised. Look: I am drinking beer with you and other people of my rank; a day-labourer could not come and sit with us; he stayed on one side waiting for someone, moved by compassion, to call him and give him the dregs left at the bottom of the pot. “Dr. Vidal’s informants declared that day-labourers—defined as those who worked for others but never employed others—were about half of all cultivators in central Rwanda.”
and sealing the concept of agriculturalist as “Hutu”. Later, the distinction between chief of the land and chief of the long grass subsequently institutionalized a division between Hutu farmers and Tutsi herders. The notion of “Tutsi” began as a term for a combatant in the military, as well as for a political elite among herders, eventually coming to mean someone successful enough to be a lender in the cattle leasing arrangement, *ubuhake*.

Through two centuries of the development of these two descriptors, “Hutu” and “Tutsi”, the monopolization of power among the kingdom’s ruling elite by members of the Tutsi population tightened and spread, usurping Hutu peasants’ lands through *ubukonde*, and imposing an onerous one-sided tax, *uburetwa*, only on Hutu. By the time of Habyarimana’s grandparents’ generation (c. 1880—1950), Rwandan society recognized two distinct populations that were identified as “Hutu” and “Tutsi”, and which had unequal status accomplished through a patron-client system, and a monopolized vertical hold on power from the king all the way down to the level of the clan on the hill.

*Socio-Psychological Effects Of The Hutu-Tutsi ‘Divide’*

Attending the definitional and operational development of the appellations “Hutu” and “Tutsi” was the parallel development of separate self-imageries. That is, the integral and inseparable descriptors “Hutu” and “Tutsi” came to represent two different selves within two different subcultures. The Hutu in patron-client contracts, in general, suffered

---

23 A system “characterized by a patrilineal management and succession of lands with concessions to leasers or land tenants in exchange for fees and services.” (André, 2003: 153).

24 In Ingelaere, 2010: 274, “If, as David Newbury suggests, Rwanda’s ethnic identities are socially produced and ‘deeply influenced by power’ such that ‘changes in these categories are related to changes in the power context’. . .” (Newbury and Newbury, 2000: 874).
to a certain degree from an inferiority complex,\textsuperscript{25} and the spread of *ubuhake* amongst the Hutu weakened them,

since individuals increasingly sought protection with rich patrons rather than in the solidarity of their lineage as of old. . . . the *imiryango* [clans, or patrilineages] began to break down as some of their members communally fulfilled obligations to *abatware* [chiefs] . . . while others sought individual immunity in the patronage of a powerful noble. With their social supports undermined, the Hutu were ruthlessly exploited; by the end of the nineteenth century the imposition of Tutsi rule had reduced many peasants to the level of destitute journeymen, wandering in search of food, work and protection. . . . The breakdown of the Hutu lineages within the Rwandan State was correlated with the transformation of the Tutsi nobility into a well defined social class whose eating habits, deportment, culture and ideology were designed to instill, in Maquet’s celebrated phrase, ‘a premise of inequality’ [my italics], which was a charter for their monopoly of the surplus wealth created by Hutu labour. . . . Hutu were invariably segregated for military training\textsuperscript{26}. . . . Confronted with the elaborate paraphernalia of court life, with its nuanced poetry and measured disdain, the peasant outside Tutsi patronage readily came to believe that, apart from being physically smaller and materially poorer, he was intellectually and morally inferior [my italics]. Marx’s statement that ‘the ideas of the ruling class are in each epoch the ruling ideas . . . the class which is ruling material power in society is, at the same time, its ruling spiritual power’ sums up the situation.\textsuperscript{27}

\textsuperscript{25} “Tutsi ideology thoroughly dominated the Hutu of central Rwanda and had been internalised, with the resulting psychological dependence and sense of inferiority that limited the potential for creative political action, even among the Hutu counter-elite.” (Linden, 1977: 234). In Maton, 1994: 9, “The colonial administration strengthened at the beginning the power of the leaders, who (except in the region of Ruhengeri) were largely Tutsi-ministers. On the one hand obliged to share the power with the Belgians, these Tutsi leaders were often opposed to the colonial power and that of the Roman Catholic Church, which had a monopoly on the public services of education and public health. . . . The farmers-Hutus were later Christianized, but more quickly than the Tutsis. This Christianization accelerated in the poor farmers is maybe less surprising than it seems at first sight. First of all, education was for the poor people a means of social advancement. It is an economic explanation that is certainly valid, but insufficient. There are other considerations, which are a matter of philosophy and cultural anthropology. At first, the theology of the White Fathers and the Jesuits, in this period neo-Thomism, made sacred the fertility, the fundamental mythical notion in the pre-Christian African thought. Then, the biblical story of liberation sometimes suits the poor people of Africa admirably. To what extent Hutu had really been exploited by Tutsi is not too relevant concerning this subject. What is relevant is that they were considered inferior by the Tutsi, which were their only reference point to judge their situation. Besides, Tutsi did nothing to reassure Hutu. For example, the archetypal metaphors of the Tutsi in this period are always the priest’s ‘stick’ and the warrior’s lance.

\textsuperscript{26} It seems probable that a predominantly Hutu military continued ‘automatically’ into the post-independence socio-political structure, since it naturally fit into the virulent anti-Tutsi policy of the first president, Grégoire Kayibanda.

\textsuperscript{27} Linden, 1970: 17-18. Marx’s statement, however, is only valid when pertaining to a ruling class that has legitimacy in the eyes of the public. In Rwanda, for example, once a significant number of educated Hutu had escaped the premise of their inequality, the Tutsi rulers lost legitimacy and were deposed in the Hutu-led two-pronged movement for the country’s independence from the Tutsi monarchy and the Belgian colonists.
This inequality of the two ‘selves’ was embedded in tradition, as pointed out by Lemarchand:

“Rwanda is unique in the sheer abundance of traditions purporting to show the superiority of the Tutsi over the other castes, and in the cumulative impact of these traditions on society as a whole.”

Examples of this traditional Tutsi belief in their superiority are found in some Rwandan folktales, such as the one in which the following lines purport to claim the historic right of the Tutsis to rule, “Dear are the dogs and the rats [the lowly Hutu and Twa], giving way to the cows and the drum” [the pastoralist Tutsi], and in the lines from another legend propagated by the Tutsi that professes the disorder that would ensue without the Tutsi as leaders, “The king and the Tutsi [were] the heart of the country. Should the Hutu chase them away, they would lose all they have and Imana [God] would punish them.”

But, the quintessential “superiority” myth that carried the idea of a caste-like social order (including the third social group, the Twa, a pygmoid, mainly forest-dwelling people, who comprise only one percent of the population), is the following one based appropriately on milk, the heart of the Tutsi pastoralist culture:

There was Kigwa, who fell from heaven and had three sons: Gatwa, Gahutu, and Gatutsi. When he decided to choose his successor, he entrusted each of the three sons a pot of milk to watch over during the night. At daybreak, Gatwa had drunk the milk; Gahutu had fallen asleep and in the carelessness of the sleep, had spilt the milk; and only Gatutsi had kept watch throughout the night, and only his milk pot was safe. So it was clear to Kigwa that Gatutsi should be the successor and by that fact should be exempt of any menial tasks. Gahutu was to be his servant. The utter

---

28 Lemarchand 1970: 34. However, it is important to bear in mind what Catherine and David Newbury (1991: 294) have written about ethnicity, that “it is best understood neither as an enduring, unchanging element to social formations nor as an instantaneous, recent invention. Instead we see it as an identity contextually configured, one which can be understood only through close familiarity with the history of social relations and political power.”

29 The symbol of the mwamiship was the royal drum, Kalinga, on which the testicles of killed powerful enemies were tied.

unreliability of Gatwa was to make him only a clown in society. As a result, Gatutsi received cattle and command whereas Gahutu would acquire cattle only through the services to Gatutsi, and Gatwa was condemned to hunger and gluttony and would not acquire cattle.31

These myths were part of a widely diffused set of social elements that added to the psychological distancing between the Hutu and Tutsi populations,32 and which give evidence to Lemarchand’s statement that “All cultures are myth sustained in that they derive their legitimacy from a body of values and beliefs which tend to embellish or falsify historical truth.”33 The historical ‘truth’, in the case of the above myths, was a fabrication that advanced an historical social inequality:

It is not just that the country’s oral and written history provides a pre-eminent example of the effects of ideological restraints in a feudal society, but also that a particular account of the past, shaped in the Tutsi court and promulgated by the Catholic clergy, influenced the political consciousness of Rwandans and Europeans alike.34

The ideological restraints, as well as the political consciousness of the Hutu, were significantly heightened in the 1950s by an increasingly vociferous denunciation of the unfairness of the cattle clientship35 system, and of the disenfranchise of the Hutu

---

32 André Sibomana (1997: 84) gives the following example of a type of cultural ‘distancing’: “… in the royal court, there was particular form of war poetry. A man would gain credit in the eyes of those around him if he spent the evenings praising murders carried out during the war … This form of poetry does not exist in Hutu culture.”
34 Linden, op. cit.: 2.
35 Rwabukumba and Mundangazi, attempting to historically place the beginnings of the cattle clientship arrangement, write that, “At the beginning of the 19th century the network of personal dependency between the mwami and the Tutsi lineages was based upon the armies and the ritual functions. It is only at the end of Yuhi Gahindiro's reign (ca. 1830) that other types of personal dependency, especially ubuhake, were established, as shown by the traditional record of a lineage of Tutsi diviners.” (Rwabukumba and Mundangazi, 1974: 6). C.f But Vansina cites evidence that the ubuhake contract developed much earlier, in the 1600s, under Ruganzu Ndori, who founded the Nyiginya kingdom, as a military-supported political instrument, so that the “patron-client relationship linked each of the great chiefs directly to the king... ties of this sort were common in the region, whereas no other realm knew a military organization similar to the one the Nyiginya developed during the eighteenth century,” and that this “combination of multiple, permanent armies based on an hereditary recruitment from lineages living all over the country and linked to the management of lands and herds, also spread all over the country, led to an effective centralization... The main theme of the internal history of the kingdom from the end of the eighteenth century
under the unremitting hold on power by the Tutsi, who were a distinct minority—about 15% of the population. It is this exclusionary Tutsi hold on power (including education) radiating from the central administration that the people in the northwest region, which included Habyarimana’s ancestors, had to contend with, and more or less successfully countered for a time. But, the court finally absorbed all the outlying regions of the kingdom to become a symbol of oppression, and thus the focal point of the Hutu revolutionary movement: the overwhelming vote in the general election in 1959 for the dissolution of the mwamiship showed how strongly the Hutu resented the Tutsi-constructed socio-political system. We shall see that in only two generations after the establishment of the Catholic missions and the arrival of Belgian administration, the power of the mwami and the privileged position of the Tutsi would be challenged by an educated Hutu elite (évolués) and overthrown, at a time when Habyarimana was a young man returning from a year’s college in the Congo.

_Socio-Political Structure From Habyarimana’s Grandfather’s Time_

The Roman Catholic Church and the Belgian colonial administration, from the advent of their arrival, had the most profound effects on Rwanda. One of the earliest was

---

36 It should be noted that a very small group of Tutsi drawn mainly from two clans monopolized most of the opportunities provided by indirect rule. It has never been valid to imply that a homogeneous Tutsi or Hutu community existed at any time. Below the small indigenous Tutsi elite were not only virtually all of Rwanda’s Hutu population, but the large majority of their fellow Tutsi, as well. Most Tutsi were not much more privileged in social or economic terms than the Hutu. Therefore, the deepening of the Hutu/Tutsi ethnic cleavage was accompanied by social distancing, giving more nuance to the double value of the term Tutsi: Tutsi as a social group with a distant ethnic substrate designating the group of lineages that are mainly pastoralists, and Tutsi as a ruling caste made up of a few lineages which are closest to the monarchy. On the eve of colonisation, it was almost exclusively in the latter sense that the Rwandese used the term Tutsi. E Gasana et al “Rwanda” in ACDESS (ed) (1999) 145, cited in Gaparayi, 2000.

37 Linden has remarked that Kayibanda, the leader of the revolution in the 1950s, and one of the authors of the Bahutu Manifesto, expressed a clear hatred of the Tutsi and the mwamiship. (Personal correspondence with the author).
the change in names influenced by baptism, and the French language used in mission
schools and state bureaucracy. Nearly everyone received Christian names. Thus,
Habyarimana’s grandfather, father and himself were named Paul, Jean-Pierre, and Juvénal,
respectively.

It isn’t known how Habyarimana’s father chose the name “Juvénal” for his son.
Since Habyarimana’s father wasn’t schooled in the European classics, it is rather doubtful
that he could have known about Juvenal the Roman satirist. But, even though the writer’s
work would have had little meaning to a farmer in the hills of Rwanda, his name on the list
of exalted classicists might have been enough of an attraction to suggest its adoption. The
missionaries most likely had an inventory of Christian names that could have been used for
quick reference. Another possibility is that Habyarimana was named after Juvenal of
Narni, a fourth century Bishop and Confessor living in Narni, Umbria, Italy, but who was
born in Africa, the birthplace being relevant. Habyarimana’s grandfather’s name, Paul, is
clearly a Biblical reference, and Habyarimana’s father’s name, Jean-Pierre, combines the
Biblical figures John and Peter, as well as being a very common name among the French-
speaking culture from which the White Fathers came. (Habyarimana’s future wife has the
name Agathe, from the Greek and meaning ‘good’, and also being the name of a third
century saint. Perhaps some would find not a little sarcasm in these benevolent meanings
for the name—say, in the flavor of Juvenal’s satires—since Habyarimana’s wife, Agathe,
is, at the time of this writing, facing efforts by various groups trying to get her extradited
from France to stand trial in Rwanda as a perpetrator of genocide).
How the adoption of these non-Rwandan names affected self perception in the ancient Kinyarwandan language community, as it was at the beginning of the twentieth century, is impossible to know now, a hundred years later, but it raises an important question concerning identity, especially people’s relation to the Church. To suddenly adopt a completely new religion, one never before encountered, is a significant act, and adopting a name from that religion and the culture within which it was presented, would be necessarily reinforcing. The church missions blatantly disregarded the integrity of indigenous culture by insisting that ‘their’ newly baptized flock have Christian names in order to authenticate and deserve entry into the faith, but the newly faithful complied, and have retained the practice of using Christian-French first names; it was more than a short-lived fascination, or trend, and demonstrates a permanent step away from one aspect of tradition, and with implications that are difficult to gauge, but should nonetheless be highlighted.

Of course, the most important effect the Church had on Rwandans and their future was the introduction of literacy. It is striking, when considering Habyarimana’s childhood development, that little more than 17 years before he was born, Rwanda had no written language; the monarch and court were illiterate and ruled over an illiterate citizenry, and even on the brink of Rwanda’s independence, over half the Hutu population had no reading and writing skills. Illiteracy tends to support and prolong subjugation in traditional societies, because the populace is trapped in a culture whose past, present, and imagined future are greatly influenced by oral tradition as a descriptor of ‘being-in-the-world’. That

---

38 I am reminded here of when I first studied Chinese, and the Chinese instructor gave us all Chinese names, the written characters he chose having very flattering meanings. It immediately gave us a sense of pride, as well as had the effect of drawing us into the language; we suddenly ‘belonged’ in a way we otherwise wouldn’t have.
is, oral history cannot construct a scientific methodology, so it necessarily holds and transmits a reality that is a conflated world view mixing practicality, as regards organismic survival techniques (the profane), with the supernatural, as regards confronting the mysterious (or sacred), and so resists challenge. The result is a nearly static social structure that is highly resistant to change, because any attempt at alteration threatens the power holders’ grip, but, even more, undermines an entire belief system incorporating the life-death cycle: any change to or break in this ‘chain with nature’ affects an individual’s position in the social contract, and for this change to occur would require a serious dislocation—usually brought about by an external force. The most common such dislocation occurring throughout history is perhaps the change in society caused by defeat in war and the victors imposing a new social structure, including a different religion and language. Rwanda had, since at least the seventeenth century, been immune to invasion because of its location, geography, and its ability to field a formidable army. The kingdom’s relative isolation, and the central court’s powerful military, allowed the kingship to flourish, and, in turn, its own, self-serving oral account of history to prevail. Rwanda’s indigenous language, Kinyarwanda, part of the great sweep of Bantu-based languages spreading from West-Central to South-Central Africa, had only a spoken form before colonization. There were no roads or villages in Rwanda, the population effectively dispersed and separated by countless hills, with very little flatland, resulting in little movement within the country and, thus, considerable ignorance about what was happening in distant hills and the rest of the kingdom. The result was a ‘captured’, illiterate peasantry having no chance to construct an alternative reality. Habyarimana was born only thirty
years after the building of the first schools, set up by Catholic missionaries. Education, and the effects of literacy on society, as we shall see, were to eventually jump-start the movement toward independence and the formation of a state, as well as the end of the kingship.

_No Village Pattern_

From the earliest demarcations of the Rwandan territory, and continuing into Habyarimana’s presidency, there was no geographical or socio-political unifying concept among the peoples of the area now known as the country of Rwanda: they would have identified themselves as part of a specific lineage, connected to a certain clan, and residing, as did their forefathers, in a particular hill area—the essential political unit:

> Real villages do not exist. . . . Today, [1969] as in the more distant past, the hill remains the primary focus of political activity in the countryside. Beyond the hill there is relatively little sense of unity among the rural communities even where caste solidarities are most in evidence, fragmentation and parochialism are the rule rather than the exception.

The hill (in each of the roughly 80 provinces) was a close neighborhood grouping of households varying “from a handful to more than a dozen”, and managed by a hill chief elected from one of the households. The hill chiefs were responsible to subchiefs who, in

---

39 In Vansina, 2004: 35: “Rwanda’ literally means ‘the surface occupied by a swarm or a scattering’; hence its semantic derivation is ‘a large space,’ and it was always used with a qualifier of locality. . . . The word was so little tied to the Nyiginya kingdom [17th century] that in a tale one hears Ndori tell his troops during a campaign against his enemy Nzira, king of Bugara: ‘Spread out in the Rwanda of Nzira.’ Here ‘Rwanda’ refers to the country of the enemy. One concludes . . . that before Ndori’s arrival the only known territorial ethnonyms referred to the small principalities to which they were linked, either by the use of Abanyarwanda + X, or by the use of a toponym such as Abariza (meaning ‘people of Burial’) or Abanyanduga (meaning ‘people of Nduga’). No ethonym is found to designate all the inhabitants of central Rwanda in opposition to the mountain people of the north and the west.”

40 Lemarchand, 1970: 16-17. Even after independence, and the constitutional and legal changes had begun to impose a relative bureaucratic unity across the hills and provinces, the dynamics of governing were riddled with undisguised regional favoritism and nepotism, to such a degree that Rwanda’s first president was forced from office by a coup d’état. Habyarimana, himself, did not escape the demands of a certain regional paternalism.

41 Albert, 1960: 53.
turn, were under the authority of the chiefs of the fields and chiefs of the pastures, who were roughly equal to what might be called ‘governors’ of each province. “All the chiefs were appointed by the mwami and were directly responsible to him.”42 Each hill had a name, which had the administrative function of locating households; this was important for the hill chief in assigning responsibility to those under his jurisdiction for the prestations it was his duty to obtain for the council of paramount chiefs (batware), who resided at the court of the central kingdom, and were primarily responsible for ensuring the continuity of divine custom. These goods and services, procured for the court, typically consisted of the farmers being called up as soldiers, as labor gangs for agricultural work or construction, for collecting foodstuffs and for providing hand-crafted products such as baskets, milk containers, spears, bows and arrows, and hoes.

Northwest Region Semi-Autonomous

Habyarimana’s relatives, cultivators and breeders in the Bushiru area of Gisenyi Province (Map 2), in the northwestern part of Rwanda, managed to escape these prestations, in contrast to most Hutus, who were situated in the central kingdom. Subsistence farmers, like 85% of the population, they owned a few cows, but were not, traditionally, principally herders. What set them apart from the majority of Hutu was their distance from the central court and their belonging to an area that had steadfastly remained largely outside the control of the mwami (king). Therefore, when trying to understand Habyarimana’s positioning regarding the Hutu/Tutsi identity problem, especially as it affected his presidency, it is salient to know how uniquely removed, historically,

42 Ibid.: 53.
Habyarimana’s home region was in relation to the area controlled by the central court, because it gives us an idea of how differently Habyarimana’s attitude toward Tutsi would develop as opposed to the virulent anti-Tutsi attitude of Grégoire Kayibanda—the central author of the Hutu Manifesto, and the driving force for the abolition of the monarchy and the independence movement—who grew up in central Rwanda, near the capital of the central court, where Tutsi control and suppression was most concentrated. The cattle clientship pattern, for example, was primarily found in the area of the central kingdom,

43 “At the micro level [the central kingdom’s] organization was supported by a cattle-based clientship contract called *ubuhake*. It came into being when a person of lower status in search of protection and participation in the prestige conferred by the possession of cattle offered his services to a person of higher status, owner of cattle. If the latter accepted the former as his client (*umugaragu*) he entrusted one or more cows to him and became his patron (*shebuja*). The *umugaragu* had to pay allegiance to the *shebuja* and to render services, for which he received the cattle in usufruct, while the *shebuja* would protect his client, especially in the event of judicial or political trouble; he kept the bare ownership of the cattle. The arrangement could be terminated by any one of the parties at any moment. The political importance of *ubuhake* was enormous: although it was individual this institution was a powerful political weapon in the hands of the Tutsi. It created a bond of friendship between the ruling minority of Tutsi and the mass of
while in the almost singularly Hutu region of the Northwest, where Habyarimana grew up, there was a land-lease system (*ubukonde*) controlled by the Hutu through patrimonial and lineage-based local traditions—as opposed to the cattle leasing system (*ubuhake*) mostly controlled by the Tutsi—and which was still practiced post-independence.

In the North and the Northwest in particular, the legitimacy of the imported authorities was minimal. This was, at least in part, due to the fact that the political conception of Tutsi law clashed with the patrimonial and lineage-based local Hutu traditions there; the Tutsi turned the land-based *ubukonde* patron-client relationship . . . into a more formal political clientship structure.44

The Bushiru-Mulera region, where the hills around Habyarimana’s grandfather’s home were located, remained one of the last areas to come under state control.45 At this time, the central core of Rwanda, which was controlled by the mwami’s court, included the central plateau, Gisaka in the east, and all of the western region (Map 2). Certain areas not under strict control by the central government found themselves slowly being forced into the administrative structure’s rigid classification imposed by Mwami Rwabugiri (c. 1867-1895), which defined the population that was rich in cattle and with connections to powerful chiefs as “Tutsi”, and classified the rest of the population—the majority—as

---

44 Reyntjens, 1987: 71-77. And Nyrop, 1974: 7, “The *Mwami’s* control was strongest in the immediate areas surrounding the capital, Nyanza, and in areas of easy access, but his control decreased in proportion to the distance vassal chiefs were located from the Mwami's power center.” Also see Linden, 1970: 62, “Rwaza [Habyarimana’s grandfather’s home area] might have been in a different country and the northern Fathers saw themselves almost in a separate mission. The Tutsi were absent except on the Mulera plain.” On the Mwamiship, also see d’Hertefelt, 1960: 61-72; and Maquet, 1954: 117-150 (Maquet’s findings are now disputed because of the small sampling of his research area).

45 Nyrop, op. cit.. “In the Hutu-controlled areas of the northwest there was a continuing struggle for hegemony throughout the history of the kingdom. This area was never brought under the complete control of the Mwami's government, and it is from here that the strongest Hutu influences emanated in the decade preceding independence.” And in Reyntjens, 1987: 72, “In the North and on the Western edge of the Zaire-Nile watershed the authority of the Mwami was more nominal than real.” Also,
Hutu”.46 This rigid social order was reinforced first by the German colonial administration and then the Belgian protectorate.47

Rwabugiri also institutionalized corvée, food prestations, and the igikingi system (in which chiefs appointed by the king held the right to the land, and became a symbol of the “Tutsi’s feudalistic domination over the Hutu”),48 as well as forcibly establishing new capitals in the north.

As the King’s control extended over the outlying principalities, the nature and style of his authority over the whole land changed gradually towards an ever greater administrative centralisation and more authoritarian forms of political control.49

Hutu in the Buama and Bushiru area adjoining Habyarimana’s grandfather’s region had risen in revolt in 1918 against the traditionally-entrenched Tutsi-ruled central government, initiating attacks on isolated Tutsi settlements50 and “refusing to pay traditional prestations (A payment of money for a toll or duty; or the rendering of a service), as well as refusing passage through their territories to Tutsi, which prompted a retaliatory expedition by mwami Musinga to bring the region under control. It was only with the help of the recently installed, though small, German colonial military forces that Mwami Musinga could quell

47 “The Hutu populations of northern Rwanda are also referred to as Kiga (or Chiga) and are ethnically related to the Kiga of the Kigezi district of southern Uganda. Unlike their Uganda kinsmen, however, described by Professor Edel as possessing a ‘basically anarchic structure’, the Kiga of northern Rwanda developed fairly centralized political structures, in which the key figure was a ‘king’ (muhinza). This process of political centralization seems to have occurred in response to the forays of invading Tutsi tribes, or in opposition to the existing threat of a Tutsi centralized system in the south. (Lemarchand 1970: 21). Also see the OAU Panel Report (2000). The Panel concludes: “Together, the Belgians and the Catholic church were guilty of what some call “ethnogenesis” – the institutionalization of rigid ethnic identities for political purposes. The proposition that it was legitimate to politicize and polarize society through ethnic cleavages – to “play the ‘ethnic card’ ” for political advantage, as a later generation would describe the tactic – became integral to Rwandese public life. Ethnogenesis was by no means unknown in other African colonies and, destructive as it has been everywhere, no other genocide has occurred. But it was everywhere a force of great potential consequence and, in Rwanda, it combined with other factors with ultimately devastating consequences”.
the uprising. But even with these periodic repressions, the Hutu inhabitants of Bushiru held out against incorporation into the central kingdom until 1926, when Habyarimana’s father would have been a teenager.

Through Habyarimana’s grandfather’s time, then his father’s, Rwanda was a kingship, with a centralized court having consolidated control through a vertical system of chiefs over most of the area that is now demarcated by the borders of the modern Rwandan state, except for small regions in the northeast, northwest and southwest. During this time it has been likened to a ‘feudal state’, but what keeps it from being analogous to such a system is its lack of villages, markets tying together regions, a burgeoning middle class in the form of merchants, or a sophisticated technological base and system of laws, which are dependent on a writing system. Rwanda at this time was not a pre-modern state, even though having a centralized authority, a type of taxation system, and a warrior class that served as a standing army and national ‘police force’, in the sense of preserving the socio-political organization. It was not a ‘kingdom’ in the European historical sense, its level of development more closely resembling a pre-Roman England, but without the wheel, animal energy used for work, or technological complexity. The first postal bureau didn’t open in Kigali until 1922, and was connected to Burundi and the Belgian Congo as a single organization, with its head office in the Congo’s capital of Leopoldville. In fact, Rwanda didn’t have its own postal administration until 1962, about the same time the first local telephone networks were installed (in Kigali, Gisenyi, and Butare).

51 Linden op. cit.: 22-23.
52 Chronology throughout this paper is based on many sources, including but not limited to Argent (1994), Botte (1985), Dorsey (1994), OAU Report (2000), Steering Committee of the Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda, (1996), and Viret (2010).
CHAPTER 5
HABYARIMANA’S GRANDFATHER / FATHER / HABYARIMANA’S EARLY YEARS

Habyarimana’s Grandfather

Habyarimana’s lineage,1 on his father’s side, within the clan Abungura b'abashusha2, can be counted back twelve generations. He was descended from the last king of Bushiru (as was his future wife—even though his wife’s family was wealthier), and belonged to “a historical line installed in the area in the seventeenth century known as the ‘clearers’, as this area was covered with forests,” and therefore “had the right known as ubukonde”.3 On his mother’s side, the line is from the Nyamamkwa, of the Abagesera clan.4 Vansina provides a brief insight into the nature of a clan’s organization in the Rwandan kingdom as it still existed at the time of Habyarimana’s grandfather’s birth, at the end of the nineteenth century:

Not an unchanging entity that has always existed . . . clans are in fact phenomena that derive from the political arena. . . . Being alliances rather than descent groups, clans were mutable and every umuryango [family] leader could always abandon his

---

1 Kimenyi (n.d.: n. p.), “A lineage is a group of people related by descent from a common ancestry, igisekuru. The name of the lineage comes from the name of the common ancestor.” Reyntjens (1987: 73) gives the following account of lineages: “Among the Hutu the lineage constituted an autonomous political unit which possessed a collective domain and which formed a residential group. The lineage chief, elected by the members, performed political functions (e.g. controlling the use of land and issuing regulations on matters interesting the members of the lineage) and judicial functions (settling disputes among members). The immigrating Tutsi, having developed a politico-administrative system at the macro level, set out to disintegrate the Hutu lineages into smaller units, whose political and judicial prerogatives were gradually usurped by the Tutsi political structures. In this way, the clanic (or totemic) organization of the Hutu was displaced by the political organization of the Tutsi.”

2 According to d’Hertefelt (1971: Annexes Tableau 2), “In 1970, the ethnic distribution of the Abungura clan was 5.84% of the total population and overwhelmingly Hutu, while the Abagesera clan comprised 11.04% of the population, with Hutu enjoying a 2 to 1 majority.” A rough estimate suggests that this distribution is not significantly off the mark from what it must have been forty years earlier, at the time of Habyarimana’s birth, since movement of domicile was greatly restricted, and travel was mostly for seasonal work.

3 Bernard Lugan, 2007, African News, November 29. Ubukonde was a patron-client system whereby land was allocated to a ‘client’, who, in return for its use, had to make payments in labor or goods.

4 Personal information regarding Habyarimana and his family is from interviews and correspondence conducted by the author, and also from Shimamungu, 2004.
clan name and its food taboo to form an affiliation with another one. . . . the
number of lineages composing a clan has constantly varied over time according to
the political adventures of the great families within the region. . . . the lineages that
were believed to have been established in early times and that were met by an
immigrating lineage were all collapsed into a single entity by the latter, whatever
their true origins had been. The immigrants united them all together into a single
‘autochthon clan’. [which they needed] . . . because a ‘godfather’ was required for
all the rituals involving land.”

But, as the German interlopers, and then the Belgian protectorate gained control
and influence, they enacted serious changes—such as taking effective control away from
the mwami, getting rid of many of the chiefs, subchiefs, and courtiers (see Organogram 2),
introducing a cash economy, and establishing a solid network of missions, with their
attendant schools—that undermined the efficacy of the clan, so that by the time of
Habyarimana’s childhood the clan was no longer a primary factor in individual motivation
for jobs or schooling.

---

5 Vansina, 2004: 35. On clans, also see Newbury, D., 1980; Nyagahene, 1997; d’Hertefelt, 1971; and Kagame,
1954.
Organogram 1. Belgian’s Government Structure in Colonial Rwanda

After Dorsey, 1994, p. 52
One example of this change was Habyarimana’s grandfather, Paul Rugwiro (c. 1880-1942), born at the end of Mwami Rwabugiri’s reign (1867-1897). In Rugwiro’s youth there was no writing system and no schools, so he, like everyone else, even the mwami, was illiterate. He led a life that typically consisted of helping cultivate, of feeding or grazing the few cattle his family owned, and of occasionally having time to play. His ‘education’ was a pragmatic one of learning traditional techniques of agriculture and animal husbandry, and his family’s subsistence farming produced some surplus that could be traded for such things as cooking utensils, cloth, and farming tools, such as hoes, pruning knives, and an axe, while livestock provided manure for the fields. Family members supplied adequate labor for the fields, so there was no need for hired help. Some years it was difficult to barter for enough seeds because of drought or cattle disease. Meals were simple, perhaps only sweet potatoes and beans (no meat), porridge and water. Milk was not customarily consumed.

As the twentieth century dawned, Rugwiro was a young man, the Germans were attempting a limited governing policy of indirect rule in Ruanda-Burundi, and the first missionaries had arrived. Rugwiro, a large man (and from whom Habyarimana may have inherited his stature), was the first in his lineage to step outside the traditional ways of making a living, by working as a cook for the White Fathers, a Roman Catholic missionary organization, which in 1914 founded the local parish near Rugwiro’s home. Rugwiro was

---

6 Linden, 1970: 64. In Carney (p. 91): “Tutsi elites like the Catholic priest and royal biru Alexis Kagame thanked White Father missionaries for developing the written Kinyarwanda language that facilitated the cultural renaissance of the 1930s and 1940s, noting that “religious formation is an irreplaceable element in the initiation of Black Africa to Western civilization.”

7 “Extended households were the basic unit of society in both Ruanda and Urundi and continue as such in the present. ... Within the enclosed yard, nuclear families occupy separate houses and operate as independent units for purposes of cooking, drawing water, getting firewood, and so on. However, herds are often cared for in common, though individual ownership is clearly and explicitly defined.” (Albert, 1960: 52).
able to engage in work with the missionaries because the mission in his area was situated far from the central court and its influence. But he still raised goats and sheep, like others in the area. His house, built from bamboo and thatch, with earth packed between the bamboo, was about 50 meters below his son’s; this would allow the son to more easily take care of Rugwiro and his wife, Nyirankera, in old age—particularly important because Nyirankera’s legs were paralyzed from an accidental fall and she had to be carried from place to place.\(^8\)

Being employed by the priests, and having land, allowed Rugwiro to live a secure and relatively well-off life, even though intermittently threatened by the vicissitudes of drought, pests and disease, an outbreak of which killed almost all the cattle in the kingdom in 1895. Indeed, he would have been among a very few individuals who seized the chance or were called upon to work with foreigners, as the kingdom had largely been sealed off from foreign trade or contact throughout its history.

It is not known how Rugwiro obtained his job with the White Fathers, but his initiative was to greatly benefit his family and pave the way for his son to become a catechist, which in turn would lead to Habyarimana being raised in close touch with an educated, Catholic environment. In the most immediate sense, Rugwiro, being a Hutu, couldn’t have failed to realize the advantages of working for a powerful group independent of the mwami’s (king) court, especially when it allowed him to avoid paying prestations to the Tutsi overlords. It is impossible to know whether his adoption of the Catholic faith was sincere or not, but, concerning his decision to work for the missionaries, rather beside

\(^8\) Much of the information in this section about the personal lives of Habyarimana’s grandparents and parents are from personal communications with Habyarimana’s brother, Bararengana, and from Shimamungu, 2004.
the point. What must have been clear to him was the prospect of a better life. And who is to say there was not an element of adventure beckoning an untraveled and illiterate man to accompany ‘exotic’, robed men of God among distant hills he would not otherwise have been able to see. Perhaps this history of daring subsequently emboldened the grandson to go off to college in a distant town in the Congo.

Walking among the hills, meeting people from different areas (something very rare in itself, as hill communities were essentially insulated socially, even considering transient workers travelling to fro from neighboring countries, especially Southern Uganda), and constantly being in the company of the missionaries, Rugwiro necessarily enlarged his world and, by extension, that of his son, whereby new, European views, existed alongside traditional views for the first time—not only in the clan’s history, but in the history of the kingdom. By the time Habyarimana was born, the missions’ intrusions into the lives of ordinary Rwandans had already sown the seeds of a social self-awareness among the Hutu that would have otherwise been long retarded, which delay might have conceivably resulted in the Tutsi mwamiship transitioning straight through the country’s independence from Belgium into a Tutsi minority-led government, as happened in its southern neighbor, Burundi.9

9 However, Burundi’s social-political structure differed significantly from Rwanda’s in terms of the mwami’s relation to the chiefs, who, for example, were relatively independent of the machinations of a central court, and thus operated with considerably greater freedom and power.
**Habyarimana’s Father**

A thriving peasant-farmer Church\(^{10}\) grew up around the individual mission stations in the first decades of the twentieth century, and Habyarimana’s father, Jean-Baptiste Ntibazilikana, born in 1904, embraced the Catholic faith handed down from his father, and was among the first baptized by the White Fathers missionaries in the region. Religiously devout, he became a catechist\(^{11}\) at the Rambura Parish. He had large responsibilities in the religious activities of the mission and helped the White Fathers spread Christian teachings throughout the Bushiru region surrounding Gasiza, in the northwest province of Gisenyi, and was held in high regard by the locals.\(^{12}\) His duties, for which he would have received a modest salary, would have included preparing children for the sacraments, conducting baptisms and confirmations, teaching converts, and giving Sunday prayer service.\(^{13}\) In addition he would have traveled often to service outstations among the many surrounding hills, being away from home for up to a week.

His marriage to Suzanne Nyirazuba, also a Catholic, and a woman from the Nyamakwa\(^{14}\) line of the *Abagesera* clan, linked to a former king of Bushiru, was also of service in elevating his position among the hill communities. Suzanne, born the same year

---

\(^{10}\) “The big parishes there [in Ruanda] have as many faithfuls as our most important parishes in Belgium.” (Editorial, *Tornade, Grands Lacs*, 1 March 1935), cited in Bhattacharyya, 1967: 50. Also, Bhattacharyya: 51, “Although only one tenth of the Ruandais were converted in 1935, the figure had risen from less than 50,000 in 1930 to over 150,000 five years later . . . by 1947, 48 Chiefs were Catholic . . . of the subchiefs, 563 were Catholic . . . by 1951, the Catholics claimed to have converted 1,012, 294 Christians and had 386,392 catechumens.”

\(^{11}\) A teacher of the principles of Christian religion.

\(^{12}\) Linden *op. cit.*, p. 6.

\(^{13}\) From author’s communication with Linden.

\(^{14}\) Habyarimana’s mother is from the powerful Nyamakwa line of the *Abagesera* clan. Nyamakwa was the king of Bushiru (d. 1926). Habyarimana’s mother often visited Nyamakwa’s youngest son, a respected statesman and one of the last Hutu chiefs to resist the Belgian-sponsored Tutsi dominance in the Bushiru area. His son, Noël Mbonabaryi, was Habyarimana’s uncle. Noël’s sons were Interahamwe. One of them, Leon, was a close friend of Habyarimana’s son. Habyarimana’s father-in-law, Gervais Magera, is also from the *Abagesera* clan. Col. Rwendeye Magera (the President’s brother-in-law) was a leader of the MRND party. (Shimamungu, 2004: 31); and see Serushago, 1998: 3-5.
as Jean-Baptiste, was among the first Rwandans baptized, along with her husband. She, also, became a catechist, traveling the hills to minister to the women, and is remembered as being sweet and calm, with a notable tenderness.

Jean-Baptiste and his wife (Jean-Baptiste in a somewhat more authoritarian manner) taught the children to be disciplined, obedient, and to respect others (especially those who were older), and to welcome people, even strangers, into their home. In the clan Abungura, he was regarded with respect for his wisdom, and others turned to him to resolve differences. Habyarimana’s bother has related that Habyarimana was clearly influenced by the home environment.15

Jean-Baptiste and Suzanne went to mass almost every day because they lived close to the mission. They were on good terms with everyone, although some were probably jealous of them because of their relations with the priests, which gave them a special status in the community, as well as some protection. They owned three parcels of land: one on which their house sat, and was shared with subsistence crops; the two other parcels were remote from the house, about five kilometers each, and were also used for subsistence crops for the family, as well as for raising goats or sheep, which provided a stable source of income and a comfortable life that allowed them to save some money. From that money, certain school expenses were paid, the Church and state paying for most, but round-trip travel costs were the families’ responsibility. It is not clear if or how much money he received for his work as a catechist, but in southern Uganda, just across the border from Rwanda, the organization of White Fathers paid catechists £50 per annum in 1920, which

15 Habyarimana’s bother quoted from correspondence with author.
would have been about 733 Belgian francs per month.\textsuperscript{16} Sometime before 1945, Jean-Baptiste had a fired-brick house with a tile roof built, situated about a kilometer, by the shortest route, from the Catholic mission. It had three rooms and a salon, which was quite advanced for its time, in contrast with the local houses, which were made from bamboo and covered with thatch.

Jean-Baptiste knew how to read and write because of his apprenticeship to the White Fathers, and was sensitive to the importance of literacy,\textsuperscript{17} sending all his children to mission schools, which provided an opportunity for an education they otherwise would not have had. Suzanne, also because of her duties as a catechist, had some reading and writing skills, and shared her husband’s valuation of education, helping to make sure the children didn’t miss class.\textsuperscript{18}

Jean-Baptiste and Suzanne were just two of the many hundreds of catechists in Rwanda by the time of Habyarimana’s birth in 1937, who made it possible for the Roman Catholic Church to rapidly spread the gospel and increase converts in a fashion that would otherwise have been impossible to do.\textsuperscript{19} J. D. Fage’s description helps us visualize the

\textsuperscript{16} Herman Van der Wee, 2012: n.p.
\textsuperscript{17} “Catholic education became increasingly important to maintaining and developing the community. Along with the catechists, Catholic teachers brought many Africans into the Catholic community, which came to the 1960s remarkably well prepared for the momentous changes in Africa and in the Roman Catholic Church.” Lettinga, 2011: n.p.
\textsuperscript{18} In Carney (p. 59): “Catholic schools educated Hutu throughout the 1910s and 1920s, and the Catholic seminary remained one of the only avenues for Hutu advancement in colonial Rwanda. Writing in the Belgian magazine Congo in 1922, Classe rejected the notion of inherent Tutsi intellectual superiority and hinted at the complexity of the Hutu-Tutsi distinction: I would say that the Tutsi are not, in general, more intelligent than the Hutu…Tutsi refers not to origin but social condition, a state of fortune…whoever is a chief, or is rich, will often be called Tutsi. Carney, (p. 66, note 129): “Hutu enrollment in the Group Scolaire never rose above 5% until the mid-1950s. Between 1946 and 1954, 389 Tutsi and 16 Hutu enrolled.”
\textsuperscript{19} The missionaries’ success was widespread in many parts of Africa: “The catechists were responsible for a huge increase in the numbers of Christians, particularly in Igboland, southern Nigeria, where the Catholic community grew from 5,000 in 1900 to 74,000 in 1912. All of this happened with a total of 30 Catholic missionaries, only half of them priests, and most of them unable to speak Igbo.” Lettinga 2011: n.p.. Also see Fage and Oliver 2008: 167-168, “In the inter-war period much of the secular prestige of the catechists was to pass eventually to the trained schoolteachers,
range of catechismal duties that obtained in much of sub-Saharan Africa at the time, and from among which Jean-Baptiste and Suzanne might have been required to perform:

In the local communities the catechist . . . gaining much of his conscious motivation from the eager response of a first-generation convert, nevertheless also assumed many of the functions of the traditional diviner and ritual expert. It was the catechist who, often with the help of a group of Christian elders, had to solve problems and reconcile disputes, lead prayers for those in sickness or troubled by the power of evil, prepare the perplexed for confession, and finally comfort and baptize the dying. . . The majority of catechists were given little or no training and lived in their villages, passing on some rudiments of literacy and imparting to both children and adults a knowledge of the catechism often painstakingly acquired by rote. In contrast to these were the relatively few catechists who received formal education.20 They became the itinerant, professional supervisors of bush schools or lived at the central station assisting the missionaries full-time. . . . In their different spheres, both groups of catechists enjoyed in these early decades considerable prestige [my italics]. In part this was derived from their successful acquisition—however slight—of some of the missionaries’ skills, but it also reflected their position in a spiritual universe which combined both new and traditional elements.21

The advantage of living close to, as well as being connected with, the Church was that it placed Habyarimana’s parents in a new world, one quite different in organization and potential than that offered by traditional farming, or that pertained under the generally oppressive rule of the central kingdom: local parishes were much more than spiritual hubs, the Church built health centers, introduced new crops and farming techniques, and began money-making projects to attract public interest.

Rapid and major political changes and slower economic developments began to alter the texture of society. While the old feudal system apparently survived intact through the 1930s, within it new types of relationships grew up with employment

---

20 “Most African Catholics owed their conversion to black African catechists, persons who were largely untrained and certainly unordained, but who were deputised to preach the gospel and develop Catholic communities throughout Africa.” Lettinga, 2011: n.p.
21 Fage and Oliver, op. cit..
opportunities afforded by the Church and Belgian administration. Educated Hutu took to teaching, cash cropping, truck driving and a host of part-time jobs as carpenters, masons, seasonal plantation labour, or they emigrated for periods to Uganda.

Thus, the Church possessed substantial independent resources which it distributed in much the same manner as chiefs, obtaining support from the population by providing them with consumer goods, seeds, health care, and other amenities. Yet, in many instances the old structure of the patron-client relationship persisted in the social mentality even as circumstances changed because of the appearance of the missions:

“From early on missionaries were integrated into Rwanda's patron-client system, with converts attaching themselves to the missions like clients, expecting protection and assistance from the missionaries, whom they viewed as patrons”. . . . their need for land, labour and cattle drew the White Fathers into clientship relationships.” (Linden, p. 61). “The catechumenate, [in 1904] defined increasingly by the Hutu as allegiance to the Fathers, became a particularly rewarding form of clientship, bestowing both wealth and protection.(Linden, p. 62). “The Fathers were powerful men and there was only one relationship in the experience of the Hutu which was appropriate to dealings with the powerful, that of clientship. To become a catechumen for the peasants represented, among other things, a formal submission to the white invaders. . . . The young Church bore the impress of the society around it.”

22 . . . despite the heavy burden imposed by the colonial powers, they opened for the first time off-farm opportunities and thus offered the possibility for Bahutu to escape degenerating clientship ties and to shape elements of group cohesion against Batutsi oppression (Baechler, 1988: 130, citing Newbury 1988: 210).
23 Linden, 1970: 3. For a good sense of the types of jobs and life styles Hutu (and Tutsi) had privy to in the region around Astrida, south-central Rwanda, see the collected biographies of Codere (1973). Also see Albert (1960: 66), “In general, the Ruandans seem to appraise what they see of European culture as holding out to them the opportunity to increase their prestige and power, and they tend to act to make it as much as possible their own. . . . The people of Ruanda are far more aggressive and demanding in relation to the Belgian administration than those of Urundi. Ruandans not infrequently write strong letters of complaint or demand to European officials, even going so far as to write directly to the Belgian king. . . . Ruandans are more frequently the authors of statements published in newspapers in which they press vigorously and aggressively for their own interests or criticize those of whom they disapprove or with whom they disagree.”
24 As Linden (op. cit.: 223-224, note 9) writes, “Both Hutu and Tutsi chiefs were able to translate their spiritual authority into a temporal sway over their parishioners. Members of an Abbe's family tended to settle around his mission or to find employment there, and as Father Superior he was able to build up a network of clients, often becoming a confidant of the local chief.”
Church education affected society on two significant levels: on the one hand, working as a feeder for religious vocations and for jobs in the civil service, and on the other hand inculcating dogma in the peasantry through a minimal literacy intended only to facilitate the spread of religion. It upheld until the middle 1950s the inegalitarian socio-political system, allocating the most educated students from among those in its schools (of which it had a monopoly) to religious and bureaucratic duties and positions, filling the country with clerics and future civil servants, first in the colonial administration, and then in the nascent Hutu government of President Kayibanda.

The students’ lack of exposure to a practical curricula or a rich social milieu of villages and towns lay outside the Church’s purview—it’s primary purpose was to build missions as a community endeavor with the mission at the center, from where converts would fan out into the hills. Outside the Church’s influence there was little pressure to change: the vast majority of people were minimally subsisting on their meager individual plots of land, working with no more sophisticated tools than a hoe and machete. But neither was there much opportunity to change, because the territory was landlocked, the

---

26 Linden (1977: 243, n 71) “There were only 296 men being given trade and craft training in all Ruanda-Urundi in 1952 . . .” (ibid: 196-197) “. . . before the 1940s, all the available white-collar jobs were in the public sector as clerks, hospital workers and a few in veterinary medicine and agriculture. Entry to the Brothers of Charity school at Astrida (Butare) was pegged at fifty per annum . . . Pupils entered the school in 1933 aged thirteen to fifteen for a basic three-year course in humanities followed by a specialized professional or vocational training. The day began with mass and a lesson in Christian doctrine. Teaching was in French. The school was . . . almost entirely Tutsi . . . and when the first products of Astrida emerged in 1940 a new distinction arose in the Tutsi elite between a Nyanza ‘old guard’ and the new men, the ‘Astridiens’. These school loyalties were to play an important part in the politics of the 1950s . . . . The closing of Nyanza marked the end of a major wave of amalgamations and fusions of chieftaincies; there were no longer enough new sub-chieftaincies to keep up Tutsi interest in the school . . . .no useful purpose would be served by opening any new trade schools while existing bricklayers, carpenters and masons were unemployed. The essential characteristic of education between the wars was that it served only the Tutsi . . . . Within this system the Church was the handmaid of the State . . . . Conditions at Kabgayi were harsh, but no harsher than life on the hills; . . . Swahili and Kinyarwanda were forbidden, and the pupils were obliged to speak French or Latin to each other. They entered at the age of eighteen to twenty and followed a three-year course in philosophy, followed by five years of theology, Then came a trial period as sub-deacons when they spent a year or two in a parish before the diaconate and ordination. . . . Only deacons were allowed to wear shoes, and all seminarians were cut off from their families for almost ten years . . . . Each year [only] four or five men emerged as Roman Catholic priests . . . .”
overwhelming preponderance of hills made large-scale farming impossible, and Rwanda was surrounded by undeveloped and non-prosperous neighboring territories. This ‘isolated’ condition continued well into Habyarimana’s presidency: the Congo, on its western side, was criminally exploited for its natural resources, first by the Belgians, then by President Mobutu; Tanzania, on the eastern border, looked inward under president Nyerere’s *Ujamaa* (villagisation) scheme that focused on self-sufficiency; to the south, Burundi’s Tutsi leadership was hostile to Rwanda’s Hutu government and as undeveloped as Rwanda; and Uganda, on the northern border, trafficked illegal diamonds, gold, coltan, and other natural resources from the Congo to Nairobi, via a route that bypassed Rwanda to the west. The southwestern part of Uganda fronting Rwanda also contained a large population of refugee Tutsi who had fled the pogroms of the early 1960s, and in that respect was not an area amenable for the development of trade.

Added to these obstacles to economic development, the Tutsi monarchy had prohibited foreign traders from entering the country until well into the early part of the twentieth century.\(^{27}\) Therefore, because of no easy access to the coast, a tertiary educational policy centered on Christian religious discipleship, a colonial and Church structure that kept the Tutsi monarchy in place into the late 1950s, an economic philosophy that was unable to envision anything other than a subsistence agriculture and the mono-export of coffee, the country that Kayibanda helped bring into existence in 1962 resembled nothing of what is meant by a modern state. Under his presidency, the creation of a constitution, and the emergence of a small national police force, a nascent indigenous

\(^{27}\) The Church supported this ban because most of the traders were Muslim.
army, along with the construction of Rwanda’s first university, put the country on a path toward operating as a sovereign state, but the new country would have foundered and collapsed without foreign aid, in the form of funds and donated projects (such as roads, factories, dams and bridges, schools, and hospitals). What Habyarimana inherited in 1974, his first year in power, was a country closer to a chiefdom than to a modern socio-political and economic entity.

**Habyarimana’s Early Years**

Juvénal Habyarimana was born March 8th, 1937, in Gasiza, Gisenyi province, in the far northwest of Rwanda, five kilometers from the border with Uganda, and ten kilometers from Ruhengeri. His father baptized his new son ‘Habyarimana’ after a Rwandan proverb, “Habyara Imana”\(^\text{28}\), abantu bakarera” (“God gives children, humans but raise them”).\(^\text{29}\) Habyarimana grew up in a very pious household, becoming an ardent attendant at Mass and a member of special classes. The family offered prayers every evening with the neighbors, either at the neighbors house or theirs, in rotation. Habyarimana was the fourth child in a large family (Table 1); he had three brothers and four sisters. His brother Mélani Nzabakikante (d. 1988), born after Habyarimana, became a community policeman, then a local government counselor. The next youngest brother, Séraphin Bararengana, was brilliant at medical studies, and became a professor on the faculty of medicine at the

\(^{28}\) *Imana* means ‘God’, and is used fairly commonly in names. Also of interest: Rwandans do not carry over paternal or maternal family names (such as Smith, as in the West.), but create a new name for each child. Especially noteworthy is the use of French for ‘first’ names (in almost every case) after the Church arrived—the first two presidents a case in point: Grégoire and Juvénal.

Table 1. Habyarimana’s Grandparents, Parents, and Siblings (as of 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Place, date of birth</th>
<th>Place, date, cause of death</th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Residence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paul Rugwiro (paternal grandfather)</td>
<td>Bushiru</td>
<td>Rambura</td>
<td>farmer, breeder</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyirankera (paternal grandmother)</td>
<td>Bushiru</td>
<td>Rambura</td>
<td>farmer</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mvuye (maternal grandfather)</td>
<td>Bushiru</td>
<td>Mwiyanike</td>
<td>farmer</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mukerwa (maternal grandmother)</td>
<td>Bushiru</td>
<td>Mwiyanike</td>
<td>farmer</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ntibazirikana, Jean Baptiste (H’s father)</td>
<td>Rambura, 1904</td>
<td>Kigali, 19 July 1973, asthma attack</td>
<td>farmer, breeder, catechist</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suzanne Nyirazuba (H’s mother)</td>
<td>Mwiyanike, 1904</td>
<td>Kabgayi, 17 Aug. 1967</td>
<td>farmer</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Céline Ahobamboneye, (sister)</td>
<td>Rambura, 1930</td>
<td>Rambura, 27 Feb. 2007</td>
<td>farmer</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nturoziraga, Concessa a.k.a. Sister Télesphore (sister)</td>
<td>Rambura, 1932</td>
<td>Living</td>
<td>nun</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barushywanubusa, Joséphine, a.k.a. Sister Godelieve (sister)</td>
<td>Rambura, 1934</td>
<td>Living</td>
<td>nun</td>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habyarimana, Juvénal</td>
<td>Rambura, 1937</td>
<td>assassinated</td>
<td>president</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nzabakikante, Melani (brother)</td>
<td>Rambura, 1940</td>
<td>Ruhengeri, 1988, then retired</td>
<td>national police</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bandiho, Euphrasie (sister)</td>
<td>Rambura, 1942</td>
<td>Jende, 1997</td>
<td>farmer</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bararengana, Séraphin (brother)</td>
<td>Rambura, 1945</td>
<td>Living</td>
<td>doctor</td>
<td>Gabon (2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uwayezu, Télesphore (brother)</td>
<td>Rambura, 1950</td>
<td>Kigali, 3 July 1983, car accident</td>
<td>merchant</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The baby of the family, Télésphore Uwayezu, ran a business with his truck, but was killed in 1983 in a motor accident. Of the sisters, and the oldest child, Céline Ahobamboneye (d. 2007) became a housewife, living in Uganda with her second husband. The next-born two sisters, Concessa Nturoziraga and Joséphine Barushwanubusa, became nuns, known as Sister Télésphore and Sister Godelieve, respectively. The youngest sister, Euphrasie Bandiho (d. 1997), lived on a farm in the Bushiru area. It is perhaps a little surprising that none of Habyarimana’s siblings worked for the government, nor followed him into politics. This lack of immediate family involvement in affairs of state would seem to contrast oddly with the opinion of those who believe that Habyarimana’s relatives were deeply involved in running his presidency as part of a behind-the-scenes group called the Akazu.

Education from Habyarimana’s father’s time, besides training catechists, also had the purpose of training assistants for local colonial administrators, cash crop production (coffee and tea) for export, and Train auxiliaries to assist the colonial masters for local administration, agricultural production of cash crops for export and implementing forced labor. Did the young Habyarimana witness in his community this usage of peasants by the Church? And did it have an influence, perhaps unconscious, on his attitude toward community volunteer labor, umuganda, that he enforced when president? Certainly, the type of government he formed mirrored, in effect, an authoritarian, hierarchical approach toward agricultural production.  

---

30 République Rwandaise (2006, n.p.), “Rwandans were not given the chance to develop skills of leadership, decision-making and creativity, neither were they given professional and technical training in fields like medicine, agriculture, engineering and veterinary medicine which would have benefited the country. It was noted that this type of training was later to entrench a culture of lack of self-confidence, dependence and passive submissiveness among
resulted in the first significant migrations to neighboring territories, it is possible that that state of affairs might have influenced President Habyarimana’s proscription against citizens’ free movement inside the country—was he afraid of losing to other countries the labor for producing the export cash crops on which his government so heavily depended?

As a boy, Habyarimana’s home life can be supposed as being much like his brother Séraphin’s description of his own childhood:

My routine task when I was in primary school was to graze the cattle (goats and sheep) outside my class hours. During the holidays I would also graze the cattle, or accompany my parents for work in the fields. When I was in secondary school, during the holidays I participated in rural work—cutting trees, splitting them and transporting the wood home for cooking fires and for heating the house. The work of catechism was for grown-ups.31

The family’s diet consisted of “potatoes, sweet potatoes, French beans (imiteja), flageolet beans and dry beans, young and dry peas, green vegetables boiled with sorghum and dough of sorghum, dregs of beer of sorghum (ibiteri), young corn (ibigori) and dry corn, colocase (taro) or gourd (ibihaza), rarely goat's meat (never mutton), very rarely beef, and very rarely also, green or ripe bananas.”32

Concerning the Church’s place in their young lives, Habyarimana’s younger brother adds,

The Catholic religion certainly had an influence on us all. We were in a Christian environment of prayer, and Christian values such as love, honesty, humility, respect, defense and the protection of the weak, and the welcoming of strangers. Our parents, followers of the Catholic faith, lived these values, and so gave us the example to follow. I remember that, since I was around the age of seven, we offered prayers every evening with the neighbors, either at their house or ours, in rotation.

Rwandans.” (Also see Lemarchand (1970: 43 especially, 44, 260, 496), on the concept of Hutu low self-esteem.
31 Correspondence with Séraphin Bararengana, Habyarimana’s younger brother.
32 Ibid.
By the time Habyarimana was born, the Catholic missionaries had established 338 primary schools with 22,645 pupils and a working force of 553 teachers.\textsuperscript{33} We have some idea of Habyarimana’s primary school experience through his brother’s recollection of his own schooling:

I do not know when the first schools in the region were founded. But before 1914, there was already a project of setting-up a catholic mission in the region. This project was stopped by World War I and had to start again after the war. The uniform at our school was shorts and a short-sleeved shirt, khaki color for the boys, and a blue dress for the girls. There were few Tutsi pupils in the region. In fact, nationwide, Tutsi who were in the regions of the North of Rwanda (Gisenyi, Ruhengeri, Byumba) were essentially Tutsi who came from the Center and from the South of Rwanda to work in the administration of the North as Chiefs, second-in-commands, assistants, and so forth. Tutsi children were, thus, children of these professionals and their entourage. In school, their number was small compared with Hutu students. In my time, the boys pupils were more numerous that the girl pupils. The parents were not yet made aware of the necessity of sending girls to school. In primary school, texts were written in \textit{Kinyarwanda} for the first three years, in French and \textit{Kinyarwanda} for the second cycle. In grammar school, all the books were in French. Subjects which I studied in primary school: essentially, arithmetic, history, geography, and French (2nd cycle). As regards my 6\textsuperscript{th} year of grammar school, we were approximately about twenty students, and the majority were able to go to secondary school.\textsuperscript{34}

Shimamungu gives this additional picture of Habyarimana’s early schooling:

At eight, Habyarimana entered primary school at Rambura, a five-year academic course of study—he completed his sixth primary year at the Catholic mission in Nyundo. Located not far from Ntebe (seat of the government) in Nyamakwa, the Catholic mission produced four (Habyarimana, Nsekaliye, Serubuga, Buregeya) of the eleven “Comrades of July 5\textsuperscript{th}”, as the members of the CPUN were known. It was from this mission, as well, that the first Rwandan woman academic, Gaudence Nyirasafali, graduated. This mission became a vicarage and later a bishopric (diocese). It was a scholarly center that provided an elite education to thousands of school children in northwest Rwanda before sending them to the first course of secondary school.\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{33} République Rwandaise, 2006, n.p.
\textsuperscript{34} Bararengana, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{35} Shimamungu, op. cit.: 34.
Map 3: Habyarimana’s Primary and Secondary Schools, and Catholic Missions, c. 1937-57

Catholic Mission Stations & Vicariates

- **Rambura Mission**: Habyarimana’s birthplace, childhood home, and location of his 5-year primary school
- **Nyundo Mission**: Where Habyarimana attended 6th year primary school and met Nsekaluge, Senubuga, and Buregeya (future Comrades of July 5th).
- **Petit Séminaire of Kabayi**: Where Habyarimana attended secondary school.
- **Bushuru Province**: At time of Habyarimana’s birth.
- **Gisenyi Province**: (incorporated Bushuru at time of Habyarimana’s presidency).
- **Rwandan Road System, 1935**: (mostly unpaved)
At the end of the 6th year, Habyarimana was admitted to the Petit Séminaire of Kabgayi at Gitarama. Situated in the center of Rwanda, then the seat of the apostolic vicarage, Kabgayi played an historic role in the formation of future founders and executives of the republic, like Kayibanda.

At the Petit Séminaire in Kabgayi, Habyarimana met his future ministers and collaborators. Among others were: Thaddée Bagaragaza, Déogratias Gashonga, Célestin Kabanda, Antoine Nyilinkindi, Simon Ntigashira, Juvénal Renzaho, and Matthieu Ngirumpatse. Already recognized for his abilities in fourth-year Latin by his teachers, his classmates had dubbed him Jupiter totus because of the intellectual abilities that had allowed him to dominate in all subjects. Habyarimana’s brother’s following account gives some additional, personal information about schooling at that time:

Subjects I studied in secondary school: religion, Kinyarwanda, French, English, Latin, Greek, history, geography, arithmetic, elementary algebra, plain and solid geometry, civics, aesthetics and physical education, elements of the theory of functions, the rectilinear trigonometry, the elements of physics and chemistry. These subjects are shown on my certificate of six years of General Humanities, Greco-Latin section, and with this certificate I was eligible to enroll at university and other higher education, with the exception of the physical and mathematical

36 Daily life at the major seminary of Nyakibanda: “The day started at dawn, at 5.30 a.m., with a cold shower! After meditation, prayers and mass, we were given breakfast. . . . At the start of the cycle, there were around 30 pupils in each class; two-thirds of them would complete the training, which lasted six years. We all knew each other and we knew that our paths would cross throughout our life. We learned psychology, accountancy or foreign languages, alongside theology and philosophy. Historical criticism of the Bible was stimulating, both for our intellect and for our faith. . . . Sometimes I would run about 20 kilometres . . . before dawn, to keep fit. This served me well later: when I became a parish priest in Muyunzwe, I had no means of transport and I used to run from parish to parish. Sometimes I covered more than 40 kilometres in half a day . . . after lunch, we returned to the classroom. The teaching methods were quite classical. Most of our teachers were Rwandan priests supported by religious officials from Europe. . . . I also owe a lot to Félicien Muvara [a Tutsi auxiliary Bishop, killed at the beginning of the genocide]. . . . I used to go and see him and we would have long discussions. He was an upright man, with great integrity, which caused him a number of problems. . . . President Habyarimana himself was openly hostile towards him” (Sibomana, 1997: 10-11). On Habyarimana and the “Muvara affair” see Mureme, 2012: 583-587.
37 Bagaragaza (foreign minister, head of presidential guard, future Député national and Ministre du Plan et de la Coopération internationale) was killed in the president’s plane on 6 April 1994; Gashonga (foreign minister); Kabanda (permanent representative to UN); Nyilinkindi (Ambassador to Zaire); Ntigashira (director National Museum); Renzaho (foreign affairs advisor); and Ngirumpatse (ambassador posts, Minister of Justice, president of MRND party) was sentenced to life imprisonment by the ICTR for participation in the genocide.
38 Shimamungu, op. cit.: 34.
In my time at school, the teachers at primary school were all Rwandan and lay people, except for the 6th year, when I had a Rwandan clergyman, who taught arithmetic. In primary school, the courses were taught in *Kinyarwanda* the first 3 years, then in French the last 3 years. In grammar school, everything was in French. It was not compulsory to go to mass. On the other hand, a course on religion was part of the education program, because the school was Catholic. In primary school, school expenses were taken care of by the State. In secondary school, the big part of expenses was taken care of by the State, and the people in charge of negotiating foreign aid for schools were often European, mainly Belgian. For our studies, the parents participated a small amount in school expenses. They had to pay the travel expenses to and from school for the holidays. For that purpose, my father had to sell goats and sheep. (When Habyarimana entered the army, he took over from our father the cost of my tuition fees). Parents were responsible for ‘minimal’ expenses, which represented a small percentage with regard to the total cost.

Celestin Kabanda, an old friend of Habyarimana’s, offered the following recollection of Habyarimana and school:

I have known him as classmate, as Chief of the Army, as Minister, as Head of State. He and I were admitted at the same time in the same High School (Petit Séminaire de Kabgayi) in 1951. We were 60 students. Our objective was to become priests of the Catholic Church. “While we were in Grade 6, our group was split into two classes, each one with 30 students. Juvenal was in one class and me in the other. But, starting from the 5th to the 3rd Grades [we counted downwards, from 6 to 1], we were school mates. Each year, Juvenal had the best score (as far as points were concerned). He was indeed a hard worker. “We were not together anymore, starting from the Second Grade: Juvenal decided to move to another High School, in another part of the country.”

The emphasis on instruction being in French in the later years of primary school and secondary school, to the exclusion of the native language, *Kinyarwanda*, would seem to point to one reason for Habyarimana’s correspondence with Mitterrand’s France, unavoidably pretending to play a role in a francophone presence in Africa in order to gain valuable French assistance (monetarily and militarily). Also of note in the education

---

39 Author’s correspondence with Celestin Kabanda.
system in the northern area’s schools is the paucity of Tutsi students, although most of the native instructors would have been Tutsi. Habyarimana is reputed to have had Tutsi friends while growing up, but the lack of contact with many Tutsi students (because of few Tutsis living in the area), who would have been mostly sons of chiefs and subchiefs, and who would have considered themselves superior to others, and because of Habyarimana’s experience with intelligent Tutsi teachers, who worked in the service to the Church’s educational philosophy and not to an isolating (or separatist) concept of minority kingship, could possibly explain why Habyarimana wasn’t among the rabid Hutu Power faction enrolled around President Kayibanda and his party’s racist platform, from the 1960s.

---

40 Education was used as early as the 1920s to divide Rwandans: Children at schools were put in distinct categories of Hutu (commons) or Tutsi (royals). Children of Tutsi chiefs were favored and admitted to ‘Astrida Secondary School’ to prepare them for service in the colonial administration. The colonialsists used the divide and rule strategy by grooming the Tutsi for leadership and excluding the Hutu children, who received Education generally from the seminaries. This was a contributing factor to trouble in the late 1950s and subsequent conflicts in Rwanda. (République Rwandaise, 2006, n.p.).
CHAPTER 6

KAYIBANDA’S EARLY YEARS / LÉON CLASSE INSTITUTE / CATHOLIC
ACTION AND THE START OF THE HUTU MOVEMENT / OFFICE OF SCHOOL
INSPECTION / KINYAMATEKA AS POLITICAL PLATFORM

Kayibanda’s Early Years

Habyarimana’s life in the years after leaving university studies in the Congo is inextricably connected with the life of Grégoire Kayibanda, leader of the independence movement, and Rwanda’s first president. In 1961, as a result of independence from the Belgian Trusteeship, the territory of “Ruanda-Urundi” split into the nations of Rwanda and Burundi. Statehood necessitated that Rwandan create an army, as well as a national police. The formation of an indigenous army led to the creation of a new officer’s training facility, l’École d’Officiers (EO)\(^1\), Kigali. It was after graduating from this facility that Habyarimana started his career in the military, and subsequently was picked by Kayibanda, who was in his first year as president, to head the nascent national army. Kayibanda’s and his colleagues’ construction of a first national constitution, and a government structure based on the premise of a republican democracy, but functioning as a de facto ethnic\(^2\) Hutu one-party state, set a precedent which existed eleven years, after which Habyarimana became heir to it, after a coup d’état, as the second president of the country. PART THREE, CHAPTERS 9 & 10, will examine how Kayibanda came to lead a successful independence movement and establish his brand of socio-political structure on the fledgling state of Rwanda, and his failure that led to Habyarimana’s coup d’état.

---

\(^1\) Neretse, 2010.

\(^2\) This paper will use ‘ethnic’ as defined in Lemarchand (1972; 69, n5): “denoting loyalty to a community detached from its traditional government, in an urban setting.”
Grégoire Kayibanda, the “father” of the Rwandan state and Rwanda’s first elected president, was born in 1924, thirteen years before Habyarimana, at Tare, about 20 miles southwest of the capital, Kigali. He lived close to the Tutsi central government in the center of Rwanda, 70 kilometers from Habyarimana’s birthplace in the northwest (Map 4). His parents were peasant-farmers, having small holdings of bananas, coffee plants, and other crops.

Kayibanda was one of 13 children, of whom only five survived past childhood.3 His parents’ producing so many offspring was in keeping with traditional attitudes concerning the need for large families (even into the 1980s, fertility rates averaged around seven births per household), as well as an adherence to the Catholic Church’s opposition to birth control. Kayibanda, in turn, had ten children of his own. This obedience to Church policy, in the face of an exploding population, was sanctioned and continued by Habyarimana (8 siblings, 8 children) deep into his presidency, a policy instrumental in Rwanda being the most densely populated country in Africa. (The resultant stress on the land, and the negative effect on the economy, greatly added to the seriously over-burdened government’s growing inability to provide basic services, and caused increasing food shortages, which were tragically exacerbated by drought, especially in the late 1980s, leading to massive starvation and hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons searching for food. The socio-economic disruption caused by the IDPs, would be one of

Map 4: Kayibanda’s Home Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tare</td>
<td>Kayibanda’s birthplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kigali</td>
<td>Classe Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kabgayi</td>
<td>Small seminary of Nyakibanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinyaga</td>
<td>Where Kayibanda taught until 1952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rambura</td>
<td>Where Kayibanda was a seminarian, 1952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habyarimana</td>
<td>Habyarimana’s birthplace</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
several elements contributing to the eventual downfall of Habyarimana’s one-party system). It could be said that with the proscription against birth control, the Church was already in the two presidents’ lives before they were born.

The family house was made of clay, with a thatch roof, and was situated near the main road, which connected to Kigali and Bujumbura. Kayibanda’s father received a primary school education and had been made a catechist at the Tare area chapel, one of fifty in the Kabgayi parish. He earned little through his church duties, so his crops were a mainstay from which he had to pay taxes and make gifts to his Tutsi patron as part of the clientship contract. But he hated the clientship system and was adamant that his children not grow up a part of it, instilling in them a deep respect for their Hutu lineage deriving from the Sindi clan more than a hundred years before, from the Kivu Lake region. It seems reasonable to consider that Kayibanda’s deep-seated hostility to Tutsis may have germinated in the atmosphere of the detested client system.

The duties of the catechists also included filling in for a parish priest when they couldn’t travel to the, often distant, local chapel, as well as acting as a moral authority (such as arbitrating disputes); their functions and influence “were appreciated hardly less than that of the subchiefs.” Kayibanda’s father, then, was a man of some standing in the community, and had a substantial influence on his son’s strong sense of moral rectitude and of religion as a guiding principle.

The important role the catechists played in spreading Christianity throughout

---

4 Ibid.: 42.
6 Ibid.: 43.
Rwanda cannot be overstated. Most crucial were the training sessions several times a week for those hoping to be baptized: because no one could be admitted to the Roman Catholic Church without being able to follow in writing the prayers and hymns, the local chapels took on the role of literacy centers, providing to its parishioners what was roughly the first two years of a primary school education. The revolutionary effects on society that would come with literacy slowly filtering into society, for the first time in Rwandan history, were not at first foreseen or encouraged by the early missionaries:

... literacy, as well as the content of the written work, became an important element (as both implement and symbol) of class differences and hence of Tuutsi elite identification. ... Group awareness among Hutu came later. This was partly because Hutu relationships to the central structures of political power were both diffuse and distant: as Hutu were increasingly included in a common structural role within a single state apparatus, they also developed an “ethnic” identity, which was no less powerful than that of Tuutsi.7

Eventually adding to the “educational process”, the vicariate determined that the local parishes should organize meetings with the local Christian chiefs and subchiefs each Sunday to instruct them in their duties, “especially concerning charity and justice”, and that they “bow to the consent of the reforming prescriptions, and wish only for the good and the progress of the country”.8 This particular sense of social fairness and responsibility, along with the publication of its informative Kinyarwanda newspaper, Kinyamateka,9 from 1933, dispels the notion that the Church was only interested in favoring the Tutsi hierarchy at the expense of the Hutu majority.

9 (Kinyamateka roughly translates as ‘Organ for Laws’, but was a news periodical. Cf. Kalibwami, 1991: 369). “Its objective at first was to give to readers—besides the administrative decisions interesting the population—news arriving from various parishes and administrative or commercial centers, and adding comments characterized by Christianity. It also tried hard to answer the readers’ questions.” (Paternostre, op. cit.: 48).
The Church at first favored the Tutsis because of concerns that disrupting the established traditional socio-political structure would rend the fabric of society, promote communism, and lead to widespread disarray. But the thrust of the Church’s mission in Rwanda was from the beginning based on Christian principles, not on promoting one group or population at the expense of another. There seems to be, among some writers on Rwanda, the idea that the Church made a huge turnaround—first supporting one population and then deciding to throw its weight behind the other. But the voice of the Church itself, *Kinyamateka*, from its inception in 1933, fully twenty-five years before the revolution, was dedicated to reaching the masses and not blindly committed to a favored group.¹⁰ And their ethical approach is likewise mirrored in the fact that, as the Hutu évolués became available, the editorial staff and managing editors were composed of Hutu and Tutsi alike, through the revolution and into independence.

Conversely, Tutsi power through the 1930s, and the monarchy’s drop from imminence, show their leaders holding themselves above the fray of any political challenge or socio-political change. For example,

In 1937, Belgium, on its part, introduced a measure which had to give to the [Tutsi] Chiefs a certain degree of autonomy: it created administrative funds at their level (that is, decentralized low budgets) intended to finance certain expenses for internal administration and economic development. These funds were temporarily entrusted to the Territorial Administrators, who were required to familiarize the chiefs with it. A similar fund was created in 1941 at the level of the Mwami. But neither he, nor the chiefs perceived then the possibilities of autonomy and responsibility which were thus offered to them, so that these funds remained managed by the Administrators until the removal of chieftainships in 1960.¹¹

---

¹⁰ “Each year a Sunday was set aside as ‘Press Day’ when the Fathers exhorted their congregations to read ‘good’ periodicals and to disseminate them.”¹² The buying of Catholic newspapers was virtually an obligation for teachers and catechists, and the readership of *Kinyamateka* doubled to nine thousand by 1947.” (Linden, op. cit.: 221).

¹¹ Paternostre, op. cit.: 49.
The education of the Hutu masses, but especially the development of the évolutés, proceeded without registering as a growing concern among the monarchy’s elite. This would appear to be related to the effects caused over centuries by Rwandan society not being literate.

In non-literate society, it was suggested, the cultural tradition functions as a series of interlocking face-to-face conversations in which the very conditions of transmission operate to favour consistency between past and present, and to make criticism—the articulation of inconsistency—less likely to occur; and if it does, the inconsistency makes a less permanent impact, and is more easily adjusted or forgotten. While scepticism may be present in such societies, it takes a personal, non-cumulative form; it does not lead to a deliberate rejection and reinterpretation of social dogma so much as to a semi-automatic readjustment of belief.\(^{12}\)

This attitude on the Tutsi’s part was also reinforced by their early dominance in the educational system as they were given preferential treatment\(^{13}\) by the Belgian Administration:

The first school in Rwanda was formed in 1900 by Catholic missionaries. Eventually, the German and Belgian colonial governments became more involved in education, helping develop curriculum and providing funding, but the operation of schools remained almost entirely the responsibility of the church. In 1925, a convention formalized this relationship by creating a system of subsidized schools run by the church but supported financially by the state. These schools became known as *libre subsidie*, or assisted schools. . . . Colonial-era education reflected and intensified the ethnic divisions in Rwanda. The Tutsi, favored by the colonial government as the Rwandan aristocracy, were also given preference in schools, even though the country was almost 90 percent Hutu. For instance, Astrida College, the most prestigious school in the country, enrolled 45 Tutsi students and just nine Hutu students.

---


\(^{13}\) OAU (2000). “Together, the Belgians and the Catholic church were guilty of . . . ‘ethnogenesis’ the institutionalization of rigid ethnic identities for political purposes. The proposition that it was legitimate to politicize and polarize society through ethnic cleavages to “play the ‘ethnic card’ for political advantage. . . became integral to Rwandese public life. Ethnogenesis was by no means unknown in other African colonies [but] destructive as it has been everywhere, no other genocide has occurred. But . . . in Rwanda, it combined with other factors with ultimately devastating consequences”.
students in 1932. In 1954, Astrida had 63 Tutsi and 19 Hutu students.¹⁴ Yet, even if Bishop Deprimoz’s fear that among the Hutu an “extensive education would create a group of déclassés who would leave the land and the assured piety of rural Catholicism”,¹⁵ and the Belgian Administration’s favoritism toward the Tutsi hierarchy had resulted in a particularly one-sided educational policy, the Hutu Movement directed by Kayibanda would not have gained much ground without a large part of the Hutu peasantry acquiring a new awareness of itself, even if not elaborated, through literacy. As Goody has pointed out,

In Literate society, these interlocking conversations go on; but they are no longer man’s only dialogue; and in so far as writing provides an alternative source for the transmission of cultural orientations it favours awareness of inconsistency. One aspect of this is a sense of change and of cultural lag; another is the notion that the cultural inheritance as a whole is composed of two very different kinds of material; fiction, error and superstition on the one hand; and, on the other, elements of truth which can provide the basis for some more reliable and coherent explanation of the gods, the human past and the physical world.¹⁶ [my italics].

This is not to say that the revolution was a popular movement driven from below, but Kayibanda and his group were able to reach a significant number of Hutu through Kinyamateka and local networking as it rode on the above new realizations, mounting a growing change in the socio-political reality. The genie was out of the bottle, but the Tutsi hierarchy, used to an unchallenged status quo for at least two hundred years, failed to recognize or consider the importance that education was having, and would have, on

¹⁴ Bridgeland et al, 2009: 5. ¹⁵ Linden, op. cit.. ¹⁶ Goody, op. cit.: 48. Frederick Douglass told of hearing his slave master telling his wife: “If you teach that nigger (speaking of myself) how to read, there will be no keeping him, it will forever unfit him to be a slave. He would at once become unmanageable, and of no value to his master.” See Paulo Freire (2000), and other of his works for the role of education in social dynamics; and Babara Trudell (2012).
society, and the threat it posed to them and their system.

Kayibanda’s education started in 1932, when he was eight, at Tare primary school, and two years later, through his father’s influence, he was able to enroll at a larger and more prestigious primary school, in Kabgayi. He boarded near the school, "in a rather ambiguous environment, with loose talk . . . from where he acquired the knowledge of good and evil and the many disorders which resulted from that". In his fourth year of primary school, he missed half a year from malaria, but kept up with schoolwork at home with the assistance of his father, and was able to finish the class.

For secondary school, because he came from a catechist family, he was able to be enrolled in the prestigious Le Petit Séminaire Saint Léon. He made friends with several students at the school, who would become “sympathizers, if not promoters” of the Hutu Movement’s democratic ideals. Among those who acquired some fame were Aloys Munyangaju, Anastase Makuza, Justin Kalibwami, Gaspard Mudashimwa, and François-Xavier Nshogozabahizi.

At the Petit Séminaire, Kayibanda studied math, Greek, Latin, French, history, botany, music, drama, sports, mineralogy and religion. “You could be kicked out just for having failed Greek or Latin . . . simple mistakes like not tucking in a shirt could lead to

18 The seminary was comparable to middle school through high school in the U.S. In started in 1913, and when Kayibanda attended there were about 160 pupils. Enrollment hasn’t significantly increased: today there are 220 students at ordinary and advanced levels.
19 Paternostre, op. cit.: 51. Munyangaju was one of draftees of the Hutu Manifesto, went with Kayibanda to Belgium to work on the staff of a Catholic newspaper, Vers L’avenir, was a luminary of the 1959 revolution, vice president for the APROSOMA Party, and first Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; Makuza was a signatory to the Hutu Manifesto and Minister of Justice in 1961/1962/1963; Kalibwami, Tutsi Abbé and editor of Kinyamateka, authored Le catholicisme et la société rwandaise; Mudashimwa became a priest in Byumba; Nshogozabahizi was Minister of Public Health in 1962.
expulsion.”20 Kayibanda and the other students were required to do manual labor, but in his free time he “loved to read novels, music, to perform in plays, and play music. . . . Instead of novels, without rejecting them completely, I read the Bible. Instead of sports, I read books on history.” And he recalls in his notebooks his dedication to others and to God:

I liked doing a service to some classmate21: it was my biggest enjoyment. When I arrived, very young, I was satisfied to do a service to them, to help them to speak in French, to find dormitories, to know the hours of such and such exercise, etc. . . From my entrance to the seminary, my eyes were fixed on Jesus Christ.22

After finishing secondary school, Kayibanda was accepted, as one of the upwardly mobile, to the Grand Séminaire, at Nyakibanda (near Butare), to further his studies, but was sidelined by illness and wasn’t able to rejoin the seminary until the next fall, having to join the class that had graduated from the Petit Séminaire one year behind him. The Grand Séminaire was the only institution of higher learning23 in Rwanda, with the Université Nationale du Rwanda not opening until 1963. The only alternative, for those who did not want to become priests, was to go to university in the Congo (as Habyarimana was to do) or in Belgium. Seminarians were expected to become priests, but for many Hutus the seminary was the only place they could hope to get an education, from which they could

21 “Msgr André Havugimana, also a former student, says the school has been very instrumental in building brotherhood ties among students. ‘. . .not only did many acquire intellectual and spiritual education, but also interpersonal skills, how to make friends and how to better contribute to building lives.’”
22 Kayibanda’s personal notebooks, “autobiography draft”, 1957 [Hereafter cited as CPAD], (cited in Paternostre: 52-54).
23 University level in the U.S.
then go on to jobs in the public and private sector.\textsuperscript{24} Reminiscing about his experience at the Grand Séminaire, Kayibanda wrote,

\begin{quote}
I loved chapel, the library . . . and the trough for my pigs! . . . the first year, I was in charge of the animals while at the same time of planting, and of training the fruit trees. . . . We studied Thomism, . . . Kant, Karl Marx, and others, in secret."\textsuperscript{25}
\end{quote}

The Petit Séminaire and the Grand Séminaire contained some Hutu students who disliked Tutsi.\textsuperscript{26} It is not known to what degree Kayibanda was affected by having predominantly Tutsi native teachers\textsuperscript{27} in addition to the White Father instructors, or by the anti-Tutsi feelings of other Hutu students at either seminary, but he clearly expressed his antipathy toward Tutsis and the monarchy in the late 1950s and after independence,\textsuperscript{28} and it must be considered whether this strong antipathy was not already seeded during his school years, and was inadvertently reinforced by the new order of socially-conscious priests arriving from Belgium in the ‘50s, who reacted against the social inequalities they witnessed between the Hutu and Tutsi populations:

\begin{quote}
A deep hatred of the Tutsi order and a sincere love of the Church, far from being incompatible sentiments, combined to create a high level of political motivation
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{24} "As we have said, in spite of the preference accorded in the general education of young Tutsi, the church foresaw in the seminaries the systematic teaching of a fair number of Hutu priests, necessary for the evangelization of the country. Without power preventing them, nevertheless certain elements coming from the world of power arranged to bar the path to the Hutu candidates judged too enthusiastic about political questions, in order to prevent risk to the question of their ethnic monopoly." (Paternostre, op. cit.: 61).

\textsuperscript{25} Kayibanda, \textit{C.p.}, n.d.; cited in Paternostre, op. cit.: 62.

\textsuperscript{26} From as early as 1973, one such student, Emmanuel Rukundo (who became a priest and army chaplain), fought against his Tutsi colleagues at the Petit Séminaire. Later, at the Grand Séminaire, after the RPF invasion, he claimed the Séminaire was a Tutsi stronghold. He denounced Tutsi students to the authorities, and after the genocide of 1994 was found guilty by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda for taking part in the killings. (The Prosecutor V. Emmanuel Rukundo, Case No. ICTR-2001-70-I).

\textsuperscript{27} "All those who later became Hutu leaders, like Lazare Mpakaniye, Froduald Minani and Calliope Mulindahabi, received their education in Church-run institutions where Tutsi dominance was liable to lead to bitterness and resentment. (Linden, op. cit: 210). Also, “To go to school was to find a Tutsi teacher, and the intellectual life of the Church was soon dominated by the new Tutsi abbés.” “the majority of Rwandan religious capable of it were engaged in teaching. By the mid-1940s half the clergy. . . were from Tutsi families.” (Linden, op. cit: p 198).

\textsuperscript{28} See, for example, Erny, 1994: 58; Clark, 2006: 71; Vidal, 1991: 40; and the Bahutu Manifesto.
that found a ready response in the young missionaries, with their social Catholicism. 

In this regard, the Grand Séminaire appears to be a watershed for Kayibanda, as he starts to show, already, a concern with the Tutu-Tutsi problem, writing:

We noticed that by a traditional series of maneuvers, the Hutu were rather 'ignored'. In addition to this were little schemes, small meetings that we noticed in the Grand-Séminaire. Not, of course, that the Hutu were so innocent as to totally ignore their unfortunate situation; but with a lot of Tutsi, they believed that by brotherly charity everything would slowly change. We were optimistic until the day when some Hutus saw that the maneuvers were deeper than we thought, and than it was necessary to make a commitment, before and for the future.

Kayibanda’s involvement with the lay community started on holidays, when Grand Séminaire students were sent to parishes for pastoral work. He was sent, over a two-year period, to Kanyanza parish (in Ndiza), and given the rather considerable responsibility of managing schools—the beginning of his involvement in education—helping organize for the building of the church, and attending to the breeding of livestock. 

His experiences in the lay community began to convince him that his true vocation was that of being involved in a useful life in the lay world, rather than being cloistered in a church, and in November 1948, after a long interview with Msgr Déprimoz, he decided to leave the Grand Séminaire, wanting to “contribute humbly to perfect the creation and to take forward in all directions the Redemption.”

Habyarimana will also leave the seminary, but to study medicine for a year at Lovanium University in the Congo, where he will be forced to leave because of the turmoil

---

29 Linden, op. cit.: 233.
of independence there, and return to Rwanda and officers training school. However, the
two future presidents, who left seminary to follow secular careers, developed different
relationships with the Church. Kayibanda utilized its organizational power to help advance
the Hutu Movement’s programs, then, once in office, used the power of the presidency to
further his agendas. Habyarimana, on the other hand, rose to the presidency through the
ranks of the military and a coup d’état, and then after attaining power saw the efficacy and
desirability of having the Church’s confirmation of his regime’s legitimacy.

It can be posited that there are organizational correlations between the Church and
one-party states (and certainly religion and power have been allied, if not inseparable,
through most of history): both are top-down structures, paternalistic, highly bureaucratic,
and operate through a belief in a shared—and unquestioned—ideology, or dogma. They
are also communities, in which faithful practitioners can find a sense of brotherhood. And
in Habyarimana’s case there was the additional correlation regarding the structure of the
military, which, by remaining its head while president, he was able to keep political
opposition at bay for over 10 years. It is no surprise, then, that Kayibanda and
Habyarimana both drew up republican constitutions for their respective governments then
quickly slid into one-party, top-down structures—like the Church, like the army—
because they each had reached their presidencies within undemocratic structures.33

In addition, when comparing their governments with the precolonial mwami system
(Organogram 2) and the colonially-imposed political order (Organogram 1, page 44), the

---

33 For Habyarimana, as his son Jean Claude says, "Medicine and the military were more or less the same … a career
of sacrifice." (Shimamungu, op. cit.: 37).
resemblance is not alien to those systems’ vertical, bureaucratic organization, reaching

Organogram 2. Precolonial Socio-Administrative Structure

[Diagram showing the hierarchical structure of the precolonial socio-administrative system, including roles such as Mwami, Abiru, Mugabekazi, Abatware b’intebe, Chief of the Fields, Chief of the Pastures, and Micro-level personal, social, and cultural relationships such as ubuhake and shebuja.]

down to the hill level of socio-political association.
After a combined thirty-two years as the first heads of the Rwandan state, neither Kayibanda nor Habyarimana did much to fundamentally alter vertical government ruled by a dictatorial head of state, not until Habyarimana was forced to do so at the end of the 1980s by irrepressible internal opposition and external forces. Even though Kayibanda and his colleagues may have looked to a collection of other countries’ constitutions when they were deciding what shape Rwanda’s first constitution should assume, the implementation of externally borrowed ideas grafted onto a largely illiterate society used to a vertical hierarchy of chiefs and subchiefs to whom one owed a personal allegiance was surely doomed to fail at the local level, where officials had no oversight and no pressure to enlighten the peasant-farmers concerning their human rights as outlined in the new constitution, rights which even the officials couldn’t regularly or appropriately put into practice because there weren’t enough lawyers, courts or judges, trained police officers, or the money to pay them. In other words, there wasn’t an infrastructure to match the constitution. This must be kept in mind when looking at the education and development of both presidents: they were exposed to new and foreign ideas, suddenly accessible to them through the missions and seminaries, while trying to come to grips with non-complementary traditional realities.

Could there have been any education, any training or experience, that could have adequately prepared Kayibanda (or anyone, for that matter) for running the newly-formed country of Rwanda as its president in 1962? What is evident is that Kayibanda’s education and organizational skills were considerable, given the restrictions on Hutu activities and the relative vacuum in existing social associations (due to proscriptions against them by the
Belgium administration), but organizing people for social action and presiding over a
country devoid of an infrastructure or a national economy—to mention only two of the
most challenging and immediate obstacles—are two vastly different propositions.
Kayibanda was a moralist, but how to discourage or lessen endemic poverty and
corruption? He was an organizer, but how to make viable compromises with political
opponents used to bribes and extra-judicial responses? How to funnel traditional behaviors
into a constitutional republican mold? No one could possibly expect the first president of a
country entering statehood to be able to tackle the problems faced in Rwanda. And as
Kayibanda went from the seminary out into the world, he could not have known that he
would one day become president, nor have imagined the demands of the office, because
the territory was not realistically ready to become a sovereign nation, despite the UN’s
eventual, and grudging, acceptance.

**Léon Classe Institute**

In 1949, Kayibanda, having left the seminary and a path to priesthood, believing
that each person’s role in the world was to work for the evolution of mankind, “to
contribute to the lifting of humanity, because all people must be saved”, 34 started teaching
general courses (geography, French, religion, and history) at a technical secondary school,
the Léon Classe Institute, in Kabgayi. Established only five years before, it was the first
facility to offer vocational training, although limited to joinery and sewing. Kayibanda
found the vocational students “morally wounded by the termination of their academic

34 Kayibanda, C.p. 23.6.57, cited in Paternostre, op. cit.:73.
studies, and tried hard ‘to win them to God’.
One attraction of the institute for Kayibanda was the fact that the alumni association of post-primary education, of which he was a member, was situated there.

Geography and history were bound to open up students’ questions about different ways of life, and Kayibanda found himself having to decide how to respond within the auspices of a trade school—the institute had been initiated by Bishop Déprimoz because he was wary of the potential ‘negative’ results of producing significant numbers of highly educated students:

The prestige of the bush catechist had declined in the face of the country’s better educated youth, and that . . . extensive education would create a group of déclassés who would leave the land and the assured piety of rural Catholicism, and so [Déprimoz] specifically set up a vocational school to train carpentry and tailoring skills.

It was not the Church’s intention, at first, to ‘liberate’ society, to upset the social order it found upon arrival in the country. It did set in play, however, a natural evolution, as Wright describes the power of the technology of writing. The seminaries had not only introduced their students to humanist thinkers but, more important, had taught the students to think. Ironically, this would also fortify them with the means to question the

---

36 As it turned out, these young, educated Hutus would be the vanguard of the liberation movement.
37 Linden, op. cit: 221.
39 If ancient writing’s main function was “to facilitate the enslavement of other human beings,” as Claude Lévi-Strauss said, then what would have happened in Rwanda without the Church’s underlying ‘morally democratic’ philosophy as it introduced literacy into Rwanda? In all likelihood, in the absence of the Church, writing eventually would have been taken up by the Tutsi monarchy from other outside sources, to the exclusion of the Hutu (and Tutsi) peasant-farmers-herders, as a means of keeping, as well as tightening, control (a degree of enslavement). The Church, in this particular sense, can be said to have played a positive role in Rwanda’s development.
40 In its 1959 evaluation of state of the country, the Belgian Working Group praised the missions for ‘‘making people conscious of a social state founded on oligarchy and privilege.’ In turn, missionaries and colonial officials did
Church itself. And since the Church was, in so many ways, a force equal to and in important ways connected with the territory’s administration, the évolutés began questioning the administration as well. Therefore, if the Church held that all men are equal, then why was there such social inequality regarding the Hutu and Tutsi populations? But the doors to academic education had been opened, and through those doors Hutu students saw opportunities for securing off-farm careers, mostly in the public sector, with more limited openings in the private sector. Barely fifteen years after Kayibanda left the Grand Séminaire, the first University in Rwanda was inaugurated.

Kayibanda married in the spring of 1950, while teaching at Léon Classe. His wife was from a well-off Tutsi family and had only received two years of primary school, but was “profoundly Christian”. They lived in Kigali, on land provided them near the institute, and appear to have been well-matched. Kayibanda joined the Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne (JOC), becoming its president, and had impressed Msgr Déprimoz sufficiently to be sent to Brussels, in September for a week, accompanied by Fr. Dejemeppe, as the Rwandan representative to the JOC’s Congress and Weekly International. Joseph Cardijn, International Chaplain of the JOC, came to Rwanda in 1956 and 1957 to launch

---

41 “. . . évoluté, a term for the Rwandan intelligentsia that did not initially appear objectionable in its connotations, and was used freely by Rwandans and Europeans alike. (Linden, 220-221).

42 “. . . for some the radical promise of Christian brotherhood opened up new horizons and expectations. For them the realisation that a Christian ruling class could be as ruthless and tyrannical as the old Tutsi nobility brought an awareness of the inherent contradictions in Rwandan society denied to many of the blinkered missionaries.” (Linden, 210).

43 “Nonetheless the Hutu were blocked from progressing much further, as the scholarships for study abroad, instituted by the Buisseret administration in 1954, went largely to the Tutsi with connections at court.” (Linden, 248, n 160).

44 Paternostre, 77.

45 Where he stayed two months with Dejemeppe’s family, and attended meetings at the Belgian Colonial Ministry. (Linden, op. cit.: 228-229).

46 Gatwa, 2005: 95, n.122. Also see Paternostre, 84-118.
the organization there. He was insistent that Catholic Action be involved in the daily lives of the lay people: “An apostolate suitably laic to the laymen is foremost and essential, and must transform the daily life of the world, sphere by sphere”. This quote epitomizes Kayibanda’s thinking, and suggests that Cardijn may have had an influence on him, as can be seen in Kayibanda’s notes at the time: “to [instill] the Christian spirit in everything. . . . It is a bit much, but I do not forget that my role has to be one of energizing popular action.” He goes on to add an intriguing observation that the common people “consisted of Hutu, as well as Tutsi, kept from power and its privileges”. This inclusive thought about the Hutu and Tutsi farmers, who were separate from the administrative power structure, demonstrates that he didn’t hold at this time a blanket prejudice against all Tutsi, and that, later, his government’s proscriptions against Tutsis reflected more an almost pathological fear of revanchism—that the monarchy might be reinstated.

Also in Kayibanda’s notebook at this time is the odd self evaluation, “I am especially the friend of my people, of the children, . . . Moreover, children love me, esteem me, listen to me,” which emanates an almost embarrassing Christ-like piety. Is it that Kayibanda is a little delusional and getting caught up in a messianic sense of mission and identifying a little too closely with his personal God, leading his ‘people’ out of darkness? His constant reference to God and Church as models for society, however, are undeniably hypocritical, given his acquiescence, at the very least, to his government’s appalling treatment of the Tutsis. It is impossible, knowing this treatment, to read his notebook and

48 Ibid.: 85
49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.
other writings of these years leading up to independence, when they constantly talk of
democracy, the evolution of mankind, and the teachings of God, without seeing that his
philosophy is not of a whole cloth but is a patchwork missing vital elements, such as
empathy for the Tutsi, and a consideration of opposite points of view. This
compartmentalization, or willful blindness, will serve him ill as president, preventing him
from recognizing the growing and immediate danger in the north-south\textsuperscript{51} discord, and the
seeds of future conflict sown among the sizeable Tutsi diaspora, whom he had forced from
the country. But these events are far in the future from his duties at Léon Classe.

**Catholic Action and the Start of the “Hutu Movement”**

Kayibanda’s relation with the Church and his abilities as an organizer were already
developing and reinforcing one another, and in May 1950 he joined two groups in the
Catholic Action structure: The Legion of Mary\textsuperscript{52}, of which he became president, and the
League of the Sacred Heart. These two groups, like other Catholic Action organizations,
were characterized by “group prayer, acts of charity, mutual assistance, brotherly behavior,
and commitment to the activities of the parish.”\textsuperscript{53} Though Kayibanda, as an energetic
organizer had some initial reservations about an aspect of Catholic Action’s configuration,
he soon embraced it:

\textsuperscript{51} The north-south discord was termed Kiga-Nduga, a neologism for the two natural regions in Rwanda, where the
northerners were the “Ba\textsuperscript{k}iga” and the southerners the “Banya\textsuperscript{n}duga”

\textsuperscript{52} “Though not obligatory, the Legion of Mary was strongly recommended for leading Catholics. (Linden, 1977: 276, n 75). Of note here are the conditions under which the Legion of Mary was founded: “During the period 1922 and 1937 a phenomenal mass conversion took place... A pilgrim statue of Mary was taken from village to village, welcomed by dances, the beat of tam-tams and public rosaries. In the wake of this unprecedented, newborn fervor the Legion of Mary was founded in 1948 and gained steady growth. . . . When the ethnic hatred and tension was about to enter its bloody climax Our Lady appeared in Kibeho, Rwanda, November 1981.” (Mary of Nazareth website).

\textsuperscript{53} Kokam, 2010: p. 16. Other groups in Catholic Action were ACE COP’ MONDE, the Youth of the World (JM), and the Boy Scouts, for example.
At first I did not like the legionary structure of Catholic Action. Its rigidity appeared to me an obstacle to many developments and adaptations . . . But when I saw in practice the depth of the adventurer spirit—the self-sacrifice— which it can bring to humble people, I loved it and used all my strength to help it. . . . How not take into account the requirements of our religion in the sphere of public life?54

His framing of the “Hutu movement” at this time, then, was deeply imbedded in Christian belief, as is further reiterated in his 6 January 1951 notebook:

I already see, a little, what there is to do to make our Rwandan society lift itself up according to Christ and his message. But the work is great, complicated, and requiring a saint, and I am not this saint. But God, who likes to use the average and the weak, does not relieve me from the trial of action . . . Vorwärts!55

“Vorwärts”, the German exclamation in this notebook entry, reveals Kayibanda’s exposure to European politics (and his love for German), as it is the name of the newspaper of the Social Democratic Party of Germany. His knowledge of this paper presumably came from his meetings and correspondence with unions and other groups during his stay in Belgium, and from the vein of social-democratic thinking that threads through his life from Grand Séminaire days.

The value of the Catholic Action groups was exhibited at a major meeting of the Legion of Mary at Kabgayi in April 1959, with Calliope Mulindahabi as secretary and Kayibanda as president, with the Hutu movement resting its campaigns on the Legion of Mary’s country-wide network.56

The structure of the Legion of Mary worked so well for Kayibanda that he structured PARMEHUTU on its model. . . and had a propagandist on practically every hill. It had, however, an uneven rural presence, with its main centers in the

---

55 Kayibanda, ibid., p. 6, cited in Paternostre, op. cit.: 80.
56 Moyet, 2001 : p. 3.
During this period of Kayibanda’s development as a social activist, Belgium accelerated its efforts to develop the country after the UN’s 1947 visit. They worked out a ten-year plan for social and economic development, which they put into effect in 1951. Then they issued a 14 July 1952 decree that included two significant elements that hoped to put the country on the path to democratization: a four-level system of councils composed of traditional chiefs and subchiefs, as well as ordinary citizens (Table 2); and the

Table 2. Consultative Councils (Instituted under Belgium’s 10-year Plan for Economic and Social Development, 1950)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNCILS</th>
<th>MEMBERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Chieftain Council <em>(Hutu 47.6%)</em></td>
<td>Local Sub-Chiefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(5-9) Local Leaders elected by an electoral college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chieftain Council <em>(Hutu 11.4%)</em></td>
<td>President elected by peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local Chiefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5-9 Local Sub-Chiefs (elected by peers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(5-9) Local Leaders elected by an electoral college from pool containing 3 delegates from each Sub-Chieftain Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Territorial Council <em>(Hutu 9.3%)</em></td>
<td>President elected by peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Chiefs of the Territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Sub-Chiefs equal to Chiefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Local Leaders equal to Chiefs, elected by an electoral college from pool containing 3 delegates from each Chieftain Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSP (National Upper Council) <em>(Hutu 9%)</em></td>
<td>Mwami</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 Presidents, (all Chiefs), each elected by one of the Territorial Councils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 Chiefs elected by peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 Notables, each elected by one of the Territorial Councils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8 Co-Opted Members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A permanent mission of 5 members from the CSP (3 elected representatives by this Council, an 2 by the Mwami) would work as day-to-day advisors

57 Kimonyo, 2008: 46.
abolition of the cattle clientship system (*ubuhake*). The Mwami and the Chiefs, for the first time, needed the consent of their respective Councils in order to act, which meant that their power was no longer absolute, even though they were still largely in control; this new situation signaled the most important shift in Rwandan socio-political control in four hundred years. The leaders of the budding Hutu Movement were subsequently encouraged when, on 1 March 1954, Mwami Mutara promulgated the order to begin dismantling the *ubuhake* system. The Mwami and the Chiefs, for the first time, needed the consent of their respective Councils in order to act, which meant that their power was no longer absolute, even though they were still largely in control; this new situation signaled the most important shift in Rwandan socio-political control in four hundred years. The leaders of the budding Hutu Movement were subsequently encouraged when, on 1 March 1954, Mwami Mutara promulgated the order to begin dismantling the *ubuhake* system. That is, new cattle owners were confronted with the problem of acquiring pasture land in the places they had freely grazed before, thus ending up in the same client-patron position as of old: giving service and foodstuffs to the Tutsi land owners in return for grazing rights. (This land clientelism

would be banned by a decree in 1960\textsuperscript{59}). Examples of the places(s) occupied by Hutu (and most Tutsi) in the socio-political structure of the mwamiship can be seen in Table 3.

### Table 3. Examples of 11 Hutu Respondents in Codere’s 1960 Study of Peasant-Farmers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Professional Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Some Schooling)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rukimirana</td>
<td>had one year of schooling only, then entered into a <em>ubuhake</em> clientship arrangement, eventually becoming a peasant-farmer;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masikini</td>
<td>completed two years of school, worked in mines in Uganda, then as a laborer in Tanzania, finally becoming a peasant-farmer;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nkundiye</td>
<td>completed five years of education, then drifted job to job (uncle was schooled and successful).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngabonziza</td>
<td>after five years of primary school became a government clerk in Burundi, and later became a mason, working in the Congo-Ruanda-Burundi region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bizimana</td>
<td>managed to finish 12 years at Grand Séminaire at Kabgayi and became teacher of fifth-year students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nabonibo</td>
<td>had 11 yrs schooling and then trained as infirmary aid, becoming head of local gov’t infirmary where he worked for 30 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(No Schooling)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muyaneza</td>
<td>went to live with Tutsi overlord and serve him. After several years, got married and was loaned cows, but the overlord took them back again when he fled the country because of a crime against the <em>mwami</em>. Had 11 children, five sons died, wife died, married again, second wife died, got a construction job at St. Jean parish in the 1950s, and a widow came to live with him and take care of his children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyemera</td>
<td>went to live with Tutsi overlord and serve him. Proved to have shamanistic powers and was given large herd of cows and large land holding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sebahutu</td>
<td>went to live with Tutsi overlord and serve him. Was given cow every year he served, was taught to dance, and performed regularly. At 20, got married, built house and was given cow, and 500 francs for construction. Grew beans, sweet potatoes, and so on. No children, but said “We live together well and love one another in our poverty.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byemera</td>
<td>went to live with Tutsi overlord and serve him in order to get a cow for bride wealth. After one year, was given cow. Allowed to go home twice a year to work on fields. Famine lasted two years and he went to Burundi to get beans. Laborer for Institut National pour l’Etude Agronomique du Congo Belge. Another famine, workers laid off, went to Rubona for food relief and was given rice, meat, cornmeal. Has 3 children who help farm small holdings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mupfumu</td>
<td>went to live with Tutsi overlord and serve him. Became a successful diviner. As he relates, “From my childhood on I have been fortunate, thanks to the Tutsi and thanks to <em>ubuhake</em> [clientage]. I have always been respected, always well looked upon, always loved by the Banyarwanda. In addition to my calling I know poetry and autopenegyrics” well.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{59} See André, 2003: 154.

\textsuperscript{60} Art of extemporaneous composing of complementary stories about superiors, with elaborate praise for their accomplishments, character, family, and so on.
Yet, the mass of Hutu peasants in this period still adhered to a system of deference to the Tutsi ruling elite, rather than to the notion of an awakened Hutu identity (not yet in place) and a democratic system of representation that Kayibanda and his colleagues were trying to bring to their attention. Therefore, when the electoral processes were introduced, the Hutu évolués (most of whom had been trained at the Nyakibanda seminary) consisted of only a small minority, and no political parties had yet emerged.

And so it was that in the early part of the ‘50s, it was beginning to enter the minds of the Church and Belgian authorities that differences between the Tutsi and Hutu populations represented a potentially volatile racial or ethnic problem, and in response they created the first elite organization approved by the Church, the Belgian-Rwandan Friendship Society61 (L’Association des Amitiés Belge-Rwandaises), devoted to ‘better’ race relations. The founder, Prosper Bwanakweri, was a liberal Tutsi Astridien, the Belgian president of the Society was married to a Tutsi, and the members were primarily liberal Tutsis, with the influential Tutsi writer Abbé Kagame as secretary, and Fr. Dejemeppe, a new brand of liberal priest arriving in Rwanda after World War II, as vice-president. Kayibanda had developed a close friendship with Dejemeppe,62 and it is likely that Dejemeppe encouraged Kayibanda to take a position on the Society in order to ‘balance’ its make up. It was also, at this time (1951), that Kayibanda formed a circle of thinkers, some of whom were former seminarians and others from the Groupe Scolaire.

---

61 Bwanakweri was a prominent Tutsi chief, and the leader of young Astridien Tutsi chiefs, who “embraced Western democracy and the continuing liberalization of Rwanda’s economy. Bwanakweri legitimized political debate in Rwanda for Tutsi and Hutu alike.” He “symbolized an early 1950s period before Hutu and Tutsi labels emerged as dominant Rwandan political identities.” (Carney, 2011: 48).

62 Dejemeppe also attended the February 1954 opening of Rwanda’s new Upper Council, an event which he celebrated as “a commencement of the democratization of (Rwandan) institutions.” (Carney, 2011: 121).
Kayibanda and Bwanakweri were also both part of *The Mouvement Politique Progressiste*, the successor of the Belgian-Rwandan Friendship Society, along with Kayibanda’s close associate Munyangaju.

This period of Hutu-Tutsi collaboration on social reform, though having an auspicious start in the early 1950s, tragically fell apart at the end of the decade. The young Tutsi liberals, who wanted to climb through the administrative ranks by dent of a meritocracy, were overwhelmed by the traditionalists, who refused to relinquish the hereditary system of advancement, and by the growing numbers of Hutu voters who had awoken to the reality of their position of inequality in the socio-political system. Kayibanda, having had the chance to recognize that there were liberal Tutsis seriously committed to Rwanda’s democratic future, nevertheless seems to have simply ignored them and the possibility of forming any kind of useful and future coalition that would, then, *equally* include all Rwandans in nation building. Instead, he focused his attention and the Hutu Movement’s platform on pushing forward a Hutu identity.

This separatism is perplexing in light of much of his writing, and shows an intellectual intransigence, as well as a spiritual dichotomy (especially since the Tutsi were baptized Christians). But, apparently, the paradox (and irony) of waging a war against the monarchy being at the same time a war against fellow Christians never troubled his mind. He was on a crusade, rather, and was more a Joan of Arc than, say a Napoleon, who had managed to free himself from Church dogma and establish a judicial code that would serve well the citizens of the state. And rather than gracious (and secure) in victory, Kayibanda and his government were as repressive to the entire Tutsi population as the Tutsi ruling the
monarchical system had been to the Hutu population. This “eye for an eye” philosophy begs comparison, because of Kayibanda’s ardent religious devotion, with biblical injunctions and Old Testament ‘justice’ in its excessive and uncompromising injunctions; the brotherly love and zeal for helping others that he often writes about appears easily partitioned. As much as Kayibanda appears a sympathetic figure throughout the years leading up to the 1959 revolution and independence, his sheer hatred for the Tutsi, as Linden has noted from conversation with him, describes an increasingly unaccommodating ideology. This view forward into Kayibanda’s presidency colours, unhappily, our survey of his development but, still, provides us a platform from which to reflect on how he developed this racist/ethnicist attitude, especially when throughout 1953, after leaving the Léon Classe Institute and becoming a secretary to Father Dejemeppe, at Kabgayi, he “wrote ardently and faithfully on the Belgian-Rwandan Friendship Society’s theme of egalitarianism”.  

In August 1953 Kayibanda was put forward for and elected to the Subchief Council in the Marangara district. Subsequently, he was elected to the Chieftain Council, and finally to the Territorial Council. In the Chieftain Council, he soon found himself at odds with the Tutsi president,

The Chair of the Chieftain Council seemed to consider me anarchistic, and is a little afraid of me. He is used to imposing on his sub-chiefs, yet I do not accept all his dogma! My spirit is full of injustices undergone by my people, and I have trouble with a regime as old-fashioned as it is ineffective.  

---

63 Linden, op. cit.: 232.
Office of School Inspection

In this period, Kayibanda also started working for the Kabgayi Office of School Inspection, checking school texts for appropriate content and correspondingly editing them. Employment in the school system was fairly common for those “Hutu who rose through the Catholic schools and seminaries [and] formed a counter-elite, totally excluded from traditional and administrative office.”65 He was also soon involved in the Teachers Association (AMR),66 as secretary,67 and wrote for their professional review, Barerera Imana (“Educate for God”), which was sent to all teachers68 and which showed its activist muscles by gathering enough signatures in April 1954 to help the Council of Parents69 petition against the elimination of religion in school curricula. It has the hallmark of Kayibanda’s influence and commitment, as is reflected in his following words,

In a country where we gag youths by a planned economy and by a certain racism . . . I prefer to awaken my country to the consciousness of its possibilities . . . to locate around me the shy or unconscious capacities . . . to help them to discover the needs of those around them, to push them and to encourage them to do service. . . . I believe that it is my social vocation, in a country which is still looking for itself, which puts forward milestones for a next definitive beginning. . . . Miserable, muzzled, at the bidding of political power and money, I shall suffer with them, . . . and I shall try to show them that it is possible to live in a Christian manner in the

65 Linden, ibid.: 227. These elite Hutu also found jobs in “. . . the veterinary or medical service, and some ran small ships or remunerative coffee plots. There were a few hundred carpenters, tailors, masons, craftsmen and lorry drivers, and seven thousand salaried workers in the private sector, between them and the bulk of the peasantry. Rwaza mission employed over a hundred men in its cigar factory, several of whom branched out as independent cigar makers and tobacco buyers.” (op. cit.). Also, see Hoyweghen (1996: 382), “The Church played a major role in the economic development of the country and became the biggest employer after the state.”
66 “When six years later, numerous Rwandan political parties will be formed, many of those among the AMR will become activists and propagandists for democracy. From this period, in any case, their magazine, [Educate for God], pleaded relentlessly for cohesion, solidarity, and the organization of its readers. Paternostre, op. cit.: p. 83.
67 Cassien Murengerantwali was president. (Linden, 1977: 245, n. 108).
68 Paternostre, op. cit.: 82.
69 “Kayibanda was a secretary of the Council of the Parents of Kabgayi, at the same time as regional president of the federation of working-class families. It is at that time that Mgr. Déprimoz launched the system of "parents' schools", which allowed the inhabitants of regions underserved by education to build at their expense new schools. He promised to allocate trained staff to it". (Paternostre, p. 82: n. 3).
midst of poverty. With my education, I can possibly synthesize observations and draw them up as the basis for useful initiatives.\textsuperscript{70}

He recalls that at this time he acquired a “deeper view of the policies regarding education and the concrete problems of the evolution of Rwandan society, the Rwandan people”,\textsuperscript{71} at the Office of Inspection, and there is in the pages of his writing a certain grasp of the breadthness of problems facing social change, plus a sense of the future.

**Kinyamateka as Political Platform**

Kayibanda found a way to broaden his voice, in 1953, when he joined the editorial staff of the bi-weekly, Kinyarwanda-language, Catholic newspaper, *Kinyamateka*,\textsuperscript{72} which was begun in 1933 and meant to be read out loud to the great number of illiterate peasant-farmers among the hills. In the 1940s, with the Tutsi priest Alexis Kagame as editor, the weekly pushed forward the idea of a consolidation between the Church and the monarchy (Tutsi mwami system), but when Kagame went to Rome for doctoral work in theology, Fr. Dejemeppe came on board and “*Kinyamateka*’s editorial vision shifted from a top-down focus on the monarchy to a more grassroots emphases on social justice, the Hutu peasantry, and democracy”,\textsuperscript{73} including the issues of *ubuhake* and *uburetwa*. *Kinyamateka*  

\textsuperscript{70} Kayibanda, C.p., 1955: II, 12, cited in Paternostre, op. cit.: 82.  
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{72} Published by the Kabgayi mission, “in the shade of the bishop’s palace” (Logiest, 1988: 50). “*Kinyamateka*, . . . was Rwanda’s first private media. . . . [It] enjoyed a widespread distribution through the church, which was firmly established in the whole country,” and “expanded from 1955 when Grégoire *Kayibanda* became its chief-editor. . . . From colonial times, the church had created strong printing facilities in the Great Lakes region in order to promote preaching. Each Rwandan diocese had its own printing facility. Later, the church’s well-trained workers started their own private printing houses. . . . In the 1960s, *Kinyamateka* was the only significant media in Rwanda, besides Radio Rwanda. . . . In 1967, the church created a second publication, the bi-monthly *Dialogue*. Both *Kinyamateka* and *Dialogue* were protected from government harassment because they belonged to the church. But generally after independence, both papers had to be moderate in their critics of the government or its treatment of the Tutsi.” (Alexis and Mpambara, 2003: p. 12).  
\textsuperscript{73} Carney, 2011: 98.
was the only political paper in Rwanda, and would soon build a circulation of 20,000.

The major ideas\textsuperscript{74} that Kayibanda felt were important to emphasize to Kinyamateka’s readers were (1) the need to educate as many young Hutu as possible to the secondary and tertiary level in order to create a widespread corps of évolutés, or elite thinkers, who could guide the country to independence and beyond; (2) these influential leaders should live and work among the rural community, rather than being cosseted in the city bureaucracy, thereby knowing what the ‘people’ wanted and thus being able to represent their needs; (3) to form associations, so that there will be an ongoing training of the elites and the population, including moral education.\textsuperscript{75}

It is necessary to form the consciousness of the inhabitants, to enlighten them about ‘real’ good and ‘real’ evil, and to train them to opt, in social life and in private life, for good, justice, equity and peace, so that the general atmosphere of the country is filled with the sense of justice and with love.\textsuperscript{76}

The Belgian Trusteeship forbade forming political associations for fear of creating racial tensions, but Kayibanda argued that the right of association be recognized:

This will be the best way—perhaps the only way—to dampen the tensions and the racial oppositions which can be born in these countries [Ruanda-Urundi] . . . Our European educators, just like their assistants, the traditional hierarchy, will find in the promotion of associations a sure framework to lead to a good end the peaceful evolution in which they have more or less succeeded until now.\textsuperscript{77}

The Hutu évolutés around Kayibanda, who would constitute the leadership of the Hutu Movement, were necessarily involved in politics, and the associations they formed had to keep a low profile as purely ‘social’ organizations. Their plans and strategies engaged

\textsuperscript{74} Paternostre, op. cit.: 93-95.
Kayibanda with the challenge of looking for concrete solutions to the economic, social and moral problems of its members, their families, and young people, and to direct the evolution of customs and traditional institutions to a democratic conception.\footnote{Ibid.}

He submitted the resultant proposals to the Trusteeship administration 1 May 1957, and they were approved the next April.

Concerning the Belgians, Kayibanda did not display an interest in ejecting the trusteeship’s administration, because (1) it did not oppressively negate the indigenous power structure, because (2) its trusteeship practices were tempered by UN monitoring (to whom annual reports and visits were due), and because (3) the Church wielded \textit{de facto} control over much of the socio-political and economic landscape. Neither was it a case of a foreign power bleeding a distant colony dry of resources, since there was little in Rwanda (regarding natural resources or potential areas of economic development) that could repay Belgium’s expenditure on administrative and development costs, even though the Belgian administrative contingent was miniscule because governing indirectly: there was a negligible amount of revenue generated through taxing a subsistence agricultural society. In this respect, Kayibanda’s concern was not drawn to immediately overthrowing the Belgian trusteeship; he no doubt saw the inevitability of independence, but also saw the value in utilizing Belgian administrative expertise and assistance, aid, and a continuing military presence until the new state was well on its feet. An example of a Belgian sympathetic view of Kayibanda is the following quote from Guy Logiest, special military resident (1959–1962) and High Representative (1962):

\footnote{Ibid.}
He reminded me of the Christian propagandists of the first centuries, who spread the faith in secret. For the first time, in this country where duplicity reigns, I felt that I was dealing with a generous and sincere man. He compared the slavery of his racial brothers to what the Hebrews had undergone in Egypt. He wanted to free them, without wishing for the death of the oppressors. If a constitutional monarchy answered these conditions, he was ready to accept it—it was the official position which his party was going to adopt. But, in reality, he little believed in the sincerity of the mwami, and certainly not in that of the Tutsi leaders. He was already thinking of a republican system. He spoke with heat, but without hatred, and with such conviction that this conversation was a determinant for the behavior that I was going to decide to conduct.79

By this time, it is evident that from Kayibanda’s religious education, deep involvement with Church organizations, and close relationships with Church leaders and religious thinkers, a sense of ‘moral outrage’ seeded and grew against the Hutus’ disenfranchisement by the Tutsi. And his successful activism through Church organizations and through its publications, Kinyamateka and L’Ami, reinforced in him the belief that there was a real possibility he could enable change; if the Church was intellectually verging on the same track, what stronger moral backing could he ask for? Kinyamateka had, early on, devoted much of its space to supporting the Belgian administration, but from the mid ‘50s could no longer avoid the pressing problems afflicting the Hutu peasants; the broad power of Kinyamateka rested on its ability to articulate the thoughts of the peasants, even though contributors could not express their opinions in the newspaper.80 It published alternative histories divergent from those of the

80 Justin Kalibwami, an editor from 1955-60, and director from 1960-63, and a close friend of Kayibanda’s, said that although Rwandan journalism was “directed by men from the Church, it nevertheless began to reflect public opinion from 1953 onwards,” and that . . . “The people invested their hopes of liberation in it [Kinyamateka],” cited in Pottier, 1993, 615-17. Kalibwami’s valuable contribution to the Hutu liberation movement was influenced by Vatican II, and his study in France, where he was exposed to Marxism and existentialism. See Pottier, op. cit..
dynastic oral traditions\textsuperscript{81} and was extremely important in affecting political attitudes and mobilizing political action in the late 1950s, because of the inherent power of the articles themselves and because they articulated widespread, preexisting perceptions among rural Rwandans.\textsuperscript{82}

To his credit, Kayibanda was soon made managing editor (1954-56) of \textit{Kinyamateka}, at the age of 30, and under his direction the journal furthered Dejemeppe’s editorial orientation, establishing itself as the organ for fighting social inequality, and becoming critically important in the political evolution of the country. “He spoke of Rwanda’s ‘equilibrated evolution’ and ‘integration into the civilised world’, putting reform before nationalism and co-operation before anti-colonialism”,\textsuperscript{83} with “prominent European, Tutsi and Hutu commentators” agreeing that the Christian civilizing mission “remained a central component of the church’s evangelical call”\textsuperscript{84} up to the period just before decolonization,\textsuperscript{85} although there was flux, as well as disagreements among the clergy. At any rate, Kayibanda was said to have made a “truly democratic newspaper, where the social doctrine of the Church was skillfully, little by little, distilled without ‘royalist’

\begin{footnotes}
\item[81] “After 1943 \textit{Kinyamateka} had six pages and cost ten francs. Its topics were evenly spread over the following during the war years: religious instruction, explanation of the news, monthly calendar of events, scientific and agricultural information, war propaganda and sport. In 1946 the front page significantly switched over from religious instruction to social and agricultural questions, with religion on page 2, and two instead of one page of news.” (Linden, op. cit: 241, note 13).
\item[82] Newbury and Newbury, 2000: 857.
\item[83] Linden, \textit{op. cit.:} 232.
\item[84] Carney, \textit{op. cit.:} pp 91.
\item[85] “[Fr. Adrianenssens] saw the Church’s mission as ‘not to please everyone but to preach truth and justice. The Church as the right to judge according to unchanging principles even the foundations of a social system... The Church as the right and duty to intervene in this issue [racism] in as much as it touches moral law... To abstain from speaking would be complicity.’ (Linden, 1977: 276, n 91). Still, “The personal preferences of missionaries, based on class and social attitudes developed in Europe, determined reactions to Rwanda’s social problems as much as pastora and directives. As late as 1959 the CMS [Church Missionary Society] could conceive of no other future for Rwanda than a Tutsi-dominated one.” (op. cit.: 261).
\end{footnotes}
clothes."

Another significant achievement for Kayibanda in this period was his appointment by the White Fathers, in June 1953, as the first lay editor of the magazine, L’Ami. It was a different kind of strategic rostrum—the primary Catholic journal directed at lay elites—in French, from which the rising spokesman for the Hutu movement could broadcast his views, and from where he continued to espouse the idea of an ‘equilibrated evolution’, out from under the Tutsi monarchy:

Understood well, the collaboration [with ‘emancipated’ Tutsis] can cleanse our social problems of a certain lazy or selfish attachment to this kind of con man, or African nationalist, who favors an indefinite preservation of the status quo.

This was a continuation of his opinion espoused in Kinyamateka:

We tried hard, however, to arouse in their [the public’s] minds the conviction that the monarchy was a human institution which depended on the will of the people and did not confer on someone a superhuman dignity and power.

The views and discourse of Kayibanda and Munyangaju, the two principal Hutu voices, had slowly begun to change in this period. L’Ami editorials began calling for “concrete

---

86 Linden, op. cit.: 235.
87 "The White Fathers started L’Ami in 1950 (C.f. Paternostre, op. cit.:87, says L’ami was founded in 1945 by Pierre Boutry) to offer a Christian perspective on the complex questions of Rwandan social and political life. They also looked to fight what they termed the “materialist ties” which threatened to swamp Rwanda’s Christian elites. Seminarians filled the pages of L’Ami with articles on various dimensions of Catholic social teaching. ... L’Ami tended to adopt a pro-Belgian editorial policy, chastising unnamed Rwandan elites for their “unnecessary” and “destructive” criticisms of Belgian authorities.” Carney (2011: 55 and 75). C.f. Linden (op. cit.: 233), “The sermonising of L’Ami was in the traditional Catholic style of generalities that allowed the complacent reader to avoid applying the lessons to himself; it was not adequate in view of such bitter litanies. Another writer went so far as to describe L’Ami’s contribution as peureuse. Also see Linden (ibid.: 220-221). L’Ami’s international pages reflected a deep concern with the fates of Indochina, China, Hungary, Yugoslavia and other nations buckling under communist pressure. Its successor Temps Nouveaux d’Afrique also carried forward the anti-communist theme.
88 "In an article entitled "Accepting our differences" in L’Ami (no. 115, Sept. 1954), Kayibanda had advocated the creation of ‘welfare homes’ to remedy the discrepancy between boys and girls.” (Cited in Paternostre, op. cit.: 111, n2).
89 Linden, ibid.: 232.
reforms, the codification of customary law, and legal recognition of rights of private property”. In addition, Kayibanda was pushing for the second of his three major ideas described above: that the influential Hutu elite should live and work among the rural community, but with the now more earnest need to build a grassroots awareness of the injustices being perpetrated against them by the monarchy. Kayibanda saw the ‘Christian’ task as “challenging barbarous mentalities which cloaked themselves in the language of the sacred customs of the country.” The Church governed much of the political life in Rwanda; it had constructed (and continued to build) the first truly public architecture in the country, and was the center for organizational meetings, and the dissemination of various kinds of knowledge and information. And because L’Ami had access to religious documents and official texts, it became the leading publication for the Hutu évolués. The pages of L’Ami suggested various democratic examples of government, and under Kayibanda’s influence urged the people—in a spin-off from the writing of the Tutsi priest, Kagame, advocating the concept of Church/State consolidation—toward the ‘new’ task of “baptizing” Rwanda’s structures and institutions, with an accord between the state and the Church being a strong basis for the advancement of Rwandan society. Kayibanda, here, is attempting to persuade the Church away from the monarchy and toward the Hutu

---

91 Linden, ibid: 258.
92 In Carney, 2011: 92-93.
93 “Pope Pius XI and the early articles in L’Ami insisted that the Church could coexist with any political structure. Older clergy solved the problem by agreeing that the Church had the right to comment on specific violations of the oral law within a political system, yet no right to criticize the system as a whole.” (citation lost).
94 “The essential defect of the Church’s official position was woolly thinking about its institutional relationship to politics. The orthodox position was to assert that the Church as moral teacher had a right to comment on the social content of politics. And when it came to racism it could be argued that this right became a duty. Yet Pope Pius XI and the early articles in L’Ami insisted that the Church could coexist with any political structure.” (Linden, 1977: 260).
95 Carney, ibid: 91-92:
movement. Yet his increasing vituperation against the Tutsis is like a vine growing around and over his good judgment and Christian discipleship:

The Tutsi, even the most idiotic, occupies the forum, official offices, and positions of responsibility. And holds on to being the only one there . . . even when he is doing nothing. Even when he has not 1/1000th of a social sense! . . . As for the courtesans (who distort the truth), I hate them with all my strength. Furthermore, they make nothing deep or long-lasting . . . it is possible to make all the customs of our country Christian except this atavism of guile, of courtisanerie, which allies so badly with evangelical caution . . . I want to banish all the half-measures in the total giving of myself to my God . . . [my italics]

Kayibanda’s appointment to the two leading papers in the country created considerable concern among the Tutsi leadership, and underscored how important Kayibanda’s voice had become: he was named a member of the General Council of Ruanda-Urundi (the two countries were still lumped together as one territory to be administered by the Belgian Trusteeship) by the Governor and Deputy Governor-General of the Belgian Congo, Jean-Paul Harroy, against the wishes of the reigning mwami, Mutara.

A year later, on 30 September 1956, the first elections in the history of Rwanda were held. As opposed to the first stage of rearranging the power structure by the Belgians into the various councils, with members of the electoral colleges selected by sub-chiefs, this time the colleges members were elected by blind votes among all adult males. The results gave the Hutus 54.4% of sub-chief council membership (up 6.8), 15.2% of chief

---

97 Dejemeppe had accompanied Kayibanda to the international Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne (JOC) conference in Belgium in 1950. He later Dejemeppe “proved instrumental in Kayibanda’s appointment as the editor of L’ami (1953) and then Kinyamateka (1955). . . . By 1955, . . . Dejemeppe’s activism had become . . . a liability . . . He was criticized for needlessly alienating the Mwami, Rwanda’s traditional leadership, the majority of évolutés, and even the Belgian colonial resident,” and consequently was passed over as Vicar Apostolic. (Carney, ibid: 121-122).
councils (up 3.8), 11.4% of Territorial councils (up 2.1), but only 3.1% of the National Council (- 5.9). As Linden explains,

In the 1956 elections all adult men were eligible to vote to choose candidates for the sub-chieftaincy councils. In theory the councils expressed the will of the people; in practice many sub-chiefs managed to push their own candidates forward. ... the caucus of traditionalist Tutsi Abbé at Nyundo used teachers and catechists to press parishioners to vote for ‘the mission’s men’. As a result many stayed at home. The missions were centres for the diffusion of government information about the election, and naturally tended to put pressure on voters to select their co-religionists.\(^{98}\)

The 1956 ‘national’ elections clearly demonstrated how little consciousness the Hutu peasantry had of themselves as an ethnic group; class conflict did not enter the election. Racist rhetoric had still not penetrated or driven Kayibanda’s attack on the monarchy. As Carney points out,

Considering his later notoriety as co-author of the 1957 Bahutu Manifesto, founder of the Mouvement Social Muhutu, and president of the Hutu-dominated First Republic, what is perhaps most striking in Kayibanda’s early 1950s writings is the muting of the Hutu-Tutsi question. For example, while Kayibanda laments the “feudal mentality” infecting the wealthier classes, he never labels this mentality “Tutsi.” Even his famous 1954 Manifesto, “Marching towards Progress,” reads like a paean for inter-racial and intra-class collaboration on the pressing social issues of the day. Significantly, Kayibanda does not name the Hutu-Tutsi question as one of these “pressing social issues.” And even after taking over the editorship at Kinyamateka in 1955, Kayibanda’s social critiques were marked by a surprising absence of Hutu-Tutsi language as late as January 1957.\(^{99}\)

\(L’Ami\) ceased publication in 1956,\(^{100}\) which allowed Kayibanda to give attention to his functions as a representative on the councils, while continuing to work at Kinyamateka, attempting to sway the authorities toward such important matters as electing more Hutu to

\(^{98}\) Linden, op. cit.: 236.
\(^{99}\) Carney, op. cit.: 99-100.
\(^{100}\) Succeeded by the more radical Temps Nouveaux d’Afrique, published by White Fathers in Bujumbura, the capital of Burundi, about 40 miles from the Rwandan border.
the councils, privatizing property rights, putting oral customs into legitimate laws, and basing positions of power on a system of meritocracy in place of the hereditary and automatic ascension to such positions. At Kinyamateka, he seems to have been coming under some pressure from Msgr Perraudin, director of the paper:

[Perraudin] would be happy if I can give myself fully, without leaving behind anything of my ideas . . . the newspaper’s management does not seem to want to use my possibilities . . . that I be reduced to the quality of a simple mukozi (hack) while waiting to be kicked out . . . do they make a mistake?

The Upper Council of the country, almost completely Tutsi, put together a document with the title “Development”, for the UN’s next visiting mission, September 1957. The document ignored the main grievance of the Hutu Movement—the disenfranchisement of the Hutu, furthered by the onerous clientship system, and the attendant ubuhake demands—and put forward, in place of these grievances, the idea that the most pressing problem was a racist one between whites and blacks, with the Tutsi as victims, in order to conceal Hutu accusations and hasten an independence movement that would keep the monarchy in place, and usurp the Hutu Movement’s push for a constitutional republic.

---

101 Kayibanda, « Inama z’igihugu », in Kinyamateka, n° 289, nov. 1956, cited in Paternostre, op. cit.: 107. “As we will see in chapter three, his language would change markedly with the release of the Bahutu Manifesto in March 1957. The early 1950s absence of Hutu-Tutsi language was not limited to Kayibanda’s writings. While themes of anti-communism, secularization, democratization, land reform, and elite conversion emerged prominently in White Father literature in the early 1950s, Hutu-Tutsi ethnic discourse was almost completely absent. (Carney, op. cit.: 99-100).

CHAPTER 7

THE BAHUTU MANIFESTO / BEGINNINGS OF PARMEHUTU PARTY / 1959 ELECTIONS / THE PEASANT REVOLT / COMMUNAL ELECTIONS

The Bahutu Manifesto

In response, and as a rebuttal,1 to this potentially threatening political maneuver, and to its patently absurd premise, Kayibanda, along with eight of his confederates:

Sylvestre Munyambonera, Maximilien Niyonzima, Godefroid Sentama, Joseph Habyarimana Gitera, Calliope Mulindahabi, Joseph Sibomana, Claver Ndahayo and Isidore Nzeyimana,2 composed on 20 March 1957 what has come to be known as the Hutu Manifesto (its original title is “Note on the Social Aspect of the Racial Problem in Rwanda: Addressed to the Trusteeship Administration”).

The document showed that the fundamental Hutu-Tutsi problem had two principle causes: the socio-political structure of the country, organized to the sole benefit of one ethnic group, inherited from the precolonial period; and the deliberate application by the Trusteeship authorities of a system of indirect administration that consolidated this structure.3 [my italics]

The UN reiterated the Manifesto’s salient points in its 1957 Visiting Mission Report:

Some people have asked whether this is a social or a racial conflict … In reality … it is both. ... it is primarily a question of a political monopoly held by one race, the Mututsi, and, in view of the social situation as a whole, it has become an economic and social monopoly. In view, also, of the de facto selection in education, this political, economic and social monopoly has also become a cultural monopoly, to the great despair of the Bahutu, who see themselves condemned forever to the role of subordinate manual workers, and this, worse still, after achieving an

---

1 See Munyarugerero, 2003: 49; Lemarchand, op. cit: 150; Reyntjens, 1985: 236.
2 (Paternostre, op. cit.: 110, n 2). “The authors of the . . . Manifesto came from ecclesial backgrounds—three were former seminarians, two served as editors at Kinyamateka, one, Mulindahabi, worked as Msgr. Perraudin’s personal secretary, and two were employed in Kabgayi by a Catholic school and Catholic press.” (Carney, op. cit: 150).
3 Paternostre, op. cit.: 111.
independence which they will have unwittingly helped to obtain.4

The Church’s support came in a Pastoral letter that was read in all the churches in the Ruanda-Urundi Territory, stemming from the Vicar apostolics—Msgr. Perraudin, Bigirimwami, Grauls and Martin. The letter addressed the “requirements of justice”, which “were still too easily underestimated” by the monarchy, who "use it wrongfully for their own advantage, for those close to them, and their friends."5

In the Manifesto (section IV. 5), and of the utmost import for the future of the country and the events leading up to the 1994 genocide, was the authors’ insistence that the separatist group designations of ‘Hutu’, ‘Tutsi’, and ‘Twa’ (a pygmoid group who numbered less than 1% of the population and never significantly figured in the country’s socio-political dynamics) be kept on identity cards.6

The one striking element in the Manifesto is . . . the element of race which is becoming more and more accentuated and acrimonious. . . . [and] labeled ‘Hamite’. The Hutu counter-elite were moving towards a dichotomous analysis of Rwandan society. . . They rejected the powerful movement of cultural nationalism as ‘Hamitisation’, a deliberate attempt to exclude them from administrative posts. Finally they insisted on the retention of ethnic designations in official documents, claiming that their proposed removal was Tutsi obfuscation. . . . the [Hutu] counter-elite slipped easily into a racial analysis of its woes.7 [my emphasis].

Their rationale was that if the designations were removed the Tutsi would take advantage of the fact that they could not, then, be traced, and so would consequently be able to monopolize jobs in the public and private sector, and in education. This fear on the part of

5 Paternostre, op. cit.: 111, n1.
6 Commenting on this Manifesto a few days later, Kayibanda wrote in his personal notebooks: “It should not especially be understood in a 'racist' sense, although in reality 'racist' and 'social' overlap nearly perfectly.” (Kayibanda, C.p., 1957: 25 and 31, cited in Paternostre, op. cit.: 113).
7 In Linden, op. cit.: 250. Also see Chrétien, 2003: 264; Lemarchand, op. cit: 149; and Reyntjens, 1985: 236.
Kayibanda and his associates, belies a fundamental mistrust of the very constitutional republic they were suing for. That is, they firmly believed a Tutsi minority (less than 15% of the population) could realistically hijack the democratic process of governance and decision making; this, in spite of the fact that only a small number of the 15% were politically and philosophically aligned. How such a small number of power seekers would orchestrate the securing of enough votes from the Hutu majority (*rubanda nyamwinshi*) to obtain administrative offices, seems ludicrous in the light of events, but escaped deliberation among the Hutu Movement leaders. Nor was it realistically addressed by Hutu Power proponents throughout Kayibanda’s and Habyarimana’s presidencies. The concept of oppositional voices operating in a governmental process was, from the publishing of the *Manifesto*, **prima facie** rejected.8

Semujanga posits an “either/or” framework on the thinking of the Hutu *évolués* in the PARMEHUTU organization and in the Bahutu *Manifesto*, saying their discourse concerning the policy of quotas necessitated a choice:

either the Tutsi are intellectually superior to the Hutu (a logically false postulate), which would explain a negative segregation against them while they are said to be a minority, or this discourse of quotas obeys a racist practice.9

This bifurcated ‘choice’ is too simplistic and doesn’t take into account other elements. One such element is institutionalized fear. Once a certain population within society holds power for a substantial amount of time, crossing generations, its hold on power thwarts competition and change, including almost complete, or severely disproportionate, access to

---

8 “Mr. S. Iddrissue, in introducing a Private Member's motion in the Ghana National Assembly calling for the introduction of a one-party system in the country contended that the African traditional system, based on the institution of chieftaincy, had no provision for opposition.” (Iddrissue, *East African Standard*: September 13th, 1962, cited in Ogot: 1963: 29).

education, especially higher education, which leads to superior jobs, as well as a “good-old-boy” network throughout the civil service bureaucracy that protects their jobs from encroachment. The bulk of the Tutsi leadership showed throughout the Belgian mandate and during the “revolution” of the 1950s an unequivocal commitment to the monarchy and Tutsi rule. Kayibanda and his colleagues, therefore, were particularly concerned that the monarchy be abolished, because it furthered the institution of minority rule. What is most important to understand here is that the évolués with Kayibanda wanted to set up a safeguard to prevent the monarchy from returning at all, but especially any time soon after independence, when the newly formed country was still fragile—in the pangs of birthing the constitution and a new social order along democratic lines. There was nothing racist per se about a safeguard against such a socio-political threat to democratic philosophy as the Tutsi monarchy posed, but it became a cause that perpetuated the Hutu-Tutsi split long after it was no longer politically necessary.

Additionally, and just as important, in feudal-like societies the masses have no access to power. And in Rwanda, especially, there was no merchant class, so society was effectively divided into the ruling class and poor peasant-farmers. And though not all Tutsi were economically situated at the level of the ruling class, they still recognized themselves as belonging to a privileged, separate, Cultural population, or class, whereas the opportunity for Hutu peasant-farmers to move to a higher standard of living was generally impossible, and the possibility of shifting their self-image, or identity, from that of being a Hutu to that of being a Tutsi only could come with the correspondent shift in economic standing. Kayibanda remarked on the inability of the Hutu masses to recognize
their plight and to gather in meaningful numbers to sue for justice. This realization is no different from any revolutionary leader’s understanding of the need for leaders to formulate a plan and distribute it to the masses in a way that it can then be marshaled into action. The quota system reversed what the vast majority of Hutu under the direct jurisdiction of the central kingdom had encountered for generations—inaccessibility to education, entrepreneurship and government jobs. Again, this reversal would not have been racist/ethnicist per se if it had been a relatively short term solution to a socio-economic and political problem—to wean the masses from a traditional lethargy and a largely unconscious acquiescence to an inferior status, and to open up job opportunities—but it persisted punitively.11

But this is not uniquely a Rwandan Hutu anger, nor did it naturally or necessarily lead to the 1994 genocide. Tutsis as oppressors and as a different cultural group from Hutus was an idea he did not construct but inherited. The idea of an egalitarian society, which was promulgated in the first constitution and Kayibanda’s presidency, was encouraged and supported by the Church in the ‘50s leading to independence. Kayibanda was not alone in his insistence on dismantling the entrenched and Tutsi-controlled monarchy in order to develop a culture of popular elections with universal suffrage

10 “The Hutu, educated in Catholic institutions where they came face to face with Tutsi in situations of expected equality, especially in the seminaries, where there was no ‘overt’ discrimination, developed a new consciousness of themselves as Hutu. When they left the seminaries they met an ethnic ‘ceiling’ on their ambitions, the only positions left for them were in school teaching or small businesses. When they read about their country they were confronted by the crushing weight of ‘Hamitic’ culture and history. . . . the Hutu spokesmen increasingly identified themselves as a competitive ethnic ‘counter-elite’ (Linden, op. cit.: 7). Fr. Stanislas Bushayija (1958: 1-5) wrote “The sense of injustice felt at one time by the Roman plebeians towards the Patricians, the Serfs towards the Lords in the former regime, is now felt by the Hutu towards the Tutsis. They seek their emancipation, to access equal rights. Thus, it is necessary to understand the complaints, the events, the journal articles that follow each other at an accelerated pace. History shows that when claims reach such a point of maturity, they inevitably lead to revolutions or civil wars, if the leaders do not give them a satisfactory answer” (cited in Kanyamibwa, 2009: 13).

11 Compare this to the Indian government’s decision allot special quotas to the untouchables in order to redress the inequality created by the caste system.
representing majority opinions. Rather, Kayibanda’s presidency became problematic and a failure because he did not deliver a multi-party governmental process, and because his quota system imposed on the Tutsi was punitive rather than time-sensitive in a proscriptive sense. That is, he did not put in place a structured program for adequately educating enough Hutu to effectively fill in a timely fashion the job vacancies left by emigrant and refugee Tutsi (because restricted or persecuted)—in government, education, health care, state-run enterprises, and private business.

He created a socio-economic vacuum that was in a sense parallel to that created by the Nazi policies toward the Jews: by prohibiting Jews to work, the Third Reich lost the majority of skilled workers and managers in manufacturing, banking, and most trades, as well as a major part of the system of jurisprudence. Germany could eventually make up for the losses over time because of the sophisticated infrastructure in place for training and employing new personnel, but for an undeveloped nascent state like Rwanda, with a newly formed government, and having almost no infrastructure, replacing the ousted and departed Tutsi personnel who had been running the territorial monarchical government proved too much for Kayibanda’s disenfranchising policies, centered around the quota system.

Coupled with this serious problem was another: maintaining a military surveillance and defense along Rwanda’s borders in order to prevent the incursion of refugee and expatriate fighters who wanted to forcefully return to their homes or overthrow the Kayibanda government. Kayibanda created the refugee problem and was saddled with its problems during his entire presidency, a legacy inherited by Habyarimana. The Tutsi Diaspora, along with the disgruntled and hamstrung Tutsi remaining in Rwanda comprised
a fundamental problem resulting from an unsound and unhealthy policy that took up an
inordinate amount of time, attention, and resources that were desperately needed for
getting the inchoate country on its feet. The punitive and retributive nature of Kayibanda’s
mind set that drove him to expel Tutsi from the country and to impose—and to persist
with—the quota system, had the single most destructive effect on his presidency.

Kayibanda’s failure and ensuing ouster from government were inevitable given his
inability to chart a progressive course for the new state. What gained him the presidency—
the impetus derived from his fixated zeal to destroy the Tutsi monarchy—could not stand
in stead of the daily demand for legislative foresight, leadership skills, and a pragmatic
attack on the needs of the nation. As an évolué, educated in the Church, he was schooled
in metaphysics, ethics, and rhetoric, and as an organizer in nonprofit groups he learned
how to rally like-minded people around an idea, but he did not have experience facing off
with, mollifying, or making unsavory but necessary deals and compromises with the cut-
throat power brokers in politics, the military and business. His disenfranchisement of the
Tutsis left him without a competitive and rich social mixture of interests, personalities,
skills, money and support. The result was a closed, one-party structure, winner take all,
rather than a nuanced interplay of varying groups, and that one party was overloaded with
appointees from Kayibanda’s home region.

Kayibanda did appoint Habyarimana, a man from outside his home region (and one
at odds with it) as head of the military, but he did it with the belief that, with the army’s
leader recruited from the northern region, where resistance to Tutsi rule had held out
longest in the territory, the army would then be as intolerant of Tutsi as Kayibanda himself.
Habyarimana, the northerner, would be a bulwark against instances of Tutsi militant attempts to infiltrate the country, but Kayibanda, inexplicably, didn’t recognize the danger of having a commander-in-chief with northern allegiances on his doorstep while he (Kayibanda) handed out favors to people in his south-central home region. Regionalism was as fateful a threat as the Tutsi, and that is why, when Habyarimana became president, he began by preaching for unity.

And this points out one difference between Kayibanda and Habyarimana: Habyarimana, in order to become head of the army, had to exhibit superior leadership while understanding how men of ambition jockeyed for positions of rank. Authority in such a case is earned through well-recognized channels of behavior, climbing up the ranks in much the same way as one would through the Church hierarchy. But, much more important than the demise of yet another ineffectual leader among the many newly formed African states in the ‘60s was the shape Kayibanda left engraved upon the Rwandan socio-political structure and which persisted through Habyarimana’s reign. In spite of a new ‘republican’ constitution there was no significant break with the old Tutsi monarchical power structure consisting of top-down rule, with the head of power delegating offices personally through the ranks of central government and as far down as governors and mayors. And because there was only one political party, the resulting vertical hierarchy was rife with regional favoritism and nepotism. Rather than a meritocracy or a competitive multi-party electoral system to allow and invite change and new ideas, a stagnant status quo persisted as self survival as well as a crude, unexamined ideology imposed as a necessity to fit in with the demands of the administration.
Apart from the long-lasting effect of the rhetoric in the *Manifesto*, of equal importance to the document’s successful impact were two elements: that the *Manifesto* was a written public document that had permanence as a concrete presence in history. It, therefore could not, in a practical manner, be denied, removed, or in some way falsified, and so stood as a permanent reproof to Tutsi monarchic aspirations hidden behind nationalistic sloganeering. Second, the *Manifesto*—for the first time in Rwandan history—stood for the awakened Hutu self-esteem:\(^{12}\) it was a jumping-off point for the performance of the new idea of civil rights, something that could only be attained (constitutionally) within a formal national government, and would be first exercised through universal suffrage two years after the *Manifesto*’s publication. Thus, a published document gave a culminating enduring voice to already stated grievances recognized by the Belgian Trusteeship, the Church, and the UN, and by doing so also helped promote self realization among the majority of Rwandans. To be sure, the *Manifesto* did not do this by itself, but was a significant signpost separating the past from the future. Kayibanda’s importance as the voice of the Hutu movement reached its zenith with the publication of the *Manifesto*, and his language changed noticeably afterwards, nakedly espousing a racist agenda.\(^{13}\) The *Manifesto* transformed forever the nature of the Hutu movement and fundamentally shaped Kayibanda’s future government, as well as continued through the Habyarimana years to deeply influence Hutu racist-oriented ideological extremists.

\(^{12}\) Lemarchand (op. cit.:152) believes “the significance of the *Manifesto* lay not so much in the organisational steps which followed its publication . . . as in the psychological climate it created among the Hut masses”.

\(^{13}\) Chrétien, 2003: 264; Lemarchand, 1970: 149; Reyntjens, 1985: 236
What is striking about this period and the way it shaped the future is what Hannah Arendt called ‘surrendering the ability to think’, the loss of the silent dialogue between a person and themself that makes moral judgment possible. That is, Kayibanda and his cohorts—but Kayibanda especially, because he put so much emphasis on the Church as a necessary moral force in the working of the state—abandoned the self-reflection encouraged by the teachings of the same Church in order to blindly follow a racist policy that they automatically accepted as the rule, whereby the rule became law, and the law became habit of action, performed without thought: they began losing their ‘personhood’ by abandoning the humanist philosophy underlying their education, and which was designed to inculcate in them a deep sense of moral imperatives—something they ironically demanded in their *Manifesto*, and in their newspaper and journal articles. Instead, they morally disappeared into political expediency in order to survive in the bureaucratic arena. This happens in every country, to varying degrees, but in those countries where democracy has never existed, where corruption, rent seeking, nepotism, and favoritism are rife, the situation is particularly acute: society is cleft into two severely disparate paths, with one leading to poverty as a peasant-farmer, and the other to a relatively secure place in the ‘system’.

It is this moral vacuum, then, that was created within the Hutu Movement the moment it shifted from being concerned with the humanist idea of an egalitarian society to being focused on racial separateness. The *Manifesto* is an historical document that enshrines this shift, and must be considered as an important turning point in Rwandan socio-political discourse; certainly as influential politically as the demand to the Belgian
and UN authorities to redress the mistreatment of the Hutu majority under the monarchy, which complaint had already been trumpeted repeatedly and was nothing new: as we have seen, everyone—the Church, the Belgians, the UN, and even many educated Tutsis—was aware of the gross inequality under the mwami-ship system. It was insupportable in the international political climate of the late ‘50s, as well, as can be witnessed in the rise to independence among the territories and colonies that made up almost all of Black Africa south of the Sahara. Certainly, Kayibanda and his colleagues didn’t have to frame their cause in a racist format; they had awakened a large part of the Hutu population to the real possibility of overthrowing the monarchy through a democratic process of universal suffrage which, in fact, occurred.

Why, then, the moral collapse? When Kayibanda’s PARMEHUTU government branded the Tutsis as the Other, for political and ideological reasons, they institutionalized immorality and entered the sphere of the ‘loss of personhood’ that Arendt describes; an atmosphere of immorality that was reified in the Manifesto and threaded its way through the fabric of Kayibanda’s government until becoming an unconscious aspect of its socio-political culture, and then was perpetuated without thought. It was sustained through Habyarimana’s reign only because he chose not to curtail it.

That the Church did nothing to stop the racist entrenchment is a sorry comment on its moral responsibility, especially given its ubiquitous influence, and their leaders’ close relationships with Kayibanda and then Habyarimana. One could say that ‘personhood’ dissolved into corporate acquiescence in the name of fear: on a personal level the fear of losing one’s position (livelihood), and on an organizational level the fear of losing
influence (politically, monetarily, ideologically). In the Church’s case, to lose the favor of and access to the governmental ‘ear’ would result in losing funds for Church-related endeavors (school expenses: administration, construction, upkeep, but perhaps above all, control over what could or should be taught), and losing influence over the government itself (especially concerning communism). In this last aspect, the Church was willing to turn a blind eye to governmental moral misdeeds (just as were donor countries) as long as the government followed an anti-communist line. ‘Thinking’, in the Arendtian sense, then, had little support, and little chance for survival, or influence, certainly in respect to the government and its administrative entities. This raises a serious question about the effectiveness of the entire Church educational system in relation to the kinds of évolués it turned out, and in terms of its apparent docility in the face of massive civil rights abuses by its ‘children’.\(^\text{14}\) How successful could it have been to have lost them? This is not a postulation or query as part of a naive attempt to apportion blame to somebody for the Rwandan government’s solidification into a racist operational mindset. Rather, the mechanisms underlying human involvement in immoral deeds—the suspension of ‘thought’—are in play from the moment the Manifesto was conceived and then published

\(^{14}\) Volf (1999: 8) believes that “Christian church’s are either impotent in the face of violent conflicts or actively participate in them” because of “the proclivities of its adherents which are at odds with the character of the Christian faith,” which he describes as a “confusion of loyalty,” in which many Christians though “explicitly giving ultimate allegiance to the gospel of Jesus Christ, . . . in fact seem to have an overriding commitment to their respective cultures and ethnic groups. Hence in conflict situations they tend to fight on the side of their cultural group and employ faith as a weapon in struggle. Kayibanda appears to have had this recalcitrant problem of confusion of loyalty, espousing Christian values but practicing racist policies—the Church, as well, by allowing this to become social policy. Concerning the Church’s ineffective posture, Gregory Baum an editor of The Reconciliation of Peoples (1997), writes, “The authors [of the essays in the book] realize that the church’s theological tradition offers very little wisdom on the social meaning of reconciliation. It is symptomatic that even in the most recent Handbook of Catholic Theology, published by Crossroad in 1995, the long, scholarly article on reconciliation makes no reference whatever to the reconciliation between peoples. The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought, published by Liturgical Press in 1994, contains no article on reconciliation” (cited in Volf, ibid: 9). If there were a causal mechanism in Rwandan social structures that could elicit reconciliation between APROSOMA’S Hut and the Tutsi elite at this juncture, it is not forthcoming.
for all Rwandans to see. From this point, whatever ‘higher’ purpose had been ascribed to
the Hutu Movement is now submerged under a naked philosophy of retribution against not
only the Tutsi leadership as represented in the monarchical system, but also the entire Tutsi
population, existing and yet to exist: insisting on keeping the identity card designations of
ethnic/racial ‘belonging’ puts immorality at the center of policy. Extra-judicial behavior is
only one part of this—the idea of human rights has no solid footing.

Looked at from this point of view, the 1994 genocide could not have happened if
Kayibanda and his colleagues had issued a *Manifesto* concerned first and foremost with
establishing a real republic, based on jurisprudence, human rights, and democratic
administration. That would have taken substantial conciliation with and contributions
from divergent and even opposing points of view. It would have been, necessarily,
intellectually ‘messy’, and would have involved plurality of parties in order to have a
check on non-representative government and abuse of power. Moreover, it would have
automatically found the identification card designations unlawful. The constitution that
Kayibanda and his colleagues drew up *appears* to contain democratic principles, but, in
fact, his government quickly devolved into a one-party ‘dictatorship’, in which his
favoritism for his home region created animosity and a split in the Hutu constituency
between north and south. It is what happened to derail the premise of democracy that
makes Kayibanda’s life a fractured path.

In Gitarama, June 1957, only three months after the *Manifesto* was published,
Kayibanda, along with the majority of leading Hutu elites who professed concern with
democracy in the country, created the *Mouvement Social Muhutu* (MSM), “as if it had been decided in common with the leaders. A movement of solid and organized social activities, which should show our spirit to build”. MSM was the forerunner of the PARMEHUTU party (*Parti du Mouvement et l'Émancipation Hutu*), formed two years later, which would be the spearhead for the Hutu independence movement. Then, just three months after Kayibanda started the MSM party, the Church sent him, along with Aloys Munyangaju, to Belgium to intern on Catholic newspapers. This hiatus from the nascent MSM, though it retarded the organizations development, was offset by the activist training he received through contacts he made with the Christian Labor movement (MOC), and with the Christian trade unions (such as the *Confédération des Syndicats Chrétiens*).

Also, while Kayibanda was interning with the left-leaning Catholic paper *Vers l’avenir*, in Belgium, Joseph Gitera, one of the signatories of the Bahutu Manifesto, created a

---

15 Because of the Belgian prohibition of political organizations, MSM was founded as an officially non-political association. In two years it had “built a grassroots network across Rwanda, taking advantage of Kayibanda’s and Calliope Mulindahabi’s extensive connections within TRAFIPRO, the Teachers Association (AMR), and the Legion of Mary.” (Carney, op. cit.: 211).


17 “The White Fathers were invaluable to the broadening of the minds of the évolutés, as they were “to sponsor the first Rwandans’ travel to Europe . . .” (Linden, op. cit.: 222).

18 “Munyangaju had launched and edited the newspaper, *Soma*, in 1956 in Kinyaga, the southwestern part of Rwanda, to bring attention to the social inequality in society.” Like Kayibanda, “He had been educated in mission schools and at the Grand Séminaire of Nyakibanda.” (Newbury, 1988: 182). He also worked in Bukavu from 1947 until 1958, when he was named editor of the Bujumbura newspaper, *Temps Nouveaux d’Afrique*. (Op. cit.: 284). His “‘old boy ties’ in the Catholic mission network provided an important network of relations with Hutu leaders in other areas of the country who themselves had come through mission schools.” (Newbury, 1988: 182). A short time before leaving for Belgium, Munyangaju and Joseph Gitera had formed the Association for the Social Advancement of the Masses (APROSOMA), in Butare, “as a different but complementary entity to the Hutu Social Movement.” (Paternostre, op. cit.: 118).

19 Kayibanda worked at *La Croix*, and Munyangaju at *La Cité*.

20 Logiest, 1988: 50-53. “He frequently met the persons in charge of Social Action, and in particular the "Popular Teams" for the education of adult males: an experience by which he seems to have been able to be later inspired to organize the local teams of the Hutu Social Movement.” (Kayibanda, *Letter* of 20.11.91 from Lucie Bragard, cited in Paternostre p. 118: note 2). Also see Carney, 2011:p. 131.

21 “Gitera, like Kayibanda and Munyangaju, had attended school at the Petit Séminaire of Kabgayi and the Grand Séminaire at Nyakibanda. But unlike Kayibanda, who was a teacher and leader of several organizations, Gitera was a small-businessman with a brickworks near Astrida. Gitera founded his own journal, *Ijwi rya Rubanda Rugufi* (Voice
stridently anti-Tutsi party, L’association Pour le Promotion des Masses Bahutu (APROSOBA), which was subsequently countered, in 1959, by an oppositional Tutsi party, the Union Nationale Rwandaise (UNAR). The racist element, so long held in check, had openly become a part of the national independence movement in the country, even though the National Upper Council [CSP] in June 1958 claimed there was no racist problem and banned the “usage of the terms Hutu, Tutsi and Twa in official documents.

A few months before, to address this mounting cleavage, and discuss the Manifesto, Mwami Mutara convened a joint study committee, “including six of the main Hutu leaders: Balthazar Bicamumpaka, Calliope Mulindahabi, J.-M.-V. Bendantunguka, Maximilien Nyonzima, Joseph Gitera and Claver Ndahayo”. Unfortunately, Mwami Mutara, as well as the National Upper Council, which had to examine the conclusions of the joint committee, disregarded its recommendations, with the result that ethnic rhetoric hardened. Adding fuel to the fire, Tutsi traditionalists, perhaps hoping to find an ally in Mutara, presented him with two incendiary papers. The first claimed their inherent supremacy over the Hutu population:

“The history shows that Ruganzu killed many Hutu chiefs (abahinza) and conquered their domains. As our kings killed Bahutu ones how can they pretend to be our brothers?”

And the second paper, represented the important cattle herders, voiced their opposition to any sort of land reform, adding that it was the Hutu that were causing harmful social

---

22 Paternostre, op. cit.: 121.
23 See Carney, op. cit.: 194.
disruption. Mutara himself denied there was any Hutu-Tutsi problem, and attacked the
“criminals who sow division”, adding that “when the tree is found which produces these
bad fruits of division, it will be cut, uprooted and burned, so that it disappears and nothing
more remains”. These two documents incensed Hutu journalists and political leaders,
especially Kayibanda and Munyangaju (who were still abroad), and, prompted retaliatory
and increasingly strident anti-Tutsi rhetoric, with Gitera ramping up the fight against
ubuhake (land clientship).

Before being sent to Belgium in September of 1957, Kayibanda had become a
member of TRAFIPRO (Travail, Fidélité, Progrès), a cooperative launched in 1956 that
became an important feeder for burgeoning Hutu businessmen and politicians. Despite
the fact that by 1958 the membership and the board of ten directors had become largely
Tutsi, Kayibanda used his influence in TRAFIPRO for his own political advantage, and
after becoming president “transformed TRAFIPRO into a state marketing board that

25 Paternostre, op. cit.: 123.
26 Carney, op. cit.: 131. Also see Chrétiens, 2003: 264; Lemarchand, 1970: 154; Munyarugerero, 2003: 50-51;
Reyntjens, 1985: 236.
27 Emmanuel Karake, of the PARMEHUTU party, published in Kinyamateka the following reply to the Tutsi paper:
“I would like to tell you that we are all Rwandans, whether those who originate from Kigwa, or from Mututsi and
Nyampundu, even others who came before the abovementioned from different areas, we are all brothers and sisters.
We should all unite and work together instead of creating divisionism among ourselves—and this is possible. All of
us; Tutsi, Hutu and Twa have to find the way of stopping hatred among ourselves. This exists because of ethnic
names’ misinterpretation . . .” (Karake, 1958: 2).
28 “The Belgian administration abolished forced labor after 1949, . . . and instituted a new tax system, which required
Hutu farmers to give a part of their production to Tutsi chiefs and other officials, yet many Hutus were forced to work
on the chiefs’ coffee plantations in addition. . . . In a move to help Hutus counter the inequalities . . . Father Pien
launched TRAFIPRO, a coffee cooperative through which Hutus could sell their coffee without interference by the
largely Tutsi-controlled governmental system.” (Kamola, 2008: 64). “TRAFIPRO . . . allowed the . . . opposition
movement to begin solving two of the main problems they faced . . . their lack of supporters beyond the area between
Gitarama and Ruhengeri, and the . . . little contact [they had] with the [hill] population.” (Lemarchand, 1970:
29 TRAFIPRO “aimed to promote the social and economic interests of its members on issues of price stability,
working conditions, and infrastructure. This initiative grew out of Msgr. Perraudin’s own familiarity with cooperative
movements in Switzerland; Swiss development workers would prove integral in facilitating TRAFIPRO’s success in
the late 1950s and early 1960s. . . . [and] TRAFIPRO helped the Rwandan church develop stronger grassroots
networks in the countryside.” (Carney: op. cit.: 146).
purchased coffee from local farmers in seventy locations throughout the country”. But TRAFIPRO being based in the south (Kayibanda’s birthplace) increasingly benefited the clients from that region, to the exacerbation of Hutu from other districts, and by the late ‘60s TRAFIPRO was responsible for fostering “regional bias, corruption and [a] climate of terror,’ as it became ‘the backbone of an authoritarian regime’ in which ‘northern businessmen found themselves pushed out of business and out of politics”.

Kayibanda’s regionalism thus created a division in the ranks of the elite, ran counter to the Church’s vision of the organization as a coalescing cooperative across the country, and eventually lead to his downfall in the coup of 1973. TRAFIPRO’s southern bias was the main reason Habyarimana later abolished the cooperative. Still, in the run-up to the 1959 revolution and independence, if Kayibanda already harbored a strong regional bias it was not in play, nor could he have allowed it to interfere, since his overriding aim was to unite the various Hutu populations behind his program of dissolving the monarchy.

Kayibanda’s attempts to create Hutu self-awareness, or a particular national consciousness, had gone through several steps. First was the forming of associations in order to bring together évolutés for common cause, and to dispatch them in a coordinated manner to various districts around the country in order to address the hill population. Then the media, in the form of Kinyamateka (in Kinyarwanda) and L’Ami (in French), had been employed to reach the peasant-farmers as well as the more educated Hutus. The

31 Pottier, 1993a: 11.
32 Kamola, op. cit.: 64.
33 See Clark, 2006.
publication of the Hutu *Manifesto* historically concretized the aims of the Movement, giving a permanent voice to the disparity between the Tutsi and Hutu populations. And recently, the Movement had been able to consolidate a kind of soft rapprochement among the Hutu from different regions in the country, in a fragile temporal unity against the monarchy.

The Tutsis at this point, in the early to mid ‘50s, had no concerted platform. They had counted on their superior numbers on the various councils (subchief, chief, territory, and national) created by the Belgians in 1950, and had only recently begun to form parties in reaction to the Hutu Movement.34 And there were different efforts by Tutsi leaders to go on the offensive. Linden makes a valuable observation regarding a Tutsi political maneuver attempted at the time:35

> The Tutsi elite had a powerful case and presented it subtly. They decried conflict between *imiryango*, lineages, as destructive unity—a fact the northern Hutu were coming to acknowledge—but by *imiryango* they referred to ‘*abatutsi, abahindiro, abega, abahutu*’ with complete confusion of level, class and clan; the mwami was father of them all. To escape from the trap the Hutu tended to use the word *ubgoko*, clan or tribe, and spoke of Gatutsi, Gahutu, and Gatwa to underline historic differences of race and caste by reference to the eponymous ancestors.

There is a counterfactual worth considering at this point: If the majority of Tutsi in leadership positions had shown good faith by not just recognizing Kayibanda’s and the Hutu Movement’s main points of contention—abolishing the monarchy and land clientship—but by also actively taking part in the abolition of those demands, and partnering with the Hutu Movement in the move toward independence (something that clearly benefited them both), then it would have deflected the Hutu Movement’s ability to

---

34 Clark, op. cit.: 83.
35 Linden, op. cit.: 255.
make them the straw man, to easily link them with a feudal past. If this had been done before the ethnic/racist element entered the arena, it would have allowed the Tutsi elite to salvage some political standing going forward. However, and this is the crux of the Hutu-Tutsi ‘problem’ as it formed in the ‘50s, the leaders of the two Hutu parties heading into the fight for independence—Kayibanda of PARMEHUTU, and Gitera of APROSOMA—were implacably anti-Tutsi (Linden remembers Kayibanda as plainly hating the Tutsi), and, as is evident in their Hutu Manifesto, already committed to keeping the distinction between the Hutu and Tutsi populations on the identification cards, even though the country’s Upper Council voted 12 June 1958 on a motion for the terms Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa to be removed from official documents.

As 1958 saw the eruption of the Hutu-Tutsi question in Rwandan political discourse, Habyarimana was 21 years old and a student in the Grand Séminaire in Kabgayi. He was struggling with choosing a career, and two years later would give up studying for the priesthood and enroll at Lovanium University in Leopoldville, the Congo, in order to start work on a medical degree. If Lumumba and the move to independence hadn’t started while he was there, he would have missed Rwanda’s independence altogether. It was a chance occurrence that forced him back to Rwanda at the moment it was in the midst of becoming a state. That Habyarimana had nothing to do with the Hutu revolution and the run-up to independence shows how differently he and Kayibanda would be positioned in the nascent nation, and would significantly affect their future relationship and their performance as heads of government: Kayibanda the intellectual and committed organizer; Habyarimana the military tactician and leader of a decisive force. Yet, their
presidencies had many commonalities, as we shall see.

When Kayibanda and Munyangaju returned to Rwanda, in November 1958, they tightened the Hutu Movement leadership and were able to utilize the media, contacts and events through Kinyamateka, TRAFIPRO (where Kayibanda was elected to the management board), the Teachers Association (AMR), the Legion of Mary (of which Kayibanda became national president), MSM, and large Catholic proceedings, for disseminating propaganda and bringing in valuable new recruits, including some of Kayibanda’s former seminary class members. At this time, “anti-monarchical” rhetoric was still the major theme of their Hutu independence movement, with racism simmering on the back burner. While Kayibanda, Munyangaju, Gitera and others were leading an increasingly clamorous rank-and-file campaign, it wasn’t until late 1958 that Msgrs Perraudin, Bigirumwami, and other religious leaders publicly addressed the Hutu-Tutsi question, and even then showed significant disagreement among themselves over the socio-political issues gripping the country.

Also in late 1958, André Perraudin, Vicar Apostolic of Kabgayi, kept Kayibanda at Kinyamateka as lay editor, but because of his political involvement replaced him on the

---

36 “However, when the political tensions came to increase in the country, the religious authorities wanted to avoid any risk of dishonest compromise, even indirect, with any party; and Kayibanda, while remaining responsible for the section of Kabgayi, had to abandon his national responsibilities in this movement.” (Paternostre, op. cit.: 130).
37 “Members of Kayibanda’s class at seminary, Abbé Apollinaire and Deogratias Rugerenyange, with Anastase Makuza, formed a natural group of friends.” (Linden, op. cit.: 251, 258).
38 Lemarchand, 2009: 115.
39 Carney, op. cit.: 127-128. Concerning this disagreement, Kalibwami (1991: 535) says, “The explanation must be sought also in changes in the composition of the clergy over time and the arrival of figures of authority who accepted that Rwandan society was changing. Noteworthy here is the arrival in the mid-1950s of the powerful Swiss figurehead Mgr Perraudin, . . . who understood the Hutu-Tutsi problem against the backcloth of ‘une très vieille tradition républicaine’, and the arrival of numerous ‘missionnaires d’origine wallonne, issus de couches sociales plus modestes, et plus enclin a prendre le parti des opprimes que leurs prédécesseurs.’” (cited in Pottier, 1993: 615).
40 Appointed archbishop November 1959.
editorship board with the Tutsi, Abbé Justin Kalibwami (1957-59), and appointed a Tutsi priest, Innocent Gasabwoya, overall director (1957-59) (Gasabwoya was a true churchman, and would be attacked from both sides).41 Perraudin, it appears, wanted to keep some semblance of fairness to the weekly publication and kept Hutu priests largely off the editorial board in the period leading up to independence.42 Still, Kinyamateka became a “powerful weapon in the armoury of the MSM and APROSOMA writers after April 1958”.43

Although Kayibanda had to rewrite many articles to get them past Kalibwami’s censorship, he effectively used Kinyamateka as a platform from which to help build the Hutu Movement’s grassroots base,44 while the Tutsi elect stayed largely within their ruling bureaucracy when trying to gain support, and so failed to engage the Hutu masses.45

While elements of the progressive White Fathers and their leadership increasingly supported Kayibanda and the Hutu movement, most of the Tutsi power holders were, at the beginning, unable to recognize the validity of the Hutu discontent and resentment because of their blind entrenchment in the monarchical socio-political structure. Alexis Kagame, the intellectual leader of the Tutsis, and twelve years older than Kayibanda, had preceded Kayibanda through the same schools and had been director of Kinyamateka just two years

41 Linden, op. cit.: 247, n. 151.
42 Carney, op. cit.: 142
43 Linden, ibid: 252.
44 Linden (ibid: 235) points out that Kayibanda’s articles in Kinyamateka lacked perspective, “the few hundred masons, carpenters, tailors and craftsmen with primary education he referred to alongside the illiterate plantation workers and miners as ‘the working class’. ‘The term “proletariat” is hardly known,’ he wrote; ‘its reality is becoming their daily experience’.”
45 “Conservative Tutsi ‘nationalism’ disqualified itself by its elitist contempt for the mass of the population. Few educated Tutsi contemplated sharing power with the Hutu and radical policies. As in the emirates of northern Nigeria, the ‘nationalism’ of the traditional rulers was not a movement or change but an entrenchment of ruling class privilege.13 The masses were called to worship at the shrine of the ‘natural leader’, and some of the old Fathers were happy to bless the liturgy. (Linden, ibid: 251).
before Kayibanda started work there. Kagame was a champion of reforming the old social order of Rwanda within a Christian mold, and as such was lined up against the évolutés and their insistence on abolishing the monarchy. (It is intriguing to note that Kagame rose to social-political renown and remained an éminence grise—and untouchable—through the upheavals of the revolution and two successive Hutu governments, dying a natural death in 1981). And Aloysius Bigirumwami, Rwanda’s first bishop, and a Tutsi, who had at the outset contested the idea that there was any Tutsi and Hutu conflict, eventually stood behind the ethnic separation of the two populations, championing the Tutsis and their ‘superiority’. Maton’s observation here seems worth noting:

The colonial administration strengthened at the beginning the power of the leaders, who . . . were largely Tutsi-ministers. On the one hand obliged to share the power with the Belgians, these Tutsi leaders were often opposed to the colonial power and that of the Roman Catholic Church, which had a monopoly on the public services of education and public health. . . . The farmers-Hutus were later Christianized, but more quickly than the Tutsis. . . . First of all, education was for the poor people a means of social advancement. . . . they were considered inferior by the Tutsi, which were their only reference point to judge their situation. Besides, Tutsi did nothing to reassure Hutu. For example, the archetypal metaphors of the Tutsi in this period are always the priest’s ‘stick’ and the warrior’s lance.46

The Tutsi elite, though never a monolithic group,

by and large felt that the demands voiced by the Hutu leadership were representative of the views of only a tiny minority of hotheads, and that most of the trouble came from errors mad by the administration in the application, or misapplication, of indirect rule. Such being the case, only through ‘full independence’ could a lasting remedy be found to the social ills generated by the Belgian presence. The strategy laid out by the Tutsi oligarchy, in brief, was to seek the eviction of the trust authorities at the earliest possible date, so as to reassert their control over the destinies of the country. Once this was one, the future of the

---

46 In Maton, 1994: 9
monarchy seemed assured.\footnote{Lemarchand, op. cit.: 153.}

Positionally at variance with the Tutsi elite was the Church, whose support for the independence movement was in part grounded in the pressure of fulfilling the promise of the principles of its own philosophy, otherwise it would have to admit to an essential hypocrisy. Most of the missionaries and their superiors were aware of the Hutu-Tutsi ‘problem’ and genuinely wanted to correct the social imbalance, but were fearful of going too fast and possibly creating an uncontrollable condition of chaos and conflict. The Church’s support, from its establishment in Rwanda, had been for those who were perceived as the ‘natural’ rulers, the Tutsi, whom they had found in control when they arrived. They had at first uncritically accepted the Eurocentric prejudice against the comparatively unsophisticated and unaccomplished Hutu masses, educating first the Tutsis in order to create a literate and accomplished indigenous group of administrative personnel, and only slowly accepting small numbers of Hutu into seminaries, primarily for entering the priesthood, and not for becoming part of the ruling class. But the dynamics resulting from the introduction of the technology of literacy into society cannot be contained within a few narrow areas of society. Reading and writing led, on a social scale, to the Hutu’s greater self-awareness, and the consequence of this awakening in a significant percent of Rwanda’s peasant-farmer Hutu majority was their emergence as an eventual controlling voting block against the monarchy.

The Church, paradoxically, found itself losing control\footnote{By 1959 the political evolution of Rwanda had reached a point where the language of theology and common sense was heard as the language of the coloniser, and the Church qua institution was unable to direct or moderate the course of events.” The Bishop [Perraudin] wrote to his clergy, appealing to them to refrain from partisan politics and} of these Hutu peasant-
farmers, whom they had made literate in order that they would continue throughout life to be steeped in religious doctrine, but who, ironically—because of their very literacy—were becoming aware of and drawn to a movement more immediate, more captivating than the Church.49 The missionaries could not have foreseen this outcome50 since they had been rather single-mindedly intent on amassing converts, and had purposefully not preached civil disobedience because they did not want to interfere with the social order, fearing it would lead to a breakdown in the socio-political order, and then to chaos. Yet, however inadvertently, they did introduce through literacy a potent technology for social change.

In one sense this can be seen as a cautionary tale—the acquisition of literacy and the dissemination of ideas cuts both ways. During the run-up to independence in the late ‘50s, the Belgian trustees and the Roman Catholic Church increasingly allowed and supported voices calling for a remedy to the social imbalance.51 But they couldn’t have measured the depth of Kayibanda’s growing racist agenda,52 and his determination to

---

49 “The Leopoldville riots of January 1959 and the subsequent government declaration that the Congo would be led ‘without precipitous haste’ to independence alerted the Church in Rwanda to the impending crisis.” (Linden, op. cit.: 258).
50 However, Fr. Dejemeppe, January 1951, wrote, “The Fathers and whites, we do not understand the évolués, . . . We do not put ourselves in their place when considering their problems. We subject them to an extraordinary degree of patronage. In talking with Grégoire Kayibanda I came to ask myself whether there had not already grown up among many of our évolution a sense of incompatibility between us and them. This feeling can be dangerous, . . . because it will logically be followed by that of opposition, then struggle and revolt.” (Linden, op. cit.: 229).
51 “Despite proddings from New York the Belgian administration stubbornly refused to think seriously about democratic reforms in Rwanda before the requisite level of economic and ‘moral’ progress was judged to have taken place.” (Linden, op. cit.: 222).
52 “In contrast to the position in the early 1950s, when the évolution formed a common front against Europeans, the growing disillusionment of the counter-élite had driven them back amongst the Hutu masses and semi-skilled labour. The degree to which they became an élite manqué seems to have been the degree to which they experienced what Kayibanda called ‘une prise de conscience fondamentale’.11 They looked to the new missionaries for advice and support, and these in turn saw them as willing agents of Catholic social policy. The solidarity of the indigenous bourgeoisie was a hopeless chimera; Rwanda’s ethnic boundaries had become too rigid where they mattered most, in competition for the key roles and status in the colonial administration. Under the pressure of the Tutsi cultural renaissance the counter-élite slipped easily into a racial analysis of its woes.” (Linden, op. cit.: 250).
eliminate the monarchy not just as a means to achieving a more egalitarian system of government, but as a step in turning the tables and disenfranchising Tutsis altogether.

Thus, the two major factors in the precolonial territory’s steps toward becoming a state entity were, first, the German occupation, which was brief and employed only a handful of German administrators, but initiated the peeling back of the lid on the secluded kingdom, and second, the Belgian occupation and Church incursion, which permanently exposed the kingdom to the outside world of ideas and new technologies, and which resulted in the country holding a mirror up to itself and discovering a heretofore unrealized inner world of potential. Yet, the Tutsis controlling the socio-political power structure, even though preferentially educated by the missionaries ahead of the Hutu, never perceived, in spite of (and because of) their privileged position, the inherent risk in their unbalanced system, nor the seriousness of the growing movement for change highlighted and encouraged among the disadvantaged Hutu population by the Hutu évolués.53 The Tutsi elites’ callousness to the necessary change that would correct the severe socio-political imbalance created by the monarchy fueled the Hutus’ growing alienation from the system.

Impinging at a distance on the Tutsi elites’ thinking and cause was Rwanda’s southern neighbor, and previously semi-coupled territory to the south, Burundi,54 which had a Tutsi-controlled socio-political system that was not seriously contested during its

53 “In Rwanda the Hutu counter-elite became Catholic protégés, and Hutu protest was ignored by Belgians and Tutsi alike. . . . Only Church organisations were available to the counter-elite, and they made use of the Press and lay associations in an unofficial manner for propaganda and recruitment.” (Linden, op. cit.: 258).
54 Burundi and Rwanda are unique among African nations: they were populated by a single people in each instance -- the Kinyarwanda in Rwanda and the Barundi in Burundi; and their borders have remained essentially unchanged throughout their histories; and they were both relatively late arrivals on the colonial scene” (Maguire, 1995: 54).
own territory’s move toward independence\textsuperscript{55}. However, its government structure was markedly different in respect to the responsibilities and powers of local chiefs, such that there was less centrally-directed vertical authority, but more shared power across the territory. In this regard, without elaborating here on the Burundian socio-political structure leading up to the era of independence, there was no concept of a single, oppressive monarchy that needed overturning. In fact, the Burundian kingship continued four years after the monarchy in Rwanda was voted out, and the Burundian Tutsi minority retained control of government. The Rwandan Tutsi ruling class was not unaware of the Tutsi domination of the socio-political situation in Burundi and surely drew some strength of conviction from their neighbor’s success, albeit mistakenly; the minority-controlled systems in the two kingdoms were not parallel.

Perhaps in light of Perraudin’s insistence on a ‘balanced’ \textit{Kinyamateka}, Kayibanda felt obliged, on occasion, to assure \textit{Kinyamateka}’s readers that the Hutu Movement was not planning to follow in the ethnic footsteps of the Tutsi monarchy:

\begin{quote}
I have never appreciated a regime based on slavery… their (the Hutu) \textit{Manifesto} stipulates well that a mono-ethnic regime should not cede to another of the same genre\textsuperscript{56}… I can assure you that the Hutu and the simple Tutsi who are with me support you in fighting for their development\textsuperscript{57}… those who love Rwanda want to
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{55} “The allies of Grégoire Kayibanda thought that once Rwanda was ‘liberated’ from the colonial ‘Tutsi’ yoke, Burundi would also fall by itself like a ripe fruit. At the time of the creation of political parties, \textbf{Prince Rwagasore} of Burundi played a decisive role for the future of the country by surrounding himself from the start with both Hutu and Tutsi in order to block the Rwandan style of Hutu extremism. He would pay dearly for it, because he was assassinated the day after the victory of his party, on 13 October 1961.” (Semujanga, 2003: 162).


However, Kayibanda’s words appear disingenuous (if not mendacious) at this point in the development of the Movement, considering the tenor of the bulk of his articles and the ethnic prejudice declared in the Manifesto, but it could also be that he is simply not aware that he has become repetitively facile in producing political sloganeering (and isn’t this the Arendtian process of the slip into thoughtlessness?). His increasingly skewed position is highlighted in a speech he gave at a political meeting in 1959:

Our movement is for the Hutu. It has been offended and humiliated by Tutsi invaders. We have to light the way for the masses. We are here to restore the country to its owners. It is the country of Bahutu. The little Tutsi came with the rich one. Who has cleared the forest? It is GaHutu? So, then?59

In the spring of 1959, the National Upper Council back-tracked from its June 1958 rejection of the joint committee’s conclusions by stating that “the problem of relations between different ethnic groups in the country is certainly of first importance,” but rather half-heartedly acknowledged that even though it estimates that “the problem is more social, but that it has a tendency to become racial”60 [my italics]. And toward the end of the year, the Belgian Working Group’s final report recognized the purported efforts toward democratic values, and supported the need for land reform. They felt, however, that it was too soon for independence, as it would primarily profit a Tutsi minority—of whom only two clans dominated the chiefdoms, the National Upper Council, the territorial councils,

the colonial administration, and education, especially secondary schools—while most of the Tutsi were no better off than the Hutu peasant-farmers.⁶¹

The facile division between Tutsi cattle-owning wealth and Hutu subsistence farming poverty, always an oversimplification became thoroughly misleading after the war [WW II]. During the colonial period a large body of Tutsi became, or remained, impoverished and lacked cattle, while returning Hutu migrants and successful coffee-growers accumulated cows and were relatively prosperous. A survey of incomes undertaken in the mid-1950s, which excluded those in political office from the sample, gave the following figures.⁶²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>No. of families</th>
<th>Adult men</th>
<th>Average income/family (francs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutsi</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>4,439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>914</td>
<td>727</td>
<td>4,249</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After Linden, 1977: 226

Even when considering the distribution of political office, the significant point is not so much a Tutsi monopoly of traditional and bureaucratic power as the closed oligarchy of a few noble lineages.⁶³ Despite this reality of the relative similarities among the Hutu and Tutsi general populations, by the mid ‘50s the language of Gitera’s APROSOMA organization was foreshadowing the Hutu Power genocidal tone of the Hutu Ten Commandments:

Long live the liberation of the Hutu! Down with Tutsi slavery! The cohabitation of

⁶¹ Carney, op. cit.: 102-103.
⁶² Linden, op. cit: 226.
⁶³ Linden, ibid: 227. “A single Nyiginya lineage occupied almost a quarter of the country’s forty-six chiefancies.⁶⁹ Nyiginya-clan Tutsi held a total of 276 offices in 1950, and Ega 113—over half the chiefancies and sub-chiefancies.⁷⁰ The Catholic chiefs and sub-chiefs formed a narrowly based political elite, wealthy in cattle, cash, coffee and clients. They were a mixture of Nyanza alumni and Astridiens with, at one elbow, the Belgian administrators and, at the other, dispossessed chiefs, their uncles and father who found position as judges and cattle owners. Below them were the mass of poor Tutsi who identified with the nobles and clung to their precarious superiority by despising and exploiting those of Hutu birth.
Tutsi with Hutu is a gnawing wound, a leech in the body, and a cancer in the stomach. Hutu, from now on believe and hope in God and in each other, never in the Tutsi!"\(^\text{64}\)

**Beginnings of PARMEHUU Party**

In the same period, the MSM association had successfully built a modicum of grassroots sets of connections across the country,\(^\text{65}\) and by October Kayibanda decided it was time to turn his so-called ‘non-political’ association into a true political party in preparation for the push for votes for independence. He named it the *Parti du Mouvement de l’Émancipation Hutu* (PARMEHUTU). The name was exclusionary, and previewed the insularity of the party to the interests of the entire Rwandan community, and left no doubt in the minds of Tutsi leaders that their welfare was at risk.

His new party\(^\text{66}\) had “the support of most of the Hutu Abbés”,\(^\text{67}\) but after Kayibanda formed the PARMEHUTU party, Msgr Perraudin removed him from the editorial staff of *Kinyamateka* as a move to show that the newspaper wasn’t overtly being run by a political party leader, but *Kinyamateka* still kept what had become a pro-Hutu viewpoint (interestingly enough, the general editor, a Tutsi priest named Kalibwami, was sympathetic to the Hutu Movement), and in February 1959, in an historically important show of support

---

\(^{64}\) Quoted in Murego, *La Révolution Rwandaise*, 885, cited in Carney, op. cit.: 211.

\(^{65}\) Paternostre (op. cit.: 158), “The Teachers Association (AMR) provided him with a second network among the Hutu teachers [1,800 – 2,000, see Paternostre, p.82]. Nonetheless, able neither to activate clientship ties, except in the north, nor use the emotive language of kingship and unity, the party had only patchy grassroots support, with its main centres around Gitarama and Rahengeri, where land shortage or lineage allegiance aided the Hutu.”

\(^{66}\) “Mulindahabi, also from Gitarama, went to Kabgayi Minor Seminary and became secretary for Catholic schools in 1956. He was Secretary General of PARMEHUTU in October 1959; he died on 7 September 1971. [Linden, note 204, chapter 8.]”

\(^{67}\) Linden, op. cit.: 266-67.
for a change in the socio-political status quo, Monsignor Perraudin announced in his pastoral letter for Lent the Church’s backing of Hutu demands.68

The party’s symbolic name was, however, time-limited: two years after PARMEHUTU was formed, the monarchy was voted out and the Hutu were in. The only thing left, essentially, for the emancipation of the Hutu, was the reformation of the education system, allowing for a greater representation of Hutu students at the secondary and tertiary levels. But that could have easily occurred ‘naturally’ over time, without having to restrict Tutsi student enrollment, through a quota system opposite the punitive one against Tutsis: there could have been instituted a minimum percent or number of Hutu students to be enrolled at each level in the education system, as well as for the number of Hutu teachers and teacher trainees. This would have benefitted everyone, rather than punishing Tutsis, and would have been easy to put in place. The Hutu Movement, branching into the two parties, APROSOMA and PARMEHUTU, had reached the point where dissolving the monarchy was not enough, marginalizing the Tutsis so they would never be able to re-install the monarchy became an obsession.

And even though PARMEHUTU presented itself as a national party that could unify Rwandans, it belied this attempt by holding the Tutsi up as bogeymen, representing the continuation of a feudal regime; the argument wasn’t that ‘feudalism’ in itself, as a system, was bad and engendered injustice, but that ‘someone’ represented the injustice, so that when they were removed then so would feudalism be removed. And in spite of the fact

68 Pottier (2002: 123-24), “Recalling his personal experiences as editor and director of Kinyamateka (1955-63), then Rwanda’s leading publication, Justin Kalibwami (1991: 372-73) stresses that the church did not suddenly drop its allegiance to the Tutsi aristocracy that it had supported for so long. In contrast to the Belgian administrators and Rwandan Tutsi aristocracy, both of whom were surprised by the 1959 uprising and then blamed it on Hutu individuals, church leaders understood that the struggle for democracy had been in the making for some time. For church leaders, this was a people’s struggle: in Kinyamateka, “the people certainly invested their hope of liberation”.

131
that Kayibanda’s PARMEHUTU party talked of “our Tutsi brothers,” and admitted that injustices had been suffered “not only by the Bahutu, but also by the poor Tutsi”, and though PARMEHUTU may have shied away from the virulent ethnic separatist rhetoric of APROSOMA, it still insisted on pairing Tutsi with threat, describing Rwanda as “an ethnically-stratified country that could come together only with ‘the end of Tutsi colonialism and the feudal regime instituted by the Tutsi.’” [my italics]. If PARMEHUTU did “invite Tutsi sympathizers into its ranks”, then it closed ranks against them after independence.

New Parties and the 1959 Elections

On the large map of things it is often easy to miss the elements that build to recognizable shapes. What must be reiterated concerning Rwanda—from the early 1900s to the 1994 genocide, and beyond—is the astounding effect that a money economy, and literacy has had on every aspect of the country. A this particular juncture—the introduction of political parties for the first time in the country’s history—it is necessary to stop and consider such a new and meaningful phenomenon; the implications are enormous. First of all, what were the aspects of a socio-political entity like that of Rwanda, which were necessary for political parties to come into being? The answer has to do with the function of organizations. The function in this case is tied to the situation in the ‘50s: the dynamic change in society brought about by literacy and a cash monetary system operating

---

70 Quoted in Murego, 1975: 904, cited in Carney, ibid 211.
71 Carney, ibid.: 211.
under a new political administration—all of which were introduced and enforced by outside forces, the Roman Catholic Church and the Belgian Trusteeship. A cash economy, literacy, and Belgian usurpation of the traditional mwami court system, freed the peasant-farmer masses from their ‘enslavement’ to the clientship system, while simultaneously devaluing the mwami’s centuries-old spiritual and *de facto* authority. Literacy, especially within the teachings of the Church schools, introduced the new concept of God above men, and the egalitarian nature of spiritual brotherhood. The Hutu students educated at the tertiary level of education offered at seminaries (the so-called évolués), found themselves outside the narrow socio-political confines of the mwami system, and able to observe it from an intellectual distance—this for the first time in history by any Rwandan. For any outside observer, it is impossible to put oneself in the shoes of those young men as they stood on the brink of the possibility of a new future for their society, one free from an unequal human bondage, an enveloping environment whose presence and substance had heretofore been as invisible to the people as water to fish.

The possibility of a new social structure slowly came into consciousness in classrooms, and the possibility for action arose. The desire to correct the social imbalance was foremost, but a solution was not separate from the country’s being under colonial control, and so the need for independence arose in tandem. The mechanism for action on a social scale is organization. In the case of suing for independence and statehood, and for the righting of social wrongs, such organization is typically a political party, since such goals are political. And the formation of political organizations in Rwanda, in the ‘50s, resulted in the four parties that follow. But it should always be held in mind that the very
foundation of political parties in Rwanda was a first-time event in the entire history of the country, and is extraordinary. The process was equally bound to be rather rough and unique to the territory and its people, and should not be regarded in the same light as political parties in developed countries with well-established political systems: they are, in fact, Rwandan political parties, even though they do have some universal characteristics such as the process of organizing voters around a political platform or issue, setting up local and national offices and managers, and other organizational procedures.

This is where Kayibanda’s organizational training, experience, and personal zeal for social action made him and his party the most successful in the national contest for independence. It does not mean, however, that he constructed the best organization for leading the country forward; being a good organizer doesn’t mean one has the requisite skills for leading a country. Kayibanda had faced opposition parties, of course, but never serious opposition within his own party, and he had never had to make significant concessions across parties in order to gain concessions in return; PARMEHUTU’s goals of an egalitarian society through elimination of the monarchy and the abolition of clientship, and education for all Rwandans was an unassailable platform that spoke directly to the desires of the peasant-farmer masses, and which made it easy to write about, and to recruit members for the Hutu Movement. It would be hard to imagine that he ever felt his ‘cause’ could fail, especially since he had the backing of the Church72 (on these points, not on the ethnic/racial issue), and since the late ‘50s the support of the colonial administration, and

72 Mamdani has described the Church as “the womb that nurtured the leadership of the insurgent Hutu movement.” (Mamdani, 2001: 232, cited in Carney, op. cit.: 228). Also see Linden (op. cit.: 245), “I was impressed during an interview with Grégoire Kayibanda, then President of Rwanda, in June 1973, by the intensity of his feelings against the Tutsi. Interviews with missionaries who had known him intimately during the years 1950-61 convinced me that social Catholicism, rather than any other philosophy, informed his actions and planning.”
even some liberal Tutsis. But once these goals were attained, and independence secured, the PARMEHUTU party was not prepared to deal with the problems facing a new republican system, especially one that was simply layered onto the old system, with its rents, corruption, and regionalism, and an economy still stuck in a subsistence agricultural mode.

Kayibanda had read much, but the vast majority of his reading was in the religious realm, and not in the secular, contemporary political, economic or historical fields. And despite his having met with labor unions in Belgium, he was incapable of moving toward a socialism that in any way would have created conflict with the Church, which was rabidly anti-communist. As Kayibanda had written, he was interested in forming a Church-State coalition, in which the foundational teachings of Catholicism would be the moral foundation of socio-political action. The irony and paradox of this philosophy is that the Church, organizationally and operationally, is closer to fascism or a dictatorship than to a republican system—severely top-down and requiring unquestioning obedience to dogma. Kayibanda no doubt found the monolithic organizational ease of cooperation within its many offices, missions, and world-wide parishes an attractive model for a smooth-running government, but a one-party state suffers from problems the Church never encounters. He made the crucial mistake of thinking his successful experiences within the Church system

---

73 Paternostre (op. cit.: 75) gives the following sample from Kayibanda’s ‘bibliothèque personnelle’ : Teilhard, Bloy, Lacger, Lebret, Rahner, Léon Harmel, Stackelberg, Bossuet, Keller, Mugner, Geibel, Schuhmacher, Zuur, Melady, Pradel, Mercier, Chantars, Thils, Schyvers, Scheeben, . . . Gandhi, M. L. King, Joseph Cardijn, Anne-Marie Taiggi, Edel Quinn, Guiseppe Sarto, Frédéric Ozanam, Jean-Bosco, Benoît J. Labre, François de Sales.
could be translated onto the state, with everyone coming on board as they see the efficacy of ‘enlightened’ cooperation in the action for a universally shared concept of society.\textsuperscript{74}

In considering the elections set up for the end of 1959, it is helpful to review some of the accumulated and relative events. As part of the Belgian administration’s attempt to address the one-sided policy they had been following, in the mid-1950s they increased the number of Hutu students entering the school at Astrida, for example, to about 30% of the total number of students enrolled. But the colonial restrictions on Hutu admittance to political office had caused a forking of educated elite: the thwarted Hutu, seeing the socio-economic situation changing through Belgian modernization of the country, were eager and ready to move away from the Tutsi ‘feudal’ (clientship) system, while the Tutsi still felt relatively secure in their privileged position. Concurrently, the Belgians were assailed by the UN’s criticism of their trusteeship and its unacceptably slow pace of socio-political evolution and change. Additionally, the Congo was embroiled in a hotly contested fight among different power players regarding its march toward independence and statehood. These events were pressing on the Belgian authorities in the run-up to Rwanda’s vote for independence, where the administration was besieged by the stratagems of the central players in the power struggle.\textsuperscript{75}

The following were the four major parties vying for power in Rwanda’s November 1959 elections:

\textsuperscript{74} Among the writers in Kayibanda’s personal library that would seem to have had an influence on him are, for example, Biship, who felt one of the responsibilities of a sovereigns’ absolute power was the primary goal of preserving the state; Marmion believed it is one’s duty to serve rather than be served, that “lay believers are in the front line of Church life for them the Church is the animating principle of human society. Therefore, they in particular ought to have an ever-clearer consciousness not only of belonging to the Church, but of being the Church”; de Sales was the patron saint of writers and journalists who write in the service of a spiritual direction; and Cardijn was the founder of the Young Christian Workers. (see Wikipedia).

\textsuperscript{75} Newbury, 1988: 193.
(1) Kayibanda’s PARMEHUTU was the strongest party going into the elections, and called for open access to jobs, public positions awarded on a merit system, country-wide education for all children through at least the primary level, and an end to the ‘feudal’ regime; its platform viewed independence as impossible without these goals being attained. The Belgian administration largely supported PARMEHUTU, the oldest party (first formed as MSM in June 1957), even though it was solely Hutu, because it was the only party that appeared to be able to involve the masses in a so-called ‘democratic’ platform through an independence process:

the party worked on a cell basis reminiscent of the Legion of Mary, with a propagandist on most hills. The Association des Moniteurs provided him with a second network among the Hutu teachers. Nonetheless, able neither to activate clientship ties, except in the north, nor use the emotive language of kingship and unity, the party had only patchy grassroots support, with its main centres around Gitarama and Ruhengeri, where land shortage or lineage allegiance aided the Hutu.76

Kayibanda was also favorably considered because he was a known entity through his years of journalism (he had never voiced an anti-Belgian viewpoint, nor an anti-white position, as some Tutsi leaders had done in an attempt to garnish nationalistic votes), and because of his religious dedication and years of sustained cooperation and networking with the Church.77

(2) The organization APROSOMA (Association pour la Promotion Sociale de la Masse) was created in November, 1957, by Joseph Gitera, in a break with the Muhutu
Social Movement [MSM] of Kayibanda because Gitera was against Kayibanda’s consuming ethnic vision. APROSOMA became a formal political party in February, 1959, and was limited in power to the south (Astrida, the hometown of Gitera and his vice-president, Munyangaju) and southwest (Cyangugu) of the country, and was completely controlled by Gitera, who had an “unshakeable commitment to Christian radicalism”, and a consuming hatred of the clientship system, but APROSOMA was as committed to democratization as was PARMEHUTU. Gitera at one point hoped to attract the poor Tutsis, who were in the same social position as the Hutu peasant-farmers, but he was unsuccessful, and the party remained almost exclusively Hutu. “The virulence of Gitera against the monarchic system at the very beginning of the revolutionary process had targeted him, for the defenders of the monarchy, as the main enemy to shoot down.” APROSOMA and PARMEHUTU had the moral support of the Church as long as they avoided racial/ethnic issues.

(3) UNAR (Union Nationale Rwandaise) was formed 15 August 1959 by “northern Tutsi chiefs joined with conservative nationalists at court”, who “had become estranged from the Church”, especially because it received communist backing and monies, and thus made it particularly difficult for pro-Tutsi clergy. In favor of the monarchy, UNAR had the court’s support, as well as that of the chiefs and Muslim groups, and was

78 Linden, op. cit.: 252. Lemarchand (op. cit.:151) recounts having a missionary describe Gitera as a “veritable fanatic”.
80 Linden, op. cit.: 263.
81 C.f. “Adriaenssens (1960: 18-19). doubted UNAR’s supposed communist sympathies, seeing their rumored outreach to China and the USSR as merely tactical. “The Unarists do not desire to introduce communism in their country. Their real goal is to conserve the monopoly of power and its advantages.”” (Cited in Carey, op. cit.: 267).
antagonistic to the Belgian Trusteeship. The colonial authorities, in turn, were especially opposed to UNAR.

“The Tutsi wanted independence and were trying to get it as quickly as possible by sabotaging Belgian actions, whether technical or political. . . . The administration was forced to toughen its attitude when faced with such obstruction and hostility coming from chiefs and sub-chiefs with whom we had collaborated for so many years.”

UNAR attempted to compete with Kayibanda’s PARMEHUTU by voicing support for some land reform, and by portraying itself as a unifying force for the country (Abashyirahamwe b’Urwanda). But its assault on Catholic schools backfired— bringing together the Belgian, Hutu, and Tutsi clergy against such a threat to their esteemed position and influence. Msgr Perraudin’s response reiterated, especially, the Church’s stand against UNAR’s socialist platform:

The UNAR party seems to wish to monopolize patriotism on its behalf and to say that those who are not with them are against the country. This tendency strongly resembles the national socialism that other countries have known and which has done them so much harm.

And on 19 August 1959 the bishops of the Congo and Ruanda-Urundi released a joint pastoral approving, in general, conditions of independence, while the Trusteeship similarly decided to grant independence. UNAR was incensed, and on one of their

82 Lemarchand (op. cit.: 158) says that UNAR “was clearly intended to serve as the instrument of Tutsi supremacy.”
84 Linden, op. cit.: 264.
85 Perraudin, “Mise en garde contre l’UNAR”, 24 September 1959. The following diatribe given by UNAR’s leader, François Rukeba, illustrates the party’s line of thought and supports the Church’s concern: “To remake our country we need a single party, like UNAR, based upon tradition and no other ideology. He who does not belong to this party will be regarded as the people’s enemy, The Mwami’s enemy, Rwanda’s enemy.” (In Lemarchand, op. cit.: 159). But the threat of being an “enemy” of the Mwami, which normally would have caused considerable concern among the peasant-farmers, had by this period been largely declawed through years of church-going, education, and Hutu Movement criticism.
pamphlets proclaimed that Perraudin and the RADER leaders Bwanakweri and Ndazaro should be “made to disappear by all possible means”. This kind of extremist and threatening language should be noted here as something too common in Rwandan politics, and is a reminder of the relative ease with which opponents were dispatched over the years leading up to the genocide. In this regard, when considering the hate media following the 1990 RPF invasion of Rwanda, and which continued in the early days after the 1994 genocide started, it should be remembered that threats against life were never idle political posturing; the ugly invectives in publications like Kangura and on RTLM radio, have roots far back from 1994, and are not just an invention of Habyarimana’s MRND party.

UNAR, by antagonizing the Church and the Belgian Administration, cut themselves off from the most important sources of support: they could no longer avail themselves of two influential channels to the Hutu masses, as well as to the UN, and, on their own ground, were in no position to defend themselves against the Hutu Movement’s valid condemnations. And, since there was nothing in the Hutu Movement’s platform that could be reproached, UNAR found itself ineffectually outside the contest.

(4) RADER (Rassemblement Démocratique du Rwanda) was formed almost immediately after UNAR, on 14 September, with the Belgian’s blessing, as a multi-ethnic, pro-Belgian party representing accomplished administrator’s families, and liberal Tutsi thinkers who were against racial extremists.

Mainly a Tutsi party, it was frowned upon by the monarchist diehards while the Hutu never quite managed to trust its liberalism. ... and liberal Tutsi opinion never

86 (Temps Nouveaux d’Afrique, 1 November 1959.)
87 Reytjens, 1985: 252, and Linden, op. cit.: 265.
had a serious chance of prevailing.”

Without treating the formation of the above parties in depth here—their formation, platforms, and constituencies have already been well described by other authors—one can observe their basic agendas as they represent positions on a spectrum from the exclusively-Hutu PARMEHUTU party at one end, to the exclusively Tutsi UNAR on the other end, with the mostly-Hutu APROSOMA and mostly-Tutsi RADER parties open to members from the mixed population, but not being able to attract them. That is, PARMEHUTU eventually manages to get the temporary (until independence) cooperation of most of the Hutus across regions, as well as the support of the Church and the Belgians, while APROSOMA is less well organized and fixed in a small southern area, RADER is limited to a comparatively small population of liberal Tutsis cut off from the traditional monarchical power structure, and UNAR has arrogantly isolated itself from and angered the Belgian Trusteeship, the Church and various clergy and elites. By the beginning of November, Kayibanda and his colleagues had managed to put PARMEHUTU in a position far superior to the other parties in the run-up to the UN-sponsored elections expected in early 1960. Surprisingly, though, as pointed out by Carney, the four parties shared a broadly similar political vision of post-colonial Rwanda. This vision included direct elections, universal suffrage, a constitutional monarchy, an independent judiciary, codification of customary law, and financial and land redistribution. One could even have imagined a future in which the parties came together across ethnic lines to forge a genuinely nationalist movement; . . .

---

90 Carney, op. cit.: 213.
But contra-indicative to this ‘shared’ notion, is the problem of ‘identity’, which often problematizes relations in any culture where groups within the population hold divergent images of ‘self in the world’. Kayibanda had spent the last ten years—since teaching at Léon Classe and ‘feeling’ the intense disappointment of his technical school students’ not being able to continue their academic studies—on a crusade against social inequality, to which had slowly been added (or perhaps it was there from early on) an ethnic/racist offensive against the Tutsis, as exhibited in an excerpt from one of his political speeches in 1959:

Our movement is for Hutu group. It has been offended, humiliated by Tutsi invaders. We have to light the way for the mass. We are there to restitute the country to his owners. It is the country of Bahutu. The little Tutsi came with the rich one. Who has cleared the forest? It is GaHutu? Then what? 91

Kayibanda not only sees the Tutsis as a separate population, but as an alien one consisting of ‘invaders’ and ‘inhabitants of different planets’. (This image would be tragically reinforced as part of the military ‘invasions’ by elements of the Tutsi diaspora, in the early ‘60s, as well as from the major invasion in 1990). Kayibanda’s identity as a Hutu had, by the end of 1959, began to take priority over the above-mentioned ‘shared’ political vision of post-colonial Rwanda by the four parties, and insured the Hutu/Tutsi cleavage that marked his presidency and party. Newbury has the following observation:

An appeal to Hutu solidarity became, for Hutu leaders, the most effective rallying point for revolutionary activity. Although Hutu could and apparently did distinguish among Tutsi of different types and attitudes, the fact that the chiefs and other African agents of the state were seen as exploiters, and that virtually all of these were Tutsi, made an appeal to ethnic solidarity potent where an appeal to “all

poor people” may have been less so. Because colonial policies had repeatedly pressed upon Hutu their inferior, excluded status, even poor Tutsi did not experience quite the same forms of discrimination as did those classified as Hutu.92

There were moderate Tutsis, such as Prosper Bwanakweri, a powerful chief from Nyanza, who was one of the founders of the Belgian-Rwandan Friendship Association in 1951, who had initiated reform in his district concerning the land clientship system, had, only a year before, in 1958, been part of the ten-man commission established to study the Hutu-Tutsi question, and in October 1959 was a leader in the new RADER party—the only moderate, and inclusive, major political organization. Bwanakweri “apparently approached Kayibanda in September 1959” with an offer to join forces to create a “genuinely nationalist movement”, but

Kayibanda demurred, recognizing the potency of ethnicity and class for mobilizing political support in the countryside. Kayibanda’s decision helped ensure that Rwandan politics would continue to revolve around the Hutu-Tutsi question.93

It is reasonable, then, to consider Kayibanda (and his party) as being largely responsible for a growing atmosphere of confrontation between what was emerging as two distinct populations, of propagating a view of independence that was driven by an ethnic/racist philosophy that called for a new state founded on a Hutu majority rule, and that this philosophy pandered to the ‘identity’ of the masses, who were increasingly seen as being Hutu, with the exclusion of the Tutsi citizens, of whom the majority were living alongside the Hutu in similar conditions, and who were in some cases married to Hutu and were indistinguishable from them. It is not possible to know what prompted Kayibanda’s ethnic/racist mindset, especially since he had spoken in his youth so fervently about the

93 Carney, op. cit.: 213.
need to live by Christian principles, but religious fervor because of its very nature, carries the notions of sin, and injunctions, but loses the notion of forgiveness in its self-righteousness. Perhaps he reasoned that “The Hutu had been made to suffer, so someone was to blame.” Perhaps he saw, or was convinced by others’ arguments, that the only way to pull the Hutu masses together politically was to scapegoat the Tutsis, and that the scapegoating took on the form of an ‘identity’ platform that situated the Tutsi outside that identity. Another possibility is that Kayibanda was wounded at having to work under a Tutsi general manager, as well as having been taken off the editorial board and being replaced by a Tutsi, at Kinyamateka, especially if he saw these two things (and others) as being just another, and continuing, infuriating example of a corrupt and prejudiced system rewarding a privileged aristocracy, while he, after all, was just another Hutu. It should be taken into consideration that, as Grogan and Sharp (1900: 119) found, “ethnic divisions and ‘obvious hatred’ toward the Tutsi overlords, . . . were well entrenched by 1898, the time the Germans began to colonise Rwanda.” To what degree that was to be found in Kayibanda’s environment as he was growing up would be a significant element in trying to understand his attitude toward the Tutsis. Along this same line of thinking, it is possible that Kayibanda, a Hutu, felt a “realization of common oppression”, as Newbury observes, which, among the Hutu of southwest Rwanda, gradually occurred when, “During the

---

94 Charles Bukowski’s poem “The Genius of the Crowd” has the appropriate lines: “and the best at murder are those who preach against it / and the best at hate are those who preach love / and the best at war finally are those who preach peace . . .”

95 C.f. Rutayisire (2009: 29-38) notes that “Kinyamateka maintained an admirably broad editorial policy on the Hutu-Tutsi question between 1955 and 1959, serving as a ‘tribune of expression’ for the competing voices in Rwandan politics” (cited in Carey, op. cit.: 233), although this doesn’t necessarily mollify Kayibanda’s resentment.

96 See, for example, Aydin et al (2014: 383), “. . . socially excluded people will react in an aggressive manner to fortify needs of control an recognition”; Twenge et al., 2001; Warburton et al., 2006; Williams, 2009.

period of Tuutsi rule, later overlaid by European rule, the advantages of being Tuutsi and the disadvantages of being Hutu increased enormously.98

Yet, Kayibanda’s intense hatred for the Tutsis—such an irrational, extreme and personalized response to a socio-political situation—speaks of a quality in him that prevents a certain kind of human empathy, as well as being retributive on a large social scale. This kind of thinking reverberates with an unfortunate parallel, for example Hitler’s confusing and conflating the Jewish population with Germany’s economic misfortunes: for Kayibanda and his party, the Tutsis were responsible for Rwanda’s socio-political woes, and so were agents who could be brought out as a straw man, at any opportunity, for blame. One doesn’t recognize this Manichaean aspect in Kayibanda’s development as a seminarian, and it comes as a gradual surprise at the end of the ‘50s, then erupts forcefully in 1972 in response to his flagging control of the state.99

And, perhaps most applicable of all to our questions concerning Kayibanda’s ideology an his hatred for the Tutsis, are Hannah Arendt’s insights into the functions of modern dictatorships, and the relevance of Tocqueville’s consideration of the French Revolution:

According to Tocqueville, the French people hated aristocrats about to lose their power more than it had ever hated them before, precisely because their rapid loss of real power was not accompanied by any considerable decline in their fortunes. As long as the aristocracy held vast powers of jurisdiction, they were not only tolerated but respected. When noblemen lost their privileges, among others the privilege to exploit and oppress, the people felt them to be parasites, without any real function

---

99 Very little is needed to generate group competition. As Banton (1995: xxiv), among many researchers, writes, “Tajfel showed that group discrimination could be produced by simply telling young men that they had been allocated to different categories even though the categories themselves had no social significance. . . . similar effects could be produced even more simply. It would seem that a belief of subjects that they share membership in some sort of group or team, even one randomly created, is sufficient to evoke a mild form of discrimination.”
in the rule of the country [my italics]. In other words, neither oppression nor exploitation as such is ever the main cause for resentment; wealth without visible function is much more intolerable because nobody can understand why it should be tolerated.100

This observation decidedly describes a major reason driving Kayibanda’s hatred for the Tutsi (as represented by the aristocracy, at least at first); he often writes of his disdain for the uselessness of the Tutsi elite, and that the efforts undertaken by the évolués in the Hutu Movement “against hunger and to enrich the community, benefit those responsible, and not the parasites,” of whom it is necessary to try hard “to restrict the number”101—the idea of a quota law against the Tutsi, which Kayibanda would institute after assuming presidential office, is adumbrated here, as well. And in another private notebook entry he writes,

The Tutsi, even the most idiotic, occupies the forum, official offices, and positions of responsibility. And holds on to being the only one there . . . even when he is doing nothing [my italics].”102

and he will punctuate a 1 July 1963 anniversary of independence speech with,

I will finish by speaking to Tutsis. Tutsi hegemony has come to an end. Tutsi should stop creating groups of proud people who are trying to step on the Hutu people. Living on the sweat of others without working themselves [my italics]. We have to work for ourselves, and those who are educated among you.103

At another time he underlines the view that there are simply too many Tutsis on the various Councils who are members “automatically stemming from the customary hierarchy.”104 In other words, in Tocqueville’s sense, the aristocratic Tutsi can no longer justify their wealth because their ‘customary’ positions of authority are being challenged

101 See Paternostre, op. cit.: 97.
104 See Paternostre, op. cit.: 107.
and renounced, thus becoming useless. So, if Arendt’s supposition is correct, then the Hutu masses found the Tutsi monarchy’s wealth without function more intolerable than the inequality of their socio-political situation, because it is impossible to understand why wealth without visible function should be tolerated. Since Kayibanda lived a rather austere life, this ‘unfounded’ wealth must have particularly rankled him. It would have found purchase with the Hutu (and Tutsi peasant-farmers) masses, who were struggling increasingly with existence and the diminution in their already small land holdings, from which they had to pay taxes to support the monarchy and an administration in which they were only beginning to have some local representation. That is, the period from 1952 to 1959 resulted in limited constitutional reforms, with the advent of advisory councils at each level of the administrative ladder, but the system was only somewhat representative, as the Tutsi held the majority of public offices:

An elective system meant to give the people a share in their own government had been introduced in a culture founded on opposite premises, those of inequality, of the idea of born rulers, of stratified society. . . . In their minds, as Maquet remarked, ‘the new institutions were understood in the perspective of a democratic system of representation’, one that would presumably enthrone the representatives of the Hutu majority; instead, and to their utter dismay, they saw these institutions converted into modern arenas for the expression of Tutsi supremacy. It is against this background of disillusion and bitterness over the failure of constitutional reforms to meet expected changes that one must seek the origins of the Rwandese revolution.\textsuperscript{105}

\textsuperscript{105} Lemarchand, 1970: 81-83. While much of Maquet’s writing on Rwanda have come under criticism, and some even discredited, there are still observations of his that bear consideration, as Lemarchand attests to here.
In Figure 3, Van Binsbergen contends that the interaction between traditional authority and the state is not a zero-sum game, because the bases of their powers are different, and both can co-exist independently, or reinforce one another as shown. It may be that Kayibanda forced too soon and too abruptly the separation and elimination of the chiefs from the nascent state, so that it would appear a zero-sum outcome, as opposed to Van Binsbergen’s model. But, as Bayart points out (later in this paper), the rhizomic matrix of

---

traditional structures carries through into ‘newer’ (at least in name) State descriptions and forms. Still, the sudden rendering of the social fabric, from chiefdomship to State bureaucracy was bound to cause tremendous difficulties, ones perhaps impossible to make feasible in the short run.

**Peasant Revolt (the Muyaga)**\(^{107}\) and the Violence of Toussaint Rwandaise \(^{108}\)

The effect of the increasing threat to Tutsi socio-political standing, and personhood—abolition of *ubuhake*, the mwami’s death, the transfer of three chiefs after a UNAR rally in Kigali, \(^{109}\) and other events in the late ‘50s, was expressed on 1 November 1959, when Tutsi youths attacked PARMEHUTU party leaders Abbé Joseph Sibomana and Dominique Mbonyamutwa \(^{110}\) (both old MSM leaders). The Hutu response was extreme, with the retaliation killing hundreds of Tutsis, with thousands fleeing\(^{111}\), in what has been termed a Jacquerie. There followed a Tutsi repression, with the main target being the Hutu Leadership,

a veritable manhunt was under way, organised from the Mwami’s palace in Nyanza. Heavy reliance was placed at the outset on traditional military organisation: the traditional army chiefs, the border guards, the Twa-led

---

\(^{107}\) “It is interesting to note that in 1959, when the first massacres of Tutsi occurred, Hutu politicians referred to the killing as ‘wind’, meaning that attacking Tutsi came abruptly, and from nowhere, like wind. It passed like it came, abruptly and without reason. In other words, this metaphor amounts to a denial of organized massacres, not unlike the euphemistic references to ‘événements’ (events), or ‘jacquerie’ in comparison with the ‘peasant uprising’ in the Isle de France in 1358 as propagated by the Colonial Ministry of Information (1960: 22-72). Prunier (1994:41) talks about the 1959 *muyaga* that Rwandans call “disturbances.” For most Tutsi victims and survivors of the 1959 mass killings, interviewed in 1995 and 2000, it was “genocide without CNN cameras.” (Mironko, 2004: 197, n 4).

\(^{108}\) All Saints Day.


\(^{110}\) Mbonyamutwa was one of the ten Hutu subchiefs in Rwanda.

\(^{111}\) Most Tutsi refugees did not leave the country during the events of the *Toussaint rwandaise* (7,000 of them fled from their regions of origin at the end of November, 1959), but rather during the months following the nomination of many Hutus as vice-chiefs and chiefs by the Belgian administration (Viret, Emmanuel, 2010: n.p. Also see Lemarchand, op. cit.: 173.
commands, all played their part in organising the repression.112

A description by the UN Visiting Mission of the tactics in the above repression reads eerily like those of the 1994 genocide, and the more one reads about the various conflicts in Rwanda since the 1959 events until 1994, the more one can’t avoid seeing a recurring set of behaviors occurring like a film loop.

The Belgian government sent soldiers, but rather than stop the Hutu revolt, they established a military command which nominated “more than 300 Hutu chiefs and subchiefs to replace those Tutsi incumbents who had been deposed, killed or had fled during the initial stages of the uprising.”113 Still, the climate was dangerously hostile,114 and Kayibanda went into hiding.115 He wrote on November 27 the famous lines that

[The Hutu and Tutsi] are two nations in a single state. . . . Two nations between whom there is no intercourse and no sympathy, who are as ignorant of each other’s habits, thoughts and feelings as if they were dwellers of different zones, or inhabitants of different planets.116

He also put forth the intolerant and discriminatory proposition that the Hutu and Tutsi should be segregated into two separate zones, “As a first step towards a ‘confederal organisation.”117 Mamdani has said that “Between the revolution of 1959 and independence in 1962, Kayibanda’s exclusionist point of view was moderated in the face

112 Lemarchand, op. cit.: 165.
113 Sellström, Tor and Wohlgemuth, 1996: 29.
114 “Generally those who resisted evictions risked being lynched. A fit of violence extended throughout the country. The royalists set up a “policy of beheading” to eliminate the PARMEHUTU nuclei. Among the main Hutu leaders, of which Kayibanda was one, several not protected by armed soldiers were murdered.” (Shimamungu, op. cit.: ).
115 Logiest, 1988: 50-53, “Kayibanda seemed rather skeptical towards me. I had stopped the momentum of the Hutu revolution. Many of his partisans had been arrested and imprisoned. I pointed out to him that I had also ended the Tutsi reaction, and doubtless prevented his murder. He admitted it with a smile which gave him a mischievous air that I was going to learn to know well. . . . His life was always in danger, and he was constantly surrounded by some loyal supporters.” Cited in Carney, op. cit.: 310-11.
117 Ibid.: 169.
of a growing coalition in favor of accommodation,” (perhaps because Kayibanda included two Tutsi ministers in his first transitional government) but, in fact, Kayibanda’s persecution of the Tutsi actually increased along with the length of his reign, until by 1973 the socio-political situation had deteriorated to the point that a coup d’état ensued. “What becomes apparent from the mid-1960s is the steady shift away from inclusive consociational arrangements to ethnic exclusiveness, extremism and unbridled authoritarianism.”\footnote{Kiwuwa, op. cit.: 89.} The ethnic exclusiveness continued through Habyarimana’s reign and fits what Bauman calls the ‘philosophical essence of racism’; “Man is before he acts; nothing he does may change what he is.”\footnote{Bauman, 1991: 60.} That is, the Tutsi—increasingly linked to the Hamitic hypothesis\footnote{Just two years before the ’59 Jacquerie, the Hutu Manifesto (Section O, Paragraph e) embraced the Hamite theory by stating that “At the heart of the problem is double colonialism: the Muhutu must suffer the domination of the Hamite and the European . . . [even if] white-black colonialism is ended, this would leave in place the even worse colonialism of Hamite over the Muhutu.” While growing up, Kayibanda would have been aware of the Hamitic influence, even if indirectly, by the examples like Pierre Ryckmans, the Belgian Governor General, who said in 1931, “The Batutsi were destined to reign . . . over the inferior races that surround them.” It is not hard to imagine that this attitude which permeated the culture should cause a lasting resentment among the Hutu.}—are inherently disruptive of the egalitarian process. Rumiya’s observation supports that notion:

> the Revolution . . . envisioned no reforms but the reversal of ethnic quotas and the creation of new social structures. Thus, the essential question \textit{relentlessly limited itself} to a simple political dialectic, Hutu-Tutsi \cite{Rumiya, 1992, cited in Mvuyekure, 2002: n.p.}.

There was certainly the perception that the political parties were heading toward a physical conflict in order to settle their differences, with UNAR capable of eliminating Kayibanda and other top leaders in the PARMEHUTU party. The type of Hutu attacking response, like the Tutsi attacks described above, was another eerie foreshadowing of the
actions in the 1994 genocide.\textsuperscript{122}

Groups of ten men led by a ‘president’ with a whistle, blazed a trail of destruction across the hills until, either exhausted or drunk, they handed on, relay fashion, to another group, who continued the burning of Tutsi huts. In Ruhengeri not a single Tutsi habitation was spared.\textsuperscript{123}

Extremely important, in regard to the Hutu attacks, was the fact that the Hutu ‘solution’ (paralleling the genocidal path of a ‘final solution’) of a political problem by violent extra-judicial means went unpunished, thereby emboldening and reinforcing the government’s policy to use such tactics as it repeatedly would do, up to April 1994’s genocide. One noteworthy difference from the 1994 genocide, however, was that the churches mostly worked as sanctuaries\textsuperscript{124} for fleeing Tutsis, and it may have been, to some extent, this success at sanctuary that was in the Tutsi collective memory in 1994 when the victims rushed to the churches for protection. In spite of the protection, “more than twenty-one Tutsi chiefs and 332 sub-chiefs had left their positions by the time the trouble died down.”\textsuperscript{125} The Jacquerie of November 1959 pushed Hutu and Tutsi clergy even further apart:

If, at the beginning there could be found a fairly wide range of opinion amongst the Tutsi clergy,’ wrote Adriaenssens, ‘as the Hutu movement gained ground a regrouping took place which will doubtless end by their being gathered, almost all of them, in a single group\textsuperscript{126}

“The violence of 1959 arose as much through the agency of Rwandan \textit{évolués} as

\textsuperscript{122} C.f. OAU (2000: Chapter 3, para. 3.10) “But for the most part, the Hutu attacks were aimed selectively not at all Tutsi, but at the rich and powerful ones who had both operated and benefited from the oppressive indigenous administration. For that reason, this series of events is most accurately regarded as a class uprising rather than as a first step toward genocide.”

\textsuperscript{123} Linden, op. cit.: 267.

\textsuperscript{124} Linden, op. cit.: 268-9.

\textsuperscript{125} Lemarchand, 1970: 173.

\textsuperscript{126} Adriaenssens, 1960.
through their supposed missionary masters. ‘Two very small groups of candidates for power opposed themselves through third-party popular masses.’”127

The Jacquerie influenced the political dynamics, intensifying Kayibanda’s PARMEHUTU’s fight for Hutu independence; they succeeded in enlisting more support among the geographically rather isolated hill populations, and received valuable support from the Special Resident to Rwanda, Bem Logiest.128 By contrast, Msgr Perraudin’s attempts to re-establish some order through the Church included the oddly exacerbating decision of putting Abbé Ntezimana, a Tutsi with no empathy for the Hutu Movement, in charge of Kinyamateka. This waffling within the Church leadership shows how strong was its decades-long policy of trying to avoid any conflict within the socio-political system that might lead to its dissolution and the encroachment of communist or other actions against the Church.

The primary issues that PARMEHUTU pushed forward following the Jacquerie, “despite the fact that PARMEHUTU was still only a loose congeries of local parties over which Kayibanda exerted little direct control”,129 were the grievances against Tutsi landowners (stealing Gitera’s and, therefore, APROSOMA’s thunder), nationalism (as represented by the Hutu masses as the ‘rightful’ inhabitants of Rwanda), and a twisted anti-colonialism by which the Tutsi were now considered the ‘outsiders’ who invaded Rwanda, headed by the mwami and his court system, the ruling class being “colonialists of the Ethiopian race,” who were invited to return to “their fathers in Abyssinia”.130 In this

128 Linden, op. cit.: 270.
regard, PARMEHUTU’s political ploy succeeded in usurping UNAR’s only two major positional arguments—nationalism and anti-colonialism—which UNAR had hoped would attract blocs of Hutu voters. Clark’s idea here that the Tutsi and the Hutu are each “communities of people organized around the idea of self-determination”, and that “the representatives of the Hutu and Tutsi identities have sought to control the Rwandan state to protect the fundamental interests of their respective communities”, resulting in “dual nationalisms”\(^\text{131}\) describes well the incompatibility of the two ‘identities’ as they solidified during the ‘50s, particularly among the two oppositional parties, and which resulted in two different sets of notions of rights and privileges which were carried decades and into the genocide. A fine example of this dual nationalism and separatists identity is an article published in *Kinyamateka*, in 1966, by Sebaganwa:

“In fact, *we are fighting for nothing*, let us rejoice and feel satisfaction because *our ethnic group has power*. . . It is surprising that Bahutu brothers in PARMEHUTU party are now busy fighting for power among themselves. Tutsis are now ordinary citizens and other parties have no power, and this means that *Hutus in power can do whatever they want* [my italics]; . . . \(^\text{132}\)

Kayibanda’s PARMEHUTU (seconded in the primarily Hutu party, APROSOMA) utilized to maximum effect the ethnic/racist card to overwhelm the Belgian position and the Church’s vacillation:\(^\text{133}\)

One of the leaders of PARMEHUTU, . . . J.-B. Rwacibo, close friend of G. Kayibanda, and Future Home Secretary in his government, drafted a long note establishing the stages to be followed for the "long-lasting pacification of the country". . . proposing straightaway the radical "détutsification" of power in the

\(^{131}\) Clark, 2006: 73.

\(^{132}\) Sebaganwa, D., “Ntimukitane ba mwana”, *Kinyamateka*, no 29, August 1966, p. 3)

\(^{133}\) “In Rwanda the two great currents in Catholicism, the unifying force of Christian equality and the hierarchical principle of order, were never in equilibrium. The stratification of Rwanda’s society produced the extraordinary phenomenon of first a Hutu and then a Tutsi Church driving a wedge into the Mission Society of White Fathers, until finally, in the crisis of 1959, the Church as a unified institution existed only on paper.” (Linden, op. cit.: 8).
name of the will of the masses, which would have lifted themselves up against the
monarchical regime, and which opposes the return of 7,000 "refugees" to their
land.\textsuperscript{134}

Already, there is evidence here of an influence in the PARMEHUTU party impacting
Kayibanda’s ethnic/racist decisions, and setting up the path for continued punitive and
discriminatory practices against the Tutsis, following party principles. And Rwacibo’s
note prefigures Kayibanda’s government’s inflexible position regarding denial of
repatriation for Tutsi expatriates, which policy Habyarimana continued, and which led, in
great part, to his downfall.

At this point in the Hutu Movement, prejudice no longer becomes only a political
pole around which to rally disgruntled Hutus, but a type of \textit{de facto} law permeating the
thought and politics of the PARMEHUTU party and Kayibanda’s subsequent presidency.
It is not to Habyarimana’s credit that he continued this anachronistic and self-destructive
concept through his twenty years in power. Equally noxious (and a foreshadowing of
Habyarimana’s MRND party’s parallel manipulation of events—performing attacks and
blaming them on the Tutsi RPF), is the allegation, if true, by Fr. De Renesse, a Catholic
Action leader (and as such would have been well acquainted with Kayibanda), who
charged that

PARMEHUTU leaders had utilized their Legion of Mary networks \textit{to initiate the
November disturbances} [my italics]. “It is the legionary chiefs of Kabgayi
(Grégoire Kayibanda and Calliope Mulindahabi, respectively president and
secretary of the Committee of Kabgayi) who have triggered this entire revolt of the
Bahutu which is bathing Rwanda in blood at the moment.” De Renesse noted that
after he confronted Kayibanda and Mulindahabi with these charges, they reacted in
an “unpredictable and uncontrollable” manner, implying the likelihood of

\textsuperscript{134} Cited in Willame, 1994: 318
“implacable racial fights for the future.” Despite these suspicions, Kayibanda, Mulindahabi and other Hutu leaders were neither questioned nor disciplined, although the Belgian administration arrested hundreds of lower-level Hutu cadres.135

Missionaries and Hutu priests blamed UNAR for the Jacquerie, with Fr. Manyurane speaking of “UNAR’s campaign of intimidation, terrorism and nationalism which incited Rwanda’s ‘fratricidal fight,’” with Adriaenssens believing the revolution of November was “inscribed in the history of the feudal regime.” And Perraudin himself blamed UNAR for provoking the crisis, “I am personally convinced also that the Hutu Revolution was a response of an exasperated mass to the systematic provocation organized by the Tutsi power of this epoch.”138

Things happened pretty quickly after the November events. The administration moved the January elections to June, and the Upper Council was replaced by a Special Provisional Council made up of two representatives each from PARMEHUTU, APROSOMA, RADER, and UNAR. This new Council immediately played into the hands of the three parties who held anti-monarchist platforms, moving the thrust of the independence movement further from UNAR and the Tutsi traditional leaders.139 In December, a temporary decree empowered the administration to oust the Mwami, as well


136 A.G.M.Afr. Nº741102, Manyurane to Parents, 8 Dec. 1959, cited in Carey, op. cit.: . “Bernard Manyurane was Rwanda’s first Hutu bishop, and died suspiciously in May 1961.” (Carey, op. cit.: 242). C.f. A Belgian official described the November violence as a “dispute between rival political elites: “[Elites] learned that far-reaching reforms were soon to be carried out and that those reforms would mean another step towards self-determination. As of that moment, the parties and movements had begun to prepare for their future roles as interpreters of the people’s wishes in the more authoritative representative institutions, and they had come into a conflict. It was . . . a political and social struggle. (A.G.M.Afr. Nº 722023-24, United Nations T/L 955, “Conditions in the Trust-Territory of Ruanda-Urundi,” 19 Jan. 1960, cited in Carey, op. cit.: 250).


139 Carney, op. cit.: 129.
as to veto his decisions, and to replace vice-chieftainships with temporary *communes*;

twenty-one Tutsi chiefs (out of the 43) and 314 vice-chiefs (out of 549) were ousted and replaced with Hutus. Half the chiefs and vice-chiefs were then Hutus. Most UNAR members had been removed from the local administration structures and replaced by APROSOMA, PARMEHUTU and RADER militants.¹⁴⁰

One significant result of these actions by the administration and the further distancing of UNAR, was that the party’s main leaders settled in Dar es Salaam; the Tutsi diaspora problem that would haunt Kayibanda’s, and especially Habyarimana’s, presidency had germinated in December 1959, thirty years before the Tutsi-led RPF invasion. UNAR’s alienation from the Church, the Belgians, and increasingly from the Hutu electorate, was to have dire consequences for the country, and could have been avoided if the leading actors on all sides had proceeded toward independence with a more inclusive, rather than an exclusive approach to political dynamics. This same exclusionary attitude turned the CDR party away from the Arusha Accords proceedings, thereby radicalizing their position toward a forceful (violent) means of being included in the country’s future political process.

The inability of UNAR’s elite Tutsi leaders to grasp the fact that the monarchy had become an anachronism, and that their system was seriously challenged, stems in large part from the Tutsi hold on power, at least in the central kingdom, for so long. As Codere points out, concerning Rwanda,

> power can be held and exercised by a minority against the interests and without the consent of the governed; that this state of affairs can last for long periods of time, that power is a factor that can be independent of the social order or capable of shaping a kind of social order that becomes the only kind known to the people; and

lastly, that revolution is a possibility.\textsuperscript{141}

And concerning the related violence that erupted in November,

The \textit{Mwami} was no longer the quasi-magical source of the general wealth of the land. Hutu economic life had escaped any mandatory relations to Tutsi, and Tutsi political power lacked economic leverage through either the threats or promises that could be made. Had the Tutsi not forced the issue in 1959 and 1960 this underlying revolution would have been confirmed in an orderly and peaceful fashion, rather than in violence.\textsuperscript{142}

From a wider perspective, it is easy to understand outbreaks of violence in a society whose socio-political and economic workings rested on a basic inequality between the power elite and the vast majority of citizens, and persisted in limiting the masses to a standard of living not much above subsistence level, divorced from ownership of the land they tilled and built their homes on. When the victorious revolutionary Mao Zedong ended the centuries-old Chinese feudal system (and before installing his own repressive system) the peasant-farmers immediately vented their anger and frustration on the wealthy land owners, killing and burning. Violent response by populations, large groups, can stem from the frustration caused by layered injustices that couldn’t be and weren’t addressed. It would seem unrealistic to assume that the majority of Hutus who felt themselves unjustifiably thwarted socially, politically or economically, over the length of their lives, or for generations, would not feel angry enough that their frustration would be vented in some fashion. As with the Chinese peasants, beating the local landlord, or burning huts and stealing some cattle, even driving him and his family and relatives off the land and out of the area so they wouldn’t be able to reconstruct the old, repressive system—these actions

\textsuperscript{141} Codere, 1962: 51-52.
\textsuperscript{142} Op. cit.: 196.
seem like understandable (though regrettable) human responses, given the circumstances, especially the lack of protection of human rights in Rwanda, in 1959. It is this universal human response to a perceived wrong-doing to one’s person or group by another person or group, that interjects considerable caution into the argument that the 1959 violence\textsuperscript{143} was an adumbration of future events such as the 1994 genocide. The OAU’s International Panel of Eminent Personalities, in 2000, arrived at the same reasoning:

for the most part, the Hutu attacks were aimed selectively not at all Tutsi, but at the rich and powerful ones who had both operated and benefited from the oppressive indigenous administration. For that reason, this series of events is most accurately regarded as a class uprising rather than as a first step toward genocide.\textsuperscript{144}

It is not the explosion of frustration, per se, but the reaction of the authority figures to the violence that can either give continued support for violence or discourage it by punishing the perpetrators and setting up a culture of intolerance for violence as a means of addressing social problems. The Belgian authorities were guilty of ‘supporting’ the violence by not condemning it in the strictest terms, and, in fact,

The White Fathers gave strategic advice to some of the Hutu leaders and, in general, blessed their cause. At the same time, the senior Belgian military officer on the spot directed events on behalf of the Hutu, while his troops, when they were not passively standing by, were actually encouraging Hutu attacks against Tutsi.\textsuperscript{145}

\textsuperscript{143} Still, it is worth noting that, “on a wall in his presidential mansion in Kigali, President Habyarimana kept a black-and-white photograph of Tutsi huts in flames, carefully labeled ‘Apocalypse Révolution—Nov 1959’” (Meredith, 2005: 489).

\textsuperscript{144} OAU, op. cit: Chapter 3.11, n.p.

\textsuperscript{145} OAU, op. cit.: Chapter 3.10, n.p. The words of Colonel Guy Logiest, the resident at the time, give testimony to his position: “Some among my assistants thought that I was wrong in being so partial against the Tutsi and that I was leading Rwanda on a road towards democratisation and was distant and uncertain! No, the time was crucial for Rwanda. Its people needed support and protection. My role was essential and it was important that I could play it till the final verdict would come from the communal elections. Today, twenty-five years later, I ask myself what was it that made me act with such resolution! It was, without doubt, the will to give people back their dignities and it was probably just as much the desire to put down the morgue and expose the duplicity of a basically oppressive and unjust aristocracy.” (from his book Mission Au Rwanda, cited in Bamurangirwa, 2013: 50).
Kayibanda made a special appeal to his followers to “maintain order in the hills, arguing that the fight against the ‘secular feudalism of the Tutsi’ must be waged in a ‘peaceful spirit.’”

Communal Elections

A few months after the violence, in May 1960, the Belgian authorities confirmed their new politics by creating an indigenous territory military guard, which included 650 men based on ethnic proportionality—85% Hutu and 15% Tutsi.” In the same month—before the newly conceived communal elections to select burgomasters and councilors for the newly created communes, which would replace subchiefdoms and chiefdoms—PARMEHUTU, realizing the need to broaden its image to reflect its reposition that included a more nationalistic platform (and to usurp the Tutsi parties’ stance on that point) added the title Mouvement Démocratique Républicain (MDR) to their party. In the party’s statutes, Article 10 proposes to “solve, once and for all, and peacefully, the problem of coexistence among different ethnic, racial, and social groups in the country” including “all areas of political administrative, economic, social and cultural progress.”

This is grand and sweeping oratory that never, of course, approached its promise, and one

---

147 Sellström, Tor and Wohlgemuth, 1996: 29.
148 “. . . any agreement with [mwami] Kigeri and with UNAR had proved totally impossible, [so] the leaders of PARMEHUTU met at Ruhengeri on June 6th, 1960, under the leadership of Kayibanda . . . rejected the institution of the Mwami, and opted for the republic. Their party was thus named from now on the PARMEHUTU Mouvement Démocratique Républicain (MDR). And it is under this new label that it campaigned from then on in the municipal elections.” (Paternostre, op. cit.: 158). Also see Linden, op. cit.: 271. In the ’60 elections, PARMEHUTU was still only a loose congeries of local parties over which Kayibanda exerted little direct control. The slow process of building up a national party was circumvented when, on 28 January 1961 the PARMEHUTU leadership seized power. . . . Formal independence was granted by Belgium on 1 July 1961, PARMEHUTU having abandoned thoughts of a constitutional monarch after their election successes. Also see Adelman and Suhrke, 2000: 63.
149 Kayibanda, quoted in Lizinde, 1979: 156.
wonders how the party could make such a statement, then write in their *Manifesto* that the MDR-PARMEHUTU was “mobilized to fight in a democratic manner against the injustice perpetrated against Gahutu and all the destitute people in the country by the feudal power of the Tutsi monarchy”.150 But, then again, there was still, in the early part of 1960, a division of voices in the Hutu Movement, among the various Hutu voices representing different regions: Gitera and Munyangaju in the south, Kayibanda nearer the center, and Bicamumpaka from the north. These different voices spoke to the various ideologies within the party and appealed politically to the voters on a spectrum from democratic nationalism to ethnic pride. But it is also an example of the competition within the party among various ideologies that would hamper Kayibanda’s attempts to unify the many areas of the country, and prevent him from following more strictly his own direction as president. Nevertheless, the party’s networking and strategies were overwhelmingly successful in the communal elections, from 26 June to 30 July 1960, as can be seen in the following votes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PARMEHUTU</td>
<td>2,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent candidates</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APROSOMA</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RADER</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAR</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Tutsis, who had always been the prevalent office holders, received only 16% of the ballots cast. The important office of burgomaster (roughly akin to a mayor) had changed from Tutsi control to the Hutu’s holding 92% of the seats (211 of 229 positions).

---

150 Lizinde, op. cit. Linden points out regarding the ‘Hamitisation’ of the Tutsis by Kayibanda and the évolués, “Under the pressure of the Tutsi cultural renaissance, the counter-elite slipped easily into a racial analysis of its woes.” (Linden, op. cit.: .250).
The importance of the Hutu victories in this communal vote were, as Newbury says, “a major milestone in the Hutu struggle to gain control of the state.”151 The effect on the monarchy is immediate: King Kigeli V left the country, never to return.152 Kayibanda is named prime minister and charged with forming a provisional government on October 26, 1960, in Kigali: offices are given to 5 Hutus, 2 Tutsis, and 2 Europeans, cementing the Hutu hold on power, as Joseph Gitera (from APROSOMA) is installed as head of a temporary transitional council.

PARMEHUTU’s commanding majority raised hopes for political stability, and a confident Kayibanda even reached out to his Tutsi rivals: ‘The inhabitants of the country should arrive at a sincere entente, regardless of ethnicity, and live happily.’153

The Tutsi elite were severely disillusioned at this point, underrepresented in both the interim government and the council; it was, practically speaking, too late for them to do anything. But, the very notion of a “modern” nation-state was antithetical to the mwamiship, because it develops from the growth of social complexity and the sophistication of political and economic relationships, which can no longer be managed under the old ideas of patronage and the rapid pace of market demands and development; the function of the nation-state was an outcome of collective, as well as individual, needs and agency, a necessary development rather than an ideological or traditional core. The Westphalian agreement in seventeenth-century Europe couldn’t have happened without the pressing need to protect the economic sphere of each territory, establishing something

---

151 See Newbury, op. cit.: 198-206. Also see Lemarchand, op. cit.: 118-196; Reyntjens, 1985: 272-275; Sellström, 1996: 29; Mvuyekure, 2002; and Linden, op. cit.: 271.
analogous to the organic membrane around a biological cell, so that the necessary mechanisms of “life” can be protected, managed, and sustained. Even at the single-cell level, activity is complex, requiring rapid cooperation and communication among the constituent parts; so, in a large and intricate social structure incorporating many cities, towns, and villages, there is a common (because of language, mostly, but also because of a great many shared cultural elements), and protective border, like a cell membrane, which allows “protected” coordination among them and, because it the borer is permeable, allows (and facilitates) necessary commerce in and out.

Once the membrane is in place, the internal socio-political workings must govern and coordinate in ways that are conducive to the “organism’s” healthy functioning. This enclosed nation-state can operate under a variety of types of good and bad government, as the world has witnessed, but it is, in its complexity, beyond the ability of chiefdoms and kingdoms. The Mwamiship created a stagnation of the economy, every peasant-farmer’s effort trapped in subsistence-level annual work, while many citizen’s labors were interrupted each week by at least two full days given over to nothing but applying their labor to their patron’s wishes. Farmers couldn’t own their own land, leaving them as indigent caretakers of small plots, many of which were non-contiguous, and were continually being broken up into smaller units to give to sons after their marriage. The overall situation was of a tiny landlocked country (territory) surrounded by non- or under-performing countries, with a predominantly hilly geography not fit for large scale cultivation (except for hill crops such as tea and coffee, which are very labor intensive and managed by the mwamiship), a socio-political system whereby land is owned by the
Mwami and awarded in parcels at his discretion, so that a farmer may increase or lose land according to his favor with the king and the court system. Having land to farm was, therefore, a political undertaking as much as a process of labor. But the result was an ever-increasing population existing on ever-decreasing land units, with immigration extremely limited due to the poverty of resources and opportunities in neighboring countries.

Rwanda, as it was controlled by the Mwamiship, with no opportunities for a middle class through entrepreneurship and trade, and without a written language, faced a relatively petrified internal impetus for change. Momentum for transformation, at least in the near future, could only come from the outside, and that is what occurred with the arrival of the Belgians and the Roman Catholic Church (through the White Fathers).

Kayibanda, and several of his cohorts, had been abroad for education and training, and had witnessed different cultures, and the results of industrialization, education and trade, and were eager to modernize Rwanda. Kayibanda’s vision included modernizing Rwanda, and necessarily involved creating a basic infrastructure that would allow, stimulate and support the mechanisms for development. (Habyarimana’s party included in its name the words ‘revolution’ and ‘development’, although there was nothing revolutionary about his policies, and little real development, focusing almost entirely on agricultural production for domestic use, with tea and coffee the only substantial export commodities, but which faced a volatile world market price fluctuation).

The Tutsi UNAR party, working only from tradition, had nothing to offer the people that would counter the Hutu Movement’s calls for modernization and change: tradition’s inadequacies were no longer accepted.
Just one hundred days after the provisional government of October 26, 1960, was formed, Kayibanda, Gitera and Bicamumpaka, with Logiest’s approval, and with around 2,900 burgomasters in attendance, held an *ad hoc* national ‘constitutional’ assembly at Gitarama, PARMEHUTU’s political base, and called on the people to vote in a referendum on the country’s future order. At this 28 January 1961 *ad hoc* assembly, one-and-a-half miles from Perraudin’s see, Kayibanda was elected prime minister and Dominique Mbonyumutwa was elected as a titular, ‘symbolic’ (as a victim of the November violence), president, and this congress of Gitarama, in what has come to be called the Coup d’État of Gitarama, effectively dismantled the monarchy.

The new bourgmestres and local council members were summoned to Gitarama, they were taken there by the Belgians, and the meeting place was guarded by a detachment of Belgian paratroopers. Colonel Logiest himself was present. The Republic was proclaimed.156

Mbonyumutwa kept his position for ten months, until the Kamarampaka referendum, 25 September 1961, when 80% of the voters in the referendum, which was held under UN surveillance, called for an abolition of the monarchy:157 Rwanda changed from a parliamentary to a presidential system.158 Kayibanda was elected Head of State (and Secretary of Education—a nod to his long-held enthusiasm for schooling) on 26 October

---

154 Excerpts from Kayibanda’s speech on 28 January (*Kinyamateka*, 1961) show some of the contradictions of his reign: “I the President of the Republic, in order to save completely the people of Rwanda and give a true democracy to our country, bring peace among citizens and allow them to collaborate in order to safeguard justice and respect for everybody in the new republic, and protect everybody from the colonization and clientelism (*ubuhake*) . . . . All Rwandans are equal before the law without considering “ethnic groups”, family, color or religion. All Rwandans have the same rights according to the bill of human rights, with the exception of some according to the law. Every Rwandan can go to school. Schools which will not follow directives regarding quotas according to the number of individuals of each ethnic group will be closed or given to other owners.”


156 Viret, op. cit.: n.p.

157 This date is known as kamarampaka, or “that which put an end to discord”. Reyntjens, 1985: 303-304.

158 Mbonyumutwa then became Minister of Justice, followed by service as deputy in the national Assembly. Parliament forced him from the MDR-PARMEHUTU party for ‘deviationism’, but was rehabilitated as Chancellor of the National Orders by Habyarimana. (See Mvuyekure, 2000).
1961 by the legislative assembly, which included no member of the Belgian contingency in its new government (though some Belgian administration would be retained as advisors).

Kayibanda’s cabinet consisted of:

- Rusingizandekwe, O. -- Secretary of State
- Rwasibo, J.-B. -- Home Secretary
- Sebazungu, Isidore -- Secretary of Defense
- Cyimana, G. -- Minister of Finance
- Makuza, A. -- Minister of Justice
- Bicamumpaka, B. -- Minister of Agriculture
- Hakizimana, Jacques -- Minister of Social Affairs and Refugees
- Sindikubwabo, Théodore -- Minister of Technology
- Habamenshi, Callixte -- Minister of the Economy
- Munyangaju, A. -- Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

A Supreme Court was put in place and its members, with mayors, local councilors, the legislative assembly, and other government functionaries met to construct a preliminary constitution. As Mvuyekure points out, “central to the writers of the Rwandan Constitution was the desire to safeguard both the 1959 social revolution and the 28 January 1961 coup against the monarchy,” that “while the Legislative Assembly purported ‘to form a more perfect national union’, in reality it was PARMEHUTU, a party whose objective was the emancipation of the Hutu, which monopolized the power

In places, the local government of the new regime took violent measures against former chiefs and subchiefs, from August to September. In the Astrida region 22,000 refugees took flight as the violence spread from the south, to the capital, then the northeast and the Belgian administration did little to stop it, although, keeping the

---

159 Paternostre, op. cit.: 163.
160 “A closer look at the preamble, however, suggests that insisting on the abolition of the monarchy without guaranteeing minority rights was a major flaw. (Mvuyekure, 2002: n.p.).
161 Lemarchand, op. cit: 195; Reyntjens, 1985: 299.
approaching elections in mind, arrested a number of UNAR militants.\textsuperscript{162} Also targeted by this violence was the APROSOMA party. “By this point, since the end of the \textit{Toussaint rwandais}, 300,000 Rwandan refugees had fled to Tanganyika, Uganda and the Congo.\textsuperscript{163} Logiest, Belgium’s special resident, was still in control of the army. A UN trusteeship report was not sanguine about the way events played out:

\begin{quote}
The developments of these last 18 months have brought about the racial dictatorship of one party... An oppressive system has been replaced by another one... It is quite possible that some day we will witness violent reactions on the part of the Tutsi.\textsuperscript{164}
\end{quote}

It is remarkable how prophetic this analysis was, and yet how ignored. It is worth noting, though, that in 1960 the provisional government had set up a State Secretariat for Refugees, and that in the First Republic the refugees were invited, on many occasions, to return to the country. This goal was never achieved. For one thing, Tutsi refugees never believed in the sincerity of the government's change in attitude: for another, the \textit{inyenzi} were making regular incursions.\textsuperscript{165}

Kayibanda continued a rather unconvincing rhetoric of appeasement: “The inhabitants of the country should arrive at a sincere entente, regardless of ethnicity, and live happily.”\textsuperscript{166}

At this point, his words and the social reality seem fixed in different planes. At the same time, Perraudin was trying to keep Kayibanda and the state within the Church sphere of influence, urging Church leaders to keep friendly relations with Kayibanda and his officials, and lobbying for a “Christian solution in collaboration, safeguarding and

\begin{flushright}
\begin{footnotesize}
\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{162} Lemarchand, ibid: 195.
\textsuperscript{163} Munyarugere, 2003: 111.
\textsuperscript{164} Prunier, op. cit: 53, cited in OAU, op. cit: Chapter 3, paragraph 3.6.
\textsuperscript{165} Sellström, 1996: 31.
\end{footnotesize}
\end{flushright}
respecting the diversity of goals and respective means.”

But Kayibanda the politician was never clearly separated from Kayibanda the lay worker, who would never have been able to reach the presidency without the Church. Perraudin and the other Church leaders, looking ahead and wondering what kind of society would follow independence and the institution of Kayibanda’s presidency, surely must have pinned their hopes on Kayibanda’s religiosity and his stated views on the necessity of Christian values as a necessary part of state function: “Perraudin posited that he always opposed the ethnic zoning of Rwanda and claimed that ‘the Catholic White Fathers and Bishop Perraudin remain open to all political leaders, Hutu and Tutsi.’”

While the Church spoke of maintaining neutrality toward politics, it wanted to maximize its reach and power by attracting the masses, who were Hutu, and whom they couldn’t risk alienating, and this caught them in a double bind from which they never extricated themselves, through Kayibanda’s and Habyarimana’s presidencies.

Many writers on Rwanda have pointed out the shift in support that the Belgians and the Church made from the Tutsis to the Hutus in the late 1950s, often remarking that it amounted to a kind of betrayal. But the relationship with the Tutsi monarchy that was implemented by the Belgians at the beginning of their involvement in Rwanda in the second decade of the twentieth century was primarily based on political expediency—a Tutsi government was already in place and Belgian indirect rule easily instituted, saving manpower and money. Similarly, the attitude of the Church toward the Tutsi governing

---

system was informed by political considerations: in order to establish the Church in the
country they needed the endorsement of the Tutsi authorities; enlisting the Tutsi ruling
class also made the Church immediately respectable to the population. The Tutsi, in
return, took advantage of their newly acquired preferential treatment by the two powerful
entities now operating in their country.

Interestingly, from the beginning, in the 1920s, none of the three groups foresaw
the Hutu Movement of the ‘50s. Yet, from the onset, the Christian concepts of God, and
the intrinsic equality among people, were, paradoxically, a direct refutation of the
Mwami’s supposed mandate from God, as well as a challenge to his inegalitarian socio-
political system of rule. And the change from Belgium’s colonial position to a UN mandate
after WWII forced the Belgian administration to speed up the democratization process in
Rwanda. The Belgians had been in no hurry to do this, believing that the territory wouldn’t
be ready for independence for several decades. It was the Hutu évolutés who took the
initiative, to set in motion the political movement for the dissolution of the Mwami system,
and which then gathered momentum for a push for independence. As has been mentioned,
neither the Church nor the Belgian administration would have fallen on PARMEHUTU’s
side of the fence if UNAR’s Tutsi elite had not been unyielding in its refusal to give up the
monarchy and share power with the Hutus. This, coupled with UNAR’s oppositional
stance to both the Church and the Belgians, had effectively pushed UNAR out of the
political picture. Strizek’s observation concerning the Church and its Tutsi clergy is
particularly revealing of the way bad choices by the elite Tutsis led to their exclusion from
real participation in the public sphere after 1962:
the Catholic Church had actively pursued integration in the country since 1962 and had been criticised for doing so by those in exile. Many Tutsi priests like the scholar, Alexis Kagame, deliberately remained in the country to demonstrate their loyalty to the new Hutu-led state. This was also true for a long time of the country’s bishops, most of whom were Tutsis. . . . the country’s first ordained African bishop, Aloys Bigirumwami, was a Tutsi and . . . expressly shared the social commitment of Bishop Perraudin, whom he himself ordained. History would have taken a different course if it had been possible to convey the concept of integration advocated by these two Church leaders to the Tutsi nobility. Regrettably, the group that opted for political integration within the RADER party remained a minority. The rest of the nobility dreamed of regaining by military force the power it had lost through a referendum.  

It would be too much to say that PARMEHUTU was victorious by default, or only won because they received the support of the Church and the Belgian administration. Both of those powerful organizations were significant players in the political arena and PARMEHUTU needed their support, but it is unfair to the work that Kayibanda and other Rwandan leaders accomplished to discount their efforts: without the Hutu Movement there most likely wouldn’t have been a transition from the Belgian trusteeship to a republican government ( though PARMEHUTU considered a constitutional monarchy in its early days, but dropped the idea in the face of Tutsi intransigence). There is no evidence that the Church or the Belgians would have opposed a Tutsi monarchy after

---

170 See Lemarchand, 1966: 318), “. . . it [the revolution] probably would not have occurred so early, if at all, if it had not been for the very active support the Hutu leadership received from both the Catholic Church and the local administration.” Also see Sellström, 1996: 29), “Belgium's policy in Rwanda encountered severe criticism in the General Assembly of the United Nations. From December 1960 to June 1962, it called on different occasions for reconciliation with both the Mwami and imprisoned Tutsi representatives, also urged Belgium to keep Rwanda and Burundi together. but to no avail. Instead, the Belgian authorities proceeded to strengthen the process towards Rwandese independence through the granting of internal autonomy under a temporary government led by the founder of Parmehutu [Grégoire Kayibanda].”
independence, as the Tutsi in Burundi, the sister territory under Belgian trusteeship, kept control after statehood (granted their monarchical system was different from Rwanda’s).\textsuperscript{171}

\textsuperscript{171} C.f. Lemarchand believes the ’59 revolution was “largely inspired, engineered and assisted by Belgian administrators, in Brussels and Kigali, acting in close collaboration with the Catholic Church”, and that the hallmark of the revolution was “regionalism”, as it “placed the levers of power firmly in the hands of politicians from the south-central region.” (Lemarchand, 2002: 308)
PART THREE

CHAPTER 8

HABYARIMANA: UNIVERSITY / OFFICERS SCHOOL

University

While Kayibanda was developing from a seminarian into a politician, Habyarimana, seven years his junior, was following similar schooling, but coming from another environment and possessing a different personality. Habyarimana is said to have been an exceptional student, while secular subjects at his schools changed between 1937, when he was born, and 1957, when he graduated, and included civics, politics, agricultural, Tutsi dynastic history, the French Revolution, and European history,¹ as well as some of the subjects his brother mentions in Part One above.² He was tall (6’3”) and athletic, made friends easily, and carried his Catholic religion comfortably—not as a vocation, lay or otherwise, as evidenced by his quitting seminary in order to study medicine, a move away from religious studies which a large part of Hutu seminarians followed, because the seminary was the only avenue to an advanced education and a decent job.

Habyarimana was uninvolved (at least overtly) in politics from the late ‘50s to independence. He was a twenty-year-old student at the Petit Séminaire when the Bahutu Manifesto was published in 1957. Then he went to the Collège des Pères Barnabites in Bukavu, Congo, where he finally decided on becoming a doctor, which meant that he would have to study outside the country, because there was no medical school in Rwanda

¹ Linden, correspondence with author.
² See from page 49.
at the time. At the Collège Barnabites he met Siméon Nteziryayo, who would be his Sports Minister, Minister of Youth, and then director of the SONARWA insurance company. The importance of school as a place to meet sympathetic thinkers was reiterated by Habyarimana to a journalist in 1983: "Those friends who persevered until now are true friends that I put before anyone else."³

Whatever thoughts and feelings he had about the movement to abolish the monarchy can only be surmised, but, being from fiercely-independent northern Rwanda, where the Tutsi monarchy had never taken hold, and being old enough to vote in the communal elections, he would surely have cast a ballot for one of the two Hutu parties. That may have been the extent of his political action before he went off to Lovanium University in Léopoldville, the Congo, in 1958. Habyarimana’s brother says that Habyarimana was the only person in their home region that was able to go to Lovanium University⁴ (The National University of Rwanda opened its doors in October, 1963, with cooperation from the Canadian Dominican Fathers). Regarding Lovanium, his brother recounts,

I don’t know who financed the university studies of Habyarimana. In any case, it was not himself. Where would he have been able to find the money? Our parents could not have influenced his studies in the Congo, or the school of officers; these peasant ‘poor people’ would not have known the existence of these institutions, let alone how to direct him there.⁵

---

⁴ Even if Habyarimana hadn’t been forced to leave the Congo because of the upheaval of independence, he would have had to survive a grueling system: “Up to 1968, Lovanium’s faculty of medicine failed 81 percent of all students.” (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002: 175).
⁵ Communication with Bararengana, 2013.
At Lovanium, Habyarimana had close Tutsi friends, such as Wenceslas Rudaseswa (who became a gynecologist in Uganda), and André Katabarwa. Rudaseswa even occasionally stayed at the Habyarimana house en route from his hometown in Kingogo to Léopoldville. This example of Habyarimana’s openness toward Tutsis is in marked contrast to Kayibanda’s hatred. (It should be noted that Rudaseswa’s father was a subchief, and so was, perhaps, not an un-useful connection to have). Habyarimana also made another friend for life in Dr. Emmanuel Hitayezu, who would become Minister of Planning under Habyarimana, and would be assassinated by the RPF six days after Habyarimana was.

After Habyarimana had spent two years at Lovanium, there was an insurrection by the Congolese army in June 1960, and foreign students were forced to leave the country. Habyarimana supposedly “assisted in the ceremonies for Congo independence, June 30, 1960, and this occasion would mark him for the rest of his life.” It is quite possible that this experience, had he mentioned it later to Mobutu, may have been a factor in establishing the two men’s close friendship. It is also a grand coincidence that he, two years later, carried the first Rwandan flag in the ceremonies for Rwandan independence, and witnessed the birth of a second African nation.

---

6 Katabarwa was the first Tutsi in government (Minister of Transportation and Communications, 1991) since 1964, and would later be charged by the extremist CDR in 1992 of being an accomplice of the RPF. If Katabarwa remained a close personal friend of Habyarimana’s from college days, then it doesn’t seem likely that Habyarimana had much influence over the CDR, nor a close working relationship with them, if they could treat his old friend as a traitor. Human Rights Watch, 1999: 709.

7 “...Habyarimana does not return during every vacation to his native hill in Rambura. Often he goes to the home of his friend, who in his stead often comes to Habyarimana’s place. After high school, they are together going to study medicine at Lovanium.” (Marchal, 1987: 92-94).

8 Shimamungu, op. cit.: 35-36.
Officer’s School

In 1960 the Rwandan National Guard, without a single Rwandan officer, was put under the command of the Belgian major, Vanderstaeten, who was instructed to “recruit, feed, house, equip and train the first Rwandan army.” The first School for Officers (l’École d’Officiers, or EO)\(^9\), and directed by Capt. Léon De Paew, opened soon after in Kigali, admitting seven candidates. One requirement was to have finished secondary school, and Habyarimana was one of the qualified who was chosen.\(^{10}\) Concerning why Habyarimana chose to enter the military\(^{11}\) rather than continue his medical studies, Shimamungu\(^{12}\) suggested that it was because at that time Rwanda was more or less at war (civil). Joining the army was a kind of patriotism that young people from the North did not really choose—they had no other means to pursue higher education. Because the government was still largely in the hands of the Batutsi, Habyarimana would have found it almost impossible to get financial assistance to continue his medical studies outside Africa. “It

---

\(^9\) “Thanks to his military score, he became the highest-ranked Officer, and was appointed as the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces. He framed and organized the Rwanda Army and the National Police. The President of the Republic appointed him in 1965 as Minister of ‘la Garde Nationale’, let us say Minister of Defense. He kept that position until July 5th, 1973, when he became Head of State.” (Celestin Kabanda correspondence, 2013).

\(^{10}\) Three were from Ruhengeri (Nyatanyi, Benda and Kanyarengwe), two from Gisenyi (Habyarimana and Nsekalije), and two from Kigali (Ruhashya and Ubalijoro, who washed out, so only six graduated). See Neretse, 2010: 13.

\(^{11}\) Bararengana on Habyarimana and the military: “I don’t know how Habyarimana was chosen to enter officers’ school. Certainly, the political officers at that time who decided on the opening of the school had to canvass to find candidates meeting the criteria of admission. At this time the political leaders of Rwanda wanted to start an officers training school in Kigali. Habyarimana was contacted and recruited with some others as part of the first graduating class. He became a Major from this training and he was the awarded the honor of carrying the national flag at the head of the military during the festivities marking the independence of the young Rwandan Republic on 1 July 1962. In 1963, he was made Chief of Staff of the National Guard (the Army), and in 1965 he was made minister of the National Guard and of the Police. . . . When I was in the 4th year of secondary school, Leopoldville, in the Congo, opened a school for training second lieutenants at Luluabourg (Kananga today). Representatives of this training center appeared at our middle school to recruit candidates. I applied and passed the admission test. During the holidays, I spoke to my father about it and said I was going to a military academy. His answer was a categorical “NO! You have a brother in the army, Habyarimana, and the other brother is in the police, and you, too, would like to go to the army? If a war bursts out, I risk losing all three of you!” This is why I abandoned the idea of going to the army” (Personal correspondence).

\(^{12}\) Shimamungu, correspondence with author, October 2009.
was more difficult to find Bahutu candidates than Batutsi, because the Hutu did not have easy access to education at the time of the monarchy.” Yet, and this seems rather odd, “the first class of the Officers School consisted of a single Batutsi.”

Training was for eighteen months, after which the cadets were given a tour of military schools in Belgium. Habyarimana graduated first in his class, December 1961, with the rank of Second Lieutenant. Six months later, he was promoted to First Lieutenant, and was accorded the privilege of carrying Rwanda’s first flag during Independence Day, 1 July, 1962. His and Kayibanda’s paths necessarily begin to cross in this period.

UNAR militants and refugees from Uganda, Burundi, Zaire, and Tanzania had attacked Hutu officials in March 1961, before Habyarimana had graduated from Officers School. Then, only a week after the Independence celebrations, militant elements operating from Uganda carried out incursions from the highlands into northwest Rwanda, and twenty-five-year-old Habyarimana and the other army officers, still under the orders of Belgians, successfully repelled the Inyenzi, (as Tutsi invaders would come to be

---

13 Shimamungu, 2004; 36, n 18).
14 “Colonel Logiest became the Belgian Ambassador in Rwanda. The Belgian troops left the country gradually until August 29, but around 50 officers and subalterns remained in Rwanda as coopérants techniques militaires (technical military advisors.” Reyntjens (1985: 309).
15 The Belgians continued in important posts after independence: in the first government the first ministerial team was composed of 2 Belgian ministers (Defense and Foreign Relations), 6 Rwandan ministers, 6 Belgian secretaries of state, and 3 Rwandan secretaries of state.
16 Twagilimana gives a full definition of the term ‘inyenzi’ in his Historical Dictionary of Rwanda (2007: 89):
“During the decade that followed the 1959 Hutu Revolution, groups of Tutsi exiles launched several attacks from neighboring countries (especially Burundi and Uganda) in an attempt to regain power. They chose to call themselves Inyenzi, an acronym for Inganguarugo zivemeje kuba ingenzi (those who attack first and have vowed to be the best). Inganguarugo was the name of a royal regiment in precolonial Rwanda, just like other armies such as the Inkotanyi (intrepid fighters) under Mwami Kigeri IV Rwabugiri, and the Interahamwe (those who attack together). The common denominator of these precolonial regiments was that they were the ones who usually engaged the enemy first. The historical origin of INYENZI the acronym is thus laudatory, and although the word inyenzi in Kinyarwanda refers to an insect, when used as a metaphor it can point to military qualities. In fact, inyenzi (cockroach) as a metaphor for a good soldier works rather well. Flatness and the ability to hide are good qualities for a soldier. The inyenzi’s nightly appearance and its swiftness are necessary qualities for commandos. These are the qualities that appealed to the 1960s Tutsi fighters in the choice of the acronym. The Hutu ideologues from the 1960s to the 1990s,
known). For the next year, Lieutenant Habyarimana was in charge of the military region in southwest Rwanda, which included Cyangugu, and had to keep on guard for the Congolese revolutionaries trying to overthrow the Congolese central government, and who were operating just across from Rwanda’s border, near Bukavu. Joseph Désiré Mobutu was then a colonel and commander of the Congolese National Army (ANC), which had the responsibility to quell the revolts. Mobutu and Habyarimana met as part of a common interest—Mobutu in putting down the revolutionaries, and Habyarimana in keeping the border safe: the Inyenzi were supporting the revolutionaries, so Habyarimana, newly appointed as commander of the National Guard by the retiring Belgian commander Vandenstraeten, and Mobutu made common cause. In June 1964, in the battle of Kamanyola, Habyarimana and Mobutu profited from their combined experience to crush the Mulélistes, as the mutinous groups in the area around Bukavu were called, and thereby thwarting the rebellion’s attempted reforms. The tight connection between Habyarimana and Mobutu was cemented during this period of military engagements.

In 1963, after Habyarimana's success in defeating the incursions along and near the western border, he was promoted to captain. He was 27. Mulindahabi, the Defense Minister, and Kayibanda, were both southerners, so this rapid promotion of Habyarimana, the northerner, was all the more surprising, given the antagonism between the two regions.

17 C.f. The friendship between Mobutu and Habyarimana had very deep roots that Colette Braeckman (1994) dismisses, claiming that they were known to become friends toward the 1980s. (Shimamungu, op. cit.: 39).
18 They were led by Pierre Mulele, hence the name. The cruelty of the government’s response to the “Simba” rebels—executions of area officials, political leaders, provincial and local police, teachers, and others—is mindful of Kayibanda’s response only in its severity, but it is instructive in showing the murderous degree and scope of retaliation without recourse to law or human rights; it puts Kayibanda’s actions in a particular historical and regional frame rather than being looked at in isolation.
Equally unexpected, and unprecedented, Habyarimana was the first indigenous officer to replace a Belgian superior, and consequently had European officers under his authority. The only downside to his success was that soldiers didn’t make much money compared to many civil servants, and he was not held in high regard by them, especially those from the south. None of Habyarimana’s siblings, surprisingly, went into the military or politics, but Habyarimana’s brother, Bararengana, had an interesting recollection concerning officer’s school:

I don’t know how Habyarimana was chosen to enter officers' school. Certainly, the political officers at that time who decided on the opening of the school had to canvass to find candidates meeting the criteria of admission . . . When I was in the 4th year of secondary school, Leopoldville, in the Congo, opened a school for training second lieutenants at Luluabourg (Kananga today). Representatives of this training center appeared at our middle school to recruit candidates. I applied and passed the admission test. During the holidays, I spoke to my father about it and said I was going to a military academy. His answer was a categorical “NO! You have a brother in the army, Habyarimana, and the other brother is in the police, and you, too, would like to go to the army? If a war bursts out, I risk losing all three of you!” This is why I abandoned the idea of going to the army.¹⁹

¹⁹ Communication with author, 2013.
CHAPTER 9


Independence

During the first Republic, the only values admired were to be Hutu and to belong to an ethnic majority of Hutu.¹ [my italics]

There was to be no Rwandese revolution. It is technically true that within a mere three years a Tutsi-dominated monarchy under colonial rule gave way to a Hutu-led independent republic. But in practice, the changes mostly affected the top echelons of Rwandese society. A small band of Hutus, mainly from the south-centre and, therefore, not representative even of the entire new Hutu elite, replaced the tiny Tutsi elite.² [my italics]

“As pointed out in the report of the OAU Panel: “Other than the change in the names and faces of the tiny ruling class, independence really produced only one major change for Rwanda: the introduction of violence between the two, increasingly divided, ethnic groups.”³ [my italics]

Most observers agree that the revolutionary transition from the Tutsi-dominated monarchy to the Hutu-led republic, which took place between November 1959 and September 1961, culminating in the proclamation of Independence on 1 July, 1962, constitutes a crucial period for the understanding of the subsequent ethnic division of the country.⁴ [my italics]

As expressed in the four quotes above, there is some consensus on the creation of ethnic division from the 1959 period on, as well as there not being much change in the socio-political structure relative to the pre-independence Tutsi monarchical administration.

This view ignores the complex levels of social agency that were already being put into

¹ Mamdani, 2001. Also see Mvuyekure (2002: n.p.) “Jean Rumiya has cogently argued that the Revolution failed to articulate tangible reforms beyond ethnicity. ‘As such the Revolution was logical in itself because it envisioned no reforms but the reversal of ethnic quotas and the creation of new social structures. Thus, the essential question relentlessly limited itself to a simple political dialectic, Hutu-Tutsi,’” (Rumiya, 1992).
³ OAU, op. cit.
effect before 1959 and were carried through into the First and Second Republics. First, the seeds of mass literacy and the subsequent desire (and demand) for its continuation and spread—not just by concerned individuals in administration and the Church, but among the masses—created a socio-political groundswell of its own, putting a certain pressure on the state to fulfill its promises and responsibilities, and though rather moderate, it would not go away because it was related to too many significant and new aspects of society. The new cash economy, for one thing, required literacy for many types of transactions and recordkeeping. Land transactions, the law, medical facilities and drug prescriptions—the growing complexity of social and economic development, demanded the necessity of being able to read and write. Secondly, the introduction and growth of the print media, especially *Kinyamateka*, as a valuable source of news and ideas relatively free of government meant that the historical and intellectual stranglehold on the peasant-farmer masses was, at the very least, interrupted and capable of being challenged. Third, the new form of government, and the forming of a constitution, set up a platform, or foundation, from which government behavior could be measured. These three elements and their constant repercussions, no matter how seemingly small at times, were capable of affecting change, and in fact the disaffection with Kayibanda’s administration led to his removal, and only fifteen years later forced Habyarimana to move toward multi-party politics.

From an additional point of view, Bayart, as pointed out by Van Hoyweghen below, considers the transformative role of the Hutu évolués as an indication of a “true revolution” in Rwanda:

Most post-colonial political landscapes originated out of what Bayart calls the reciprocal assimilation of elites. While the colonial state introduced a new
instrument to guarantee the acquisition of wealth by traditional elites, the school system made way to the rise of a new elite, the so-called évolués. In most countries, the contemporary political class is constituted out of a coalition of both old and new elites. In Rwanda, this is not the case. Elites spring up along ethnic lines and the 'new' elites wiped out the 'old'.

The other opinion put forward by the four quotes at the top of this section on independence purports that ethnic separation and violence only started from the 1959 period and has profound implications for the genocidal violence of 1994. The Tutsi-Hutu designation of different populations was already institutionalized under mwami Rwabugiri’s central kingdom by the early years of the twentieth century, and the preferential (and often exclusive) treatment in favor of the Tutsi—from the mwami down to the subchief level (including prosperous cattle herders)—by the Belgian administration and the Church, had been going on since the ‘20s. It was not that Habyarimana and the other leaders in the Hutu Movement ‘invented’ the ethnic divide, it already existed, and it was their educated indignation—fueled by their awareness through a literacy acquired from a non-state organization, the Church—that they transferred to the peasant-farmers. And it was this sense of entitlement to fair treatment under state auspices that the masses embraced; they were not primarily concerned with ethnic ideologies or prejudices, but with having the chance, for the first time, to own their own land, just as the peasants in any ‘feudal’-type system of exclusion from land ownership, around the world, have wanted, and have participated in revolutions for that right. And they, in almost every case, have been led in that fight, thru revolutions, by the educated, who could pamphleteer and muster the means

---

5 See Bayart, 1993: 122-123, cited in Van Hoyweghen, 1996: 381. C.f. OAU (op. cit.: Chap 3, para 3.6), “In the . . . words of a 1961 UN Trusteeship Council report, “The developments of these last 18 months have brought about the racial dictatorship of one party... An oppressive system has been replaced by another one...” And this prescient note: “It is quite possible that some day we will witness violent reactions on the part of the Tutsi.”
to organize on a wide scale. To say that there was no revolution in Rwanda is to sorely
miss the large picture and to say that Rwanda was the same after 1959 as it was before,
which is insulting to the thoughts and efforts of the entire Rwandan population (and the
Church and the Belgian administration), who affected and were affected by transformative
events at an unprecedented level in a short (historical) period of time, including the
introduction of schooling, a monetized economy, a constitution and new form of
government, a more complete system of jurisprudence, a modern army and police force,
new agricultural technological input, and more modern medical care, as well as the end to
abusive practices on the population by an elite class, and a seismic shift in social relations.
One could also say the revolution was never completed, that the real aim of the 1959 push
for independence and a republic was never realized during Kayibanda’s reign, and was
retarded by Habyarimana’s presidency until the late ‘80s, when multiple pressures forced
him to acquiesce to opening up his one-party government. The RPF invasion stopped him
from making that transition, and his death—followed by the genocide and the RPF’s
seizure of the state—ended the full implementation of the promise of the ’59 revolution
during the first two presidencies.

Kayibanda’s Presidency and the First Republic

After being elected president on 26 October 1961, Kayibanda appointed a
government made up of members from the PARMEHUTU, UNAR and APROSOMA
parties. In February 1962, despite the fact that a UNAR raiding party entered from
Uganda and hit the Mugira and Gatunda communes, in Byumba préfecture, and killing

---

two policemen, UNAR was given the Public Health and Livestock Ministries in the new republican government in an agreement signed in New York. Yet, again, UNAR raiders attacked, this time in Nkana commune, in Byumba préfecture, killing four and stealing communal funds, with the result that the Hutu locals killed about 1,500 innocent civilians in the area, destroying houses, looting, and stealing land.7

On 1 July 1962 Rwanda (and Burundi) achieved independence.8

Flanked by Archbishop Perraudin and Belgium’s first ambassador, Guy Logiest, Kayibanda offered an inaugural address in which he thanked the Catholic missions for their “civilizing influence,” praised Belgium’s four decades of political stewardship, and trumpeted Rwanda’s new credo of “liberty, cooperation, and progress”.9

Kayibanda, rhetorically, kept up his adherence to Church principles, allegedly telling Perraudin that “the day we deviate from this Mater et Magistra, I counsel you to no longer vote for us.”10 What might at first seem surprising—after the build-up to the elections and the their favorable results to the Hutu population, and the Catholic Church’s solid support for the Hutu Movement—is that the clergy was still dominated by Tutsi, but this was because the flow of Hutu was into public office, where they were finally free to enter.11 Still, there was “the growing sense among Hutu politicians that

---

8 Rwanda was admitted as a member of the United Nations immediately following its independence, on September 18, 1962. Baker (1970: 147) reminds us that “At independence the two territories possessed very different administrations and hierarchies, Rwanda having a socialist framework and Burundi remaining a feudal Batutsi monarchy.”
9 Carney, op. cit.: 314.
10 Carney, op. cit.: 319. Baker (1970: 147) states simply that Rwanda had a “socialist framework”.
11 Van Hoyweghen, 1996: 381. “Prior to independence, . . . over 250,000 Tutsi remained in the country and the administration depended heavily upon them for civil servants, teachers, and clerks” (Segal, 1964: 11).
the Catholic Church’s Tutsi-dominated clergy included a large number of UNAR sympathizers”.12

The Constitution of 1962

November 24th, 1962, President Kayibanda had been able to sign the new Constitution of the Rwandan Republic—the text was well developed at this point—after the National Assembly, gathered in a Constituent Assembly, had studied it for a long time and then adopted it.13

The formulation of a country’s first constitution is an arduous and monumental task because it not only embodies an assumption of the future and its complexities, but attempts to distill into a cohesive whole the competing philosophies of those involved in drawing it up. The ’62 constitution personifies Kayibanda’s and his associates’ world views, and intends to set the stage, rather permanently, for those administrations that follow—barring any circumstances in which they might turn over the government structure. In trying to give a picture of Kayibanda’s life, his participation in the drafting of something so momentous in Rwandan history as a constitution needs to be given particular consideration. There is the question of whether this one act should be deemed his most important, a culmination of everything he had worked for socially, politically and spiritually. From his notebooks it has been seen that he deeply believed the Church and

12 Carney, op. cit.: 320.
13 Paternostre, op. cit.: 181. Paternostre goes on to say that “This fundamental law wisely resumed the major principles of democracy within the framework of a presidential system (on the model of France and the United States)”, but the major principles of democracy—freedom of speech and assembly, as well as the guarantee of equal rights, and a multi-party government coalition—never existed. Paternostre is in error, I think, to say that the US Constitution was a meaningful influence, or model, because none of the évolutées were educated in the US, but in Europe, and absorbed socialist doctrine and experience—something outside American political philosophy. For example, the National Assembly does not have the checks and balances of the American Congress and the Supreme Court, nor the dynamics of political opposition and change in legislative representatives.
14 A constitution, by its very nature, is considered (and problematically so) as a perpetual document, therefore to say the 1962 constitution was the “first” also implies it is the “last”. The arguments surrounding this concept are too many and too vast to include here.
State were necessarily correspondent, but the constitution does not exhibit that relationship. Secondly, can the constitution be considered the zenith of his socio-political life if, after implementing it, neither he nor his government hold it in particularly high esteem, easily deviating from its principles. Similarly, are he and his officials (and the state) simply inadequate to carry out its precepts? And there are the peasant-farmer majority and elite minority to consider: to what degree does the document reflect a reality they can embrace and, thereby, embrace the government, especially since much of the population was illiterate? Surely, the constitution is a high point in Kayibanda’s life, but his presidency that follows it is what must determine his place in history.

The lead-up to the constitution of 1962 had some roots in Belgium’s 1924 League of Nations mandated administration, which generally adopted codes and laws from those existing in the Belgian Congo, whose Penal Code was made effective in 1940; its Civil Code was adopted in 1927, 1936 and 1951 ordinances. Rwandan customary law was left as it was found, and written civil law applied only to Europeans.15 The change in Belgium’s administration of Rwanda occurred with the shift from the League’s mandate to the UN Trusteeship, in June 1945, and the July 1952 ruling to liberalize Rwanda’s local government composition and native power structures, resulting in the councils that have been described previously in this paper. This allowed the Belgian administration to act as the go-between with the peasant-farmers and the traditional Tutsi elite. When it worked well, this system was fine, but there was bound to be conflict between what the people rightfully needed from an egalitarian and practical standpoint, and what the traditional

15 Kamanga, 2010: 59. Also see Schabas and Imbleau (1997: 5).
authorities felt was theirs by inherited custom. The Belgians being caught in the middle were too often content with letting the Tutsi ruling class continuing in its established ways, because it was easier and cheaper than trying to establish new procedures. This resulted in what Kayibanda rebuked in the Bahutu Manifesto as “double colonialism”, with the law (itegeko) divided in people’s minds as, on the one hand, a set of objective rules, and on the other hand as something to be manipulated by those in power as they wished:

Whenever an unwanted decision was taken by the colonial administration, the indigenous courts and its notables twisted it by postponing its execution or by modifying it when the colonial administration was not present to oversee its application. An example of such a situation is the attitude with regards to the death penalty following the interdiction in 1917 by the colonial authority of King Musinga. The interdiction was accepted in theory, but simply ignored in practice, as citizens continued to be subjected to the penalty for a long time. To sum up this period one could say that, instead of creating a society based on the rule of law and which was favourable to the development of constitutionalism, colonial rule radicalised the Hutu-Tutsi cleavage and empowered the former to exploit and abuse the later.16 [my italics]

This cleavage, as has already been shown, prevented a truly inclusive nationalist movement for independence from the Belgian Trusteeship to form, and pushed the dominant PARMEHUTU party toward the Belgians and away from the Tutsi aristocracy; they shifted their initial idea of a constitutional monarchy to a republican form of government at the “Coup de Gitarama” gathering. This January 1961 meeting resulted in a provisional constitution, but which was rejected by the Belgians, and Rwanda was without a constitution when it became independent on 1 July 1962.

Rwanda’s first official constitution was drafted four months later17 by leaders from the PARMEHUTU and APROSOMA parties, and was modeled on elements largely taken

---

16 Kamanga, ibid.: 61.
from the constitutions of France and Senegal, but also from those of Madagascar, Burkina Faso, and the Republic of Guinea-Conakry.

The Constitution of 1962 has been praised for having embodied a complete list of human rights as defined in the UDHR. . . . [and] obliged the Republic of Rwanda to ensure equality of all citizens without any distinction on grounds of race, origin, sex, or religion. It declared the abolition of all caste privileges and of slavery. . . . Article 16 declared all citizens equal before the law without any distinction based on race, clan, colour, sex or religion. . . . the constitution proclaimed equality between men and women, but added that the man is the natural head of the family. Although freedom of religion and expression were recognised, a specific provision of the constitution prohibited communist activities and propaganda. The 1962 Constitution set up three constitutional organs of government, the president, the national assembly and the judiciary. Even though the Constitution envisaged a pluralist regime, president Kayibanda quickly established a single-party system under his Mouvement Démocratique Republicain (MDR).18

It has been posited that the adoption of a constitution “did not bring about any fundamental changes in the relationship between the citizens and political authorities nor in the relationship between the citizens”,19 but that is a superficial judgment turning on the notion that Kayibanda and the Hutu leaders simply turned the tables on the Tutsi, taking their place as insulated and abusive wielders of power. But nothing could be further from the post-independence reality. The constitution was the first Rwandan-written instrument of governance, and as such it was available to every citizen as an objective set of laws that could not be indiscriminately changed by one person in power, as the mwami had been able to do. Written laws provide a referential ‘permanence’ that sits above simple opinion and resists being ‘tinkered’ with arbitrarily and, thus, is the only thing that can guarantee egalitarianism and human rights; law is the necessary foundation for a responsible society,

18 Kamanga. ibid 64. Also see the following, all cited in Kamanga: General Assembly Resolution No. 1746 XVI; Gasamagera (2007: 6, note 67); Ankut (op. cit.: 7 note 68); Schabas and Imbleau (op. cit.: 7, note 53); “Articles 1, 2, and 3”, of the 1962 Rwandan Constitution.
19 Kamanga, ibid: 65.
and constitutional law is a requirement for responsible government. But, as has been
pointed out, it is only responsible government agency that gives the constitution meaning.
That is, people should be able to count on the future as being tethered to something
reasonably concrete, rather than plans, hopes, and desires being ephemeral, so that would
not be abruptly dashed by arbitrary and irrational (personal) actions by those in power.

In purely economic terms this meant people could take risks, which outlook forms
the initial definition of the word *entrepreneur*, and without which a middle class cannot
develop. The lack of a middle class makes it impossible to escape an agriculturalist
subsistence economy. Along with and inseparable from the constitution, in order for it to
be implemented, is the institution of a legal, as well as an educational system. The new
constitution was, therefore, only as good as these necessary and surrounding contingent
elements and the government’s will to realize them. Fellman concurs, writing that

> Whatever particular form of government a constitution delineates, however, it serves as the keystone of the arch of constitutionalism, except in those countries whose written constitutions are mere sham. Constitutionalism as a theory and in practice stands for the principle that there are—in a properly governed state—limitations upon those who exercise the powers of government, and that these limitations are spelled out in a body of higher law which is enforceable in a variety of ways, political and judicial. \(^{20}\)

A one-dimensional definition of constitutionalism is ‘government according to a
constitution’. But a widespread and permeating aspect of constitutionalism is that it
expresses the dynamic political arrangement in a given state. \(^{21}\) For those observers of
Rwanda who think there was no transformation after the installation of the constitution in
1962—for example, that in the Kayibanda government power was concentrated at the top

\(^{21}\) Center for Conflict Management of the National University of Rwanda, 2010: 37.
and that the President could “distribute it down to the grassroots through civil servants appointed by him, and this is not different from the former precolonial monarchy system”,—it is incumbent upon them to show that there was no change in the way the legal or education system affected society, which would entail the self-refuting task of trying to prove that society is static, because a static society would insure the development of a constitution would not be possible since it would require change. Additionally, the horizontal flexibility possible in a vertical bureaucracy, as well as the degree of individual responsibility and initiative, and the varieties of ‘distance’ between the top and the subsequent levels (micro or macro management, etc.) that can exist or accrue in such a system means that any two top-down systems can have wildly divergent operative organization: the constraints on Kayibanda did not exist during the mwamiship, nor was the Kayibanda government’s relationship to the peasant-farmers in any meaningful way an echo of the patron-clientship of the monarchy. Too much control from top to bottom through the levels can easily result in such inefficiency over time that the system ceases to work properly, and in the case of public administration would result in a failure to address citizens’ essential needs. It should not be forgotten—rather it should be admired—that it took only twenty-five brief years after the constitution was put in place for the people to challenge Habyarimana’s government over its failures to address their needs; such a challenge to power is something that would have been unimaginable before the évolutés and the Hutu Movement, from which the constitution sprang. It is conflation of the worst kind to extrapolate from the mistakes and abuses made by the Kayibanda government, that

22 Lemarchand, op. cit.: 116.
those behaviors consequently represented Rwandan society and its attendant changes.

To summarize Kayibanda’s life at this juncture: starting out as an idealistic young country boy, he corralled his religious zeal in the service of a vision of his country that focused on education and the moral injunction of civil rights, specifically the abolition of a system of inequality in the form of the Mwamiship. He built a political-action movement, MSM, and then a national party, PARMEHUTU, in order to carry out his vision, and succeeded in bringing to an end the centuries-old institution of the Mwami, in leading the country to independence, and in inaugurating a constitutional republic, by the age of 37. Notwithstanding the racist and regional policies that seriously marred his presidency and brought about his removal from office, his accomplishments up to his presidency were huge and put his signature on the history and shape of the new state.

Directly after independence there was a period of relative calm, despite the government eliminating the buhake cattle contractual system, and allotting to the Hutu over 60% of the cattle held among them and the Tutsi, as well as doing away with the land contract system (ibikingi), which had required clients to make payments to the land holders, either in labor or goods; these abolitions cut off traditional funds/support to the Tutsi remaining in superior public and private financial positions, and furthered the PARMEHUTU drive for a situation representing political and economic parity among the population (though Hutu power holders would successively acquire major allotments of land from the poor peasant-farmers).

---

23 Primary education for all children was at first made free—as written in the 1962 Constitution, and in the 1966 Education Act. Primary school attendance increased in a nine-year period from 160,000 (1960) to 409,000 (1969). Schools became centralized, managed by state employees, and having government inspections. Secondary education was restructured, and increased from 24 schools in 1960, to 64 by 1971. See Paternostre, op. cit.: 212-213.
The Tutsi power holders’ reality, as it existed after the national vote that discarded the monarchy and resulted in a Hutu republican government, was a completely new world where the most pervasive traditional structure, that of the Tutsi Mwami, his Tutsi court, the largely Tutsi vertical hierarchy of command, and the patron-client relationships that provided a labor-free life style for the elite, was vanishing in front of them; a development that no one could have foreseen, and which left them not only powerless but rudderless, because the Mwami was not just a ruler, but a figurehead ruling from a divine mandate, and his court abiru (keepers of tradition) shaped the nature of the sacred as it came into contact with the profane. An epistemology crumbled. How devastating this must have been is impossible to gauge, but it gives an idea of why it was impossible for the traditional Tutsi administrators, teachers, and private power holders, and even some Tutsi Catholic priests—in short, all those steeped in and committed to the Mwamiship as a cornerstone in their weltanschauung—to break bread with PARMEHUTU-APROSOMA. They were not facing a temporary setback in a political struggle, like the Republicans in America being defeated by the Democrats in a presidential election that they could contest four years later, but the permanent loss of a way of life, one that had existed for several centuries. Their refusal to enter into a political association with Kayibanda and his colleagues was not only a refusal, but an inability to let go of the past, otherwise an earnest collaboration would have at least allowed for many Tutsi in powerful and useful public positions to continue working in a new, republican government, as some, in fact, did (though few, because of the perceived intransigence of the Tutsi elite in general). Instead, attempts would be made by refugee groups to force their way back into the country, hoping
to enlarge their numbers from sympathetic Tutsis in-country, as they advanced, and overwhelm small, poorly equipped army barracks and outposts until they reached the capital.

Of the many problems facing Kayibanda and his new government, perhaps the most difficult to implement was the education and familiarization of everyone regarding the new governing structure and laws. To go from a ‘local’ African territory with a socio-political structure made up of a combined chiefdom-monarchy-Belgian trusteeship administration to a republican nation-state recognized by the international community is a staggering leap. How would illiterate peasant-farmers who had never been more than a few kilometers from home react to being asked to see themselves as part of a unified new country, citizens of equal rank and opportunity as all the other (unknown) citizens scattered over the hills and valleys within the country’s boundaries? What did it mean, in fact, in 1962, to be Rwandan? And what did Kayibanda and his government think it meant, want it to mean going forward?

The foundation for Kayibanda’s (and then Habyarimana’s) government was the notion of “unity”. This image of a certain kind of amalgamated citizenry, as has been touched upon, had an origin in Kayibanda’s religiosity, in which he believed that Church and State should form a perfect union combining moral and republican leadership. The

---

24 Kayibanda had adopted the principle of free access for the Tutsi to available places in the Administration, in schools, and to the university, according to a 20% quota (double what was due to them according to demographics). [A civil right parallel could be drawn here between Rwanda and the US by observing that both the disenfranchisement of African Americans and of Tutsis paid a lie (for a much longer time in the US, of course) to both countries’ constitutions’ promise of equality among its citizens. This also corresponds to Arendt’s point about the difference between the ideal of democracy and the reality of being able to recognize “equality” among all citizens].

25 Rosamond Carr, from New Jersey, and long-time pyrethrum farmer in northwestern Rwanda, relates how, “At the time of Ruanda independence, leaflets were dropped from airplanes that read in Kinyarwanda, . . . ‘Europeans and Asians will show us the way to economic prosperity’” (Carr, 1999: 25).
irony and unworkability of this union lies in the simple fact that the Church, like the 
military, is a top-down organization that brooks no dissent, no opposing rhetoric, and no 
significant change. Rather than republican ideals, what exists is more akin to a 
dictatorship. When Kayibanda imagines an idyllic union of Rwandan citizens coming 
together as would church-goers in a shared expression of faith, he shows a surprising 
naïveté; he should have had a better understanding of competing forces in society after 
having to corral the cooperation of diverse Hutu groups from around Rwanda for a 
‘unified’ push for independence and the abolition of the Tutsi monarchy, and realizing that 
they were not ‘naturally’ or permanently consolidated. The ‘unifying’ aspects of the 
Church, through shared dogma and faith, and the interlocking of parishes, priests, and 
liturgy, had been essential for him and PARMEHUTU in their efforts to address, educate, 
and attract people concerning the PARMEHUTU platform. But Kayibanda makes the 
mistake of thinking this success can be translated to the nation-state and the country’s 
socio-political and economic dynamics.

So here there can be seen the inescapable conflict between a “theocratic” approach 
to government and a republican one. Kayibanda sees no problem with the government 
dictating moral behavior to the masses, or of deciding the direction and content of 
education, enforcing guidelines for the media, and favoring the Catholic Church’s policies 
on issues such as refusing birth control, or religious instruction being included in schools.
Municipal Elections

In April 1963, new municipal elections were held, with MDR PARMEHUTU receiving 1,166 councilors' seats out of 1,192, and an increase in mayors to 142, while UNAR received only 24 seats and 1 mayoral post, and APROSOMA only 2 seats. RADER effectively collapsed. Kayibanda’s devotion to a single-party state was expressed in his statement on the eve of elections, that small parties be temporarily “put on the back burner” so as not to disrupt the democratic process. He had regretted a "proliferation of political parties rendering the progress of the country incoherent, and causing a standstill harmful to the nation." Paternostre suggests that this insistence on one-party government, at this time, was a choice by the party’s leaders which was governed by the belief that it was the only way for the new republic to ward off external aggression and bolster internal weaknesses as it tried to establish democratic principles. Yet, as Paternostre himself admits, a single party was not capable of meeting all the challenges the new nation faced. But there is more to this problem of a one-party state in Rwanda. The opposition’s stand was, because traditionally ingrained, inimical to a “civilized” agreement about how to conduct a competition of ideas; in most cases they were unable to grasp the idea of fair-play, or were ruthlessly opposed to power sharing. The vagaries of election results, of being in office and reaping the rewards only to be possibly voted out in the next election was completely unacceptable because in a socio-economic situation like Rwanda’s, there was a stark finality to one’s position in life: one could, if fortunate, gain a decent education and then find a place in

26 Kayibanda, cited in Paternostre, op. cit.: 183.
public office, from the lowliest clerk in the local bureaucratic structure or private venture (of which there weren’t many), or one might manage to work one’s way up through various levels, or know someone with influence who could place one in a valued job. The whole range of job opportunities for educated people (almost entirely men, save for teachers and nurses), was overwhelmingly found in public employment. However, in small and poor Rwanda, this job market was very limited. Consequently, competition was fierce and jobs were held onto as by a drowning man clinging to a floating piece of wood. Losing a government job, therefore, was tantamount to a loss in livelihood. (That is, the alternative was to become a peasant-farmer eking out a bare minimum existence). A one-party system, therefore, neutralized the “uncertain threat” of open elections, and gave one a more-or-less lifetime lock on job security; democracy was rather stillborn in Rwanda’s first government.

Simultaneous with educating the people about the new government\textsuperscript{28} was the pressing need to develop the infrastructure of the nation state so that it could function in its new form, standing on its own, and without being an appendage to the Belgian administration. The country was severely underdeveloped.\textsuperscript{29} On reason for this was

\begin{itemize}
  \item Another example of Kayibanda’s socialist affirmations: “Each of us, he said, knows that the more the people are educated, the easier, faster and more profitable will be the work of the leaders; the people will be less exploitable, and will participate more effectively in the leaders’ efforts; and national development will be more democratic\textsuperscript{28} (Kayibanda, “Discours of 28 January, 1971”, cited in Paternostre, op. cit.: 215); and "It is necessary that they emerge from their studies convinced that we become enlightened not only for the individual, but mainly for others. It must be those who have been trained at the National University to reacquaint themselves in some way with the people in order to become one with them, and communicate with them the benefits they have received, thanks to them” (Kayibanda, speech at the inauguration of the national university, 3 November, 1963, Paternostre, ibid).
  \item “At independence, the post-colonial governments inherited economies with low levels of education, poorly developed infrastructure, few African entrepreneurs, little technical change in agriculture, undiversified economies with small manufacturing capability, a reliance on a few crops or minerals for export earnings and state structures and policies which were quite intrusive. . . . The structural nature of African economies dictated the need for a gradual transformation to build the institutions and capacities, which would expand future economic options. Unfortunately political and social imperatives pushed African governments into developing policies within very short time horizons
\end{itemize}

195
Belgium’s policy of concentrating the Ruanda-Urundi Territory’s (under their trusteeship) civil major economic and communications facilities in Bujumbura (Burundi’s capital):

“port facilities, warehouses, an international airport, and administration buildings; as well as most private commercial infrastructures, such as warehouses, offices, banks, hotels and other facilities”. As a result, Rwanda had entered independence deprived of these facilities, goods, and services, which were now outside their borders. There were “no buildings for its ministries, nor for its municipalities, and little for its decentralized social services, . . . no savings banks, pension funds, or public transports, no long-distance telephone, and in Kigali only an archaic manual exchange that was always overloaded”.  

In Kigali, there was a small airport capable of handling only outdated DC-3s.

with two tiny sheds covered with corrugated steel sheets—one for customs and the other for immigration. No asphalt roads, no banks, no insurance companies, no warehouses, nor hotels, a novice broadcasting facility (5 kW) only capable of being heard near Kigali. . . [and] a grave deficiency in technical professionals. . . a number of . . . political authorities and state employees in 1962 had a high general education (acquired most of the time in the large catholic seminaries), [but] the technical level was terribly lacking: upper-level technical professionals had never been formed, and the average technical professional, formerly the Tutsi elite, had abandoned their offices during the 1959-60 events. 

As a nation state, Rwanda was also faced with the necessity of providing a small number of embassies, and as a matter of protecting its borders and maintaining internal security, it had to train, equip and sustain an adequate police force and army.

When Belgium reduced its aid as a result of the events in the Congo, Rwanda found itself essentially alone regarding outside funding, therefore another urgent need was to find
international financial support. A Ministry of Planning was set up in February 1963, followed by a National Planning Committee in June 1964. Actions were taken to try to rectify fraudulent monetary practices, and the enormous deficit in the balance of payments, a spectacular leap in retail prices, and the serious drop in purchasing power of the producers of the leading exports: tea, coffee, pyrethrum, and mined ores. Kayibanda implemented an extreme austerity measure, called "budgetary realism", which included reducing the number of ministries “from 11 to 9, that of the municipalities from 229 to 141, and that of the canton courts from 109 to 75”.32

Because Rwanda and Burundi still had only one common currency, and Burundi was not addressing its fiscal policies in a way comparable to Rwanda’s austerity measures, there arose considerable difficulties over the currency’s management. Arbitration between the two countries failed, with Burundi opting to end the union; the free trade arrangement and the customs compact were rescinded. In response, Rwanda opened its own National Bank of Rwanda33 in January 1964, “a tariff barrier was established on the border of Burundi, causing numerous companies established in Bujumbura to split, and to install a head office, workshops, stocks and warehouses in Kigali”34. After the Inyenzi attacks in 1963, movement of goods from Rwanda had to shift away from Bujumbura, to the northern route through Uganda, then to Kenya and Tanzania. In the two following years, ’65-'66, an expert from the IMF was called in to help decide a way to revamp the outdated monetary system, and with the help of Belgium and the US a wide set of new measures

32 Ibid.: 199.
33 Baker (1970: 148, n.17) “Belgium gave unlimited support to the Rwanda franc for a few years but withdrew it in 1966. Since then the country has existed on standby credits from the IMF, though that organisation is attempting to ensure the best possible use of scarce capital for future growth.”
34 Paternostre, op. cit.: 200.
were inaugurated, which, over the next two years, stabilized prices and helped increase production. There followed the opening of the Bank of Kigali, and many new branches of the Commercial Bank of Rwanda.\textsuperscript{35} Agricultural land space was increased by roughly 50\% with the change in land policy related to \textit{ibikingi} and \textit{ubukonde}\textsuperscript{36}, by clearing swamps and marshes, and by irrigation of arid regions\textsuperscript{37}. The capital, Kigali, which was completely underdeveloped and little occupied, became a primary focus of Kayibanda, where he widened the streets, constructed housing, developed water and electricity supplies, and built building for government and commercial purposes. For the new nation not to have a thriving capital in which to attract entrepreneurs and funders, and to receive foreign dignitaries was unacceptable and embarrassing.

**The 1963 Inyenzi Attacks**

At the end of 1963, Tutsi refugee fighters launched unsuccessful attacks from Burundi.\textsuperscript{38} The first serious attack was on 20 December 1963, when

\textsuperscript{35} “In the field of savings, a network of small popular banks was established on the model of Raiffeissen Funds. These new banks were designed, in the countryside, to collect the savings of the population, and to make their money work allocating it to loans to small farmers and craftsmen. Contrary to the big banks, who naturally tended "to give only to the rich" and to so favor the enrichment of the bourgeoisie,\textsuperscript{9} the Popular Banks aimed at serving the most modest initiatives” (Paternostre, op. cit.: 206).

\textsuperscript{36} “The Belgians had abolished \textit{ubuhake}, thus breaking the power of the pasture chiefs. But they had not redistributed pastures. This redistribution was made during the revolution and was made temporary by President Kayibanda. Then, according to the law, the family landed property . . . could be neither sold nor bought. But the system of \textit{ubukonde} is never abolished and, according to some, it remained, more particularly in the North. In fact, \textit{ubukonde} was a part of a wider system of sharing considered as beneficial. The “communalisme” with its excessive power of the mayors, so typical of Rwanda, was partially based on the family relations within the “lineages” and partially on the rest of this informal system of \textit{ubukonde} . . . Habyarimana strengthened this communalisme. The new trade elites would be partially constituted by the descendants of these chief-agriculturalists of the previous periods and/or of the people who saw themselves in the role of such a chief” (Maton, 1994: 10).

\textsuperscript{37} Paternostre. op. cit.: 202.

\textsuperscript{38} See Totten and Ubaldo, 2011: 6; Des Forges, 1999: 39-40. Melvern, 2004: 9-10; and Sellström, 1996: 31. Baker (1970: 148) relates that “Across the southern border in Burundi Batutsi irregulars (the \textit{Iyenzi}), made up of refugees from the 1959 \textit{révolution populaire} in Rwanda, had been known to be arming for some time. It was also known that they were receiving training and arms from the Communist Chinese who were, ironically, strong in Burundi at that time.”
a band of Tutsi invaders armed only with bows, arrows and home-made rifles infiltrated across the Rwanda-Burundi border at Nemba. They first rallied local Tutsi to increase their numbers to 600 and then attacked a Rwanda military camp under construction at Agako, killing four Rwanda soldiers while the others fled leaving their arms behind. The invaders commandeered two jeeps and some light arms and ammunition and moved northwards towards, Kigali, the smallest capital in the world with a population of 7,000 and one tarmac street. . . . The invaders were intercepted by a group of Rwandan soldiers reinforced by their Belgian military advisors at Kanzenze bridge on the River Nyabarungo, 15 miles from the capital, where a full scale inter-tribal skirmish fought with modern weapons ensued. The Tutsi invaders were routed, the majority being killed and the others fleeing into the bush. The initial reaction of the Rwanda government to the news of the invasion attempt was a paralysing panic. The recently appointed Rwandan Commandant of the Garde Nationale, a lieutenant two years out of Officers’ School, handed over command to his Belgian military advisor who rallied the panic-stricken soldiery to halt the invaders.39 [my italics]

This is the first eye-witness account of Habyarimana, the young lieutenant, in action, and it suggests that he and his troops, although trained, were not prepared for a real engagement. But, far overshadowing Habyarimana’s first real taste of battle is what the future genocide perpetrators will learn and utilize from the series of events surrounding the Inyenzi incursions and the Hutu responses to it; reading Segal’s description of the Hutu reaction is unsettling, because it is like glimpsing a script for the 1994 genocide, with each instance having a correlate to the future tragedy. First correlate: the government arrests prominent Tutsi throughout the country, with those suspected of collaboration being shot: “the leading members of the opposition monarchist UNAR ministers, UNAR deputies in the National Assembly and several leading Tutsi civil servants” mentioned in a list found on a dead attacker. A list of prominent personages to be eliminated was the first step in perpetrating the ’94 massacres. Second: because the Garde Nationale was small and only recently created, the Inyenzi posed a serious threat, so the government organized a “self-

defence” of the country by sending government authorities to each prefecture. Third: the authorities worked with local prefects, sub-prefects and burgomasters to rally every Hutu citizen. Fourth: road blocks were put in place. Fifth: dreadful reprisals and mass killings followed.  

De Heusch captures the spirit of the events:

A small fraction of the Tutsi émigrés, stirred by the dubious François Rukeba, dreamt of overthrowing the regime by force. They organized a series of armed incursions from bordering countries: derisory and badly planned raids which all failed. They were openly repudiated by the few Tutsi deputys representing UNAR in the National Assembly. But the Rwandan government took advantage of these desperate enterprises, putting at risk only a handful of men, to foster an anti-Tutsi psychosis. This campaign was organized by a Belgian military adviser responsible for security, Major Tulpin. He exercised his wits to inflame passions by denouncing an alleged communist plot. At the time of my stay in Rwanda in October 1963, he was expecting a new Tutsi 'terrorist' raid, organized this time in Burundi. He confided in me with an alarming jubilation that there would be 'sport'. Two months after I left, several hundred Tutsi . . . did cross the southern frontier of the country. Badly armed, they were quickly crushed by the Rwandan national guard, commanded by Belgian officers. Then ensued throughout the country the first collective massacre of the Tutsi population. Their last leaders to stay in the country were summarily executed on the orders of one or more Belgian officers. President Kayibanda sent a minister to each prefecture to stir up the Hutu to hatred.  

The worst instance of violence in De Heusch’s narrative was in Gikongoro prefecture where “local Tutsi had been boasting for several days prior to the invasion of their hopes of returning to power and restoring the monarchy.”  

The Kayibanda
government’s response in Gikongoro was brutal reprisals, where anywhere from 10,00 to 16,000 Tutsi were murdered, which resulted in a new wave of Tutsi exodus into the neighboring countries of Tanzania, Congo, Uganda, and Burundi, bringing the total number of Tutsi refugees outside the country to about 300,000. Most of those fleeing were peasant-farmers (including some Hutu), who thought they would be able to come back to their homes after things quieted down. No Tutsi politicians in Rwanda survived; including the former secretary general of UNAR, Michael Rwagasana, in spite of his being a Hutu and a cousin of Kayibanda. “A major result from the invasions and the disruptions they caused, was the rupture in the economic partnership between Rwanda and Burundi in January”.44

The Vatican called the Gikongoro killings “the most terrible, systematic genocide since the genocide of the Jews by Hitler,”45 to which Perraudin and other Church leaders in Rwanda took serious exception, pointing out that it was not an attempt to eradicate a people, but was a response to an invasion, and that “To speak of genocide without having proof in hand is a gravely reckless judgment . . . The comparison with Hitler is monstrous and gravely offensive for the head of a Catholic state.”46 He is correct insofar as the Tutsi from Burundi which had no follow-through, people proceeded in every main centre to arrest educated Tutsi systematically; they were piled up in prisons, where they were beaten, left without food. At Cyangugu, 80 Tutsi were loaded onto lorries and shot dead in the forest of Congo-Will after having been pushed into a ravine. If these facts amount to an elimination of suspects (all educated Tutsi being suspects) and a contempt for the most elementary protection under the law, the repression carried out in the prefecture of Gikongoro is indeed a true genocide. Stirred up by the prefect, the mayors and the commissioners of PARMEHUTU, bands of murderers systematically killed Tutsi from the 24 to 28 December. In most cases, women and children were also felled with clubs or run through with spears. The victims were for the most part thrown in the river after having been undressed.”

44 Lemarchand, op. cit.: 197-227; Prunier, op. cit.: 54-60; Magnarella, “Comprehending Genocide”, pp. 32-33; Ministère des affaires étrangères, 1964; Kimonyo, 2008: 52; Encyclopedia of the Nations
http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/Africa/Rwanda-HISTORY.html; The first solely Rwandan national bank, the Banque Nationale du Rwanda (BNR), opens in 1964.

45 Carney, op. cit.: 367.

46 Carney, op. cit.
killings were not aimed at the destruction of Tutsis just because they were Tutsis, but were retributive in nature and played out quickly once the *Inyenzi* attacks stopped. That in no way excuses the killings, and it shows again, just as did the 1959 violence, that Kayibanda did noting to control the emotions and hatreds taking precedence over human rights and the law.\(^\text{47}\)

In an early 1964 issue, *Vivante Afrique* described Rwanda as an “oasis of peace, work and efforts for all the people,” expressed relief at the limited nature of the 1963-64 massacres, and praised Kayibanda for his “politics of austerity” and success in “remaining integrally faithful to the Christian ideal of his youth.” A less effusive White Father account came from Dominic Nothomb who admitted that “manifest injustices were perpetrated by official persons exercising recognized authority” even as he resisted implicating the entire Kayibanda government in the Gikongoro violence.\(^\text{48}\)

Lemarchand, one of the most respected and reliable writers on Rwanda and the Great Lakes Region, is notably sanguine on the history of violence in Rwanda, but the Gikongoro events prompted this condemnation from him:

The recent history of Rwanda is punctuated with countless examples of bloodshed and violence; but there are no precedents for the appalling brutality employed after independence by some Hutu officials. In late 1963 and early 1964 thousands of innocent Tutsi were wantonly murdered in what has been described as a genocide … the scale and methods by which it was perpetrated suggest that it can only be regarded as an extreme example of pathological behavior, as the blind reaction of a

\(^\text{47}\) “President Kayibanda’s father, Lénidas Rwamanywa, was himself a former serf, *Umugaragu*, which contributed to the shaping of Kayibanda’s memories and political views about the system and its supporters. In a speech on 10\(^{th}\) April 1964, about five months after the attack of the Tutsi refugees close to UNAR, and willing to avenge themselves on the Hutu, President Kayibanda repeatedly referred to his *Uhubake* memories, and the fear that the idea of the return to that system provoked in him and those who shared those memories.” (Paternostre, op. cit.: 43).

\(^\text{48}\) Dominic Nothomb, “Le Rwanda est-il Chrétien?” *Etudes* CCCXX, (1964: 700-705), cited in Carney (op. cit.: 368). C. Vidal, in her book, *La Sociologie Des Passion*, adds to the criticism of Kayibanda’s government, with her overly bleak picture of Rwanda after independence: [The country] “slowly turned into an island: the government feared its whole environment: it was horrified by the Congolese rebellions, reserved towards Tanzania, hostile to the Tutsi regime in Burundi and dependent on Uganda’s roads for its imports. The inhabitants were inward-looking and bore the country’s slow shrinkage in silence. There were several forms of censorship: from a triumphant Catholic church and from the government, which was afraid both of a possible communist-inspired movement and of the traditional manifestations, which could be a reminder of the Tutsi imprint, which it considered with something like a phobia. Regarding the government: rumour, secrecy, lack of trust and breathing space, on top of the material deprivation. The country was one of the poorest in the world and lacked almost everything” (In Bamurangirwa, 2013: 58-59).
people traumatised by a deep and lasting sense of inferiority.\textsuperscript{49}

If the Church leaders—as the only \textit{meaningful} moral authority in the country— had held the PARMEHUTU government accountable\textsuperscript{50} in 1959 and after Gikongoro (especially in \textit{Kinyamateka}, whose words would have reached the masses), and then had continued, needfully, to act as ‘watchdog’ for possible abuses, there is the chance Kayibanda and local authorities might have been forced to act more responsibly, certainly more restrained, toward the Tutsi population.\textsuperscript{51} As it was, an atmosphere had begun to germinate: that a specific segment of the Rwandan population, the Tutsis, did not have state protection. In a growing sense, they existed outside the safeguard of the law, abusing them did not generally result in punishment, and in some circumstances resulted in reward: driven off their land, their fields, cattle, homes, and belongings could be appropriated.

In some places the prefects and the PARMHUTU propagandists saw in the reprisals a golden opportunity to solidify their bases of support among the local Hutu populations. Realising that a massive elimination of Tutsi would make their land ‘available’ to the Hutu, they saw distinct political advantages in encouraging the liquidation of the local Tutsi population. Thus one can better understand why the prefect of Gikongoro, André Nkeramugaba, after he decided to present his candidacy to the National Assembly, in 1965, was elected by an overwhelming majority of the votes in the prefecture of Gikongoro (Nkeramugaba’s electoral slogan was: ‘If I am not elected, charges may be brought against you; but if I am

\textsuperscript{49} Lemarchand, op. cit.: 44.

\textsuperscript{50} See Carney, op. cit.: 372.

\textsuperscript{51} Concerning the 1963-64 violence, Michel Kayihura and Fr. Jean Kayonga alleged that the Catholic hierarchy remained silent so as not to jeopardize their privileged relationship with the Kayibanda government. . . . “For their part, the White Fathers continued their pattern of giving Kayibanda’s government the benefit of the doubt, blaming Tutsi exiles for all of Rwanda’s internal problems, and defending their own international reputation. . . . Third, while church leaders should be credited with reaching out to refugees, there was little reflection on the lessons of Gikongoro for the church’s mission. The focus lay rather on defending the hierarchy and disputing international press accounts that jeopardized Rwanda’s supply of international funds and missionaries alike. A quarter-century after the events, Perraudin claimed that in the days following the Gikongoro massacres, he “had gone many times to the house of President Kayibanda to ask him to stop all this.” This implies that Perraudin thought that Kayibanda \textit{could} stop the violence, granting the government a level of agency that Perraudin was reluctant to acknowledge publicly in 1964. (Carney, op. cit.: 369-372).
elected I shall do my best to prevent all investigations’).\textsuperscript{52}

The import of this message of being free from investigation was not lost on the Hutu
Power radicals in government in the two years leading up to the ’94 genocide as they
contemplated their own possible incarceration for criminal activities, which would likely
follow the Arusha Accords’ giving significant future governmental power to their enemy,
the RPF.

If there are still any reservations about considering the 1963 massacres as one of
the likely precedents (or influences) for the 1994 genocide, then the following eyewitness
account of the event by a UNESCO teacher, should be persuasive:

During the December events, motivated officially by the incursion of a small
number of Tutsi from Burundi which had no follow-through, people proceeded in
every main centre to arrest educated Tutsi systematically; they were piled up in
prisons, where they were beaten, left without food. At Cyangugu, 80 Tutsi were
loaded onto lorries and shot dead in the forest of Congo-Will after having been
pushed into a ravine. If these facts amount to an elimination of suspects (all
educated Tutsi being suspects) and a contempt for the most elementary protection
under the law, the repression carried out in the prefecture of Gikongoro is indeed a
true genocide. Stirred up by the prefect, the mayors and the commissioners of
PARMEHUTU, bands of murderers systematically killed Tutsi from the 24 to 28
December. In most cases, women and children were also felled with clubs or run
through with spears. The victims were for the most part thrown in the river after
having been undressed.\textsuperscript{53}

Since the November ’59 violence, and the subsequent years of harassment, the fear
of punishment was so pervasive a social phenomenon that many Tutsis in the days
preceding the 1994 genocide were listless and vacant-eyed, and were heard to remark that
they were already dead. Such a frame of mind was too deeply penetrating to have been
simply the result of the hate media spewed from Kigali over two years and cresting in

\textsuperscript{52} Lemarchand, op. cit.: 226.
April 1994.\textsuperscript{54} The reduction to the position of non-persons had settled on the Tutsis like a disease—from the advent of the Bahutu \textit{Manifesto}, through the treatment of the Tutsis during both Kayibanda’s and Habyarimana’s presidencies, most visibly in the mandatory ethnic indication on identity cards, and the quota system imposed on entrance to schools and public service jobs—denying the humanity of an entire segment of Rwandan society.

What allowed the introduction and continuation of a punitive state policy against the Tutsi population (or any population) was in large part due to the structure of a one-party government, without oppositional dynamics. In relative perspective regarding Kayibanda’s PARMEHUTU party’s choice of government structure, it should be noted that every African country south of the Sahara, almost all of which had become independent states in the 1960s, had either one-party governments or were under military control.\textsuperscript{55} Of the 46 first presidents in the newly independent states, 12 held office for more than 20 years, half held office for 14 years or longer, and 9 were assassinated, executed, put in prison, or had ‘accidents’. Some leaders, like Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire and Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, took the abuse of power to new heights, funneling such enormous amounts of money from international aid donors and the state into their own pockets that their actions engendered a term for a new kind of governance: “kleptocracy”. In the twenty-five year period after 1960, Africa has experienced 131 coup attempts, with more

\textsuperscript{54} Mvuyekure (2002: n.p.) recalls how, in 1973, “The Tutsi of my commune lived in constant fear, not knowing what might happen to them. While some of them left to return later when things were calmer, others decided to stay. Luckily, our mayor banned any burning of Tutsi houses or looting of their cattle.”

\textsuperscript{55} See Appendix for list of coups in Africa. For information on coups in Africa see Wangome (1985); McGowan (2003; McGowan and Johnson (1986); Decalo (1976)
than half being successful.\textsuperscript{56} Only six countries have not encountered a coup d’état. In the 30 years after the advent of these countries, there have essentially been no working democracies. The reasons for this vary and are too complex to explain in this paper, but the basic dynamic centers on the fact that all the new countries jumped, more or less, from territorial chieftaincies to full-blown sovereign state status (recognized by the UN) relatively overnight, with no adequate span of transitional developments. There has also been a resistance to multi-party government by outspoken country leaders such as Nyerere of Tanzania, Nkrumah of Ghana, and Kenyatta in Kenya, who have held that such a political system is not consonant with African tradition.\textsuperscript{57} This generally means that in precolonial times kingdoms were ruled by a king or chief (with a coterie of advisors), with no organized opposition. Additionally, proponents of one-party systems give the following reasons for their choice: multi-party politics engender ethnic and regional interests and prejudices that prevent consensus; a single-party can consolidate its policies without wasting time and money on elections and remaining in power, and therefore focus on the people’s needs. These are the reasons underlying Habyarimana’s one-party government, even though he sometimes described his system as democratic, and added ‘democracy’ to his party’s name in 1991 in an attempt to overcome flagging support. But the flip-side of a one-party system is that it contains no mechanism for preventing the worst kind of abuses of power, and this is its seminal danger.

After the 1963 Inyenzi attacks, President Obote of Uganda warned that he would

\textsuperscript{56} From November 1958 to Habyarimana’s coup in 1973 there were 31 successful coups out of 53 attempts in 19 countries in Africa south of the Sahara (McGowan, 2003: 363).

\textsuperscript{57} See Uwezeyimana, D. (2012).
not give protection to refugees that used Uganda as a base of attack on other states.\textsuperscript{58} At the same time Kayibanda warned the Inyenzi that they should “finally measure the big steps realized by Rwandan history, and stop sulking about independence and the development of the Republic.”\textsuperscript{59} Concerning the Rwandan government’s use of troops, Paternostre says that Kayibanda asked UN Secretary-General, U’ Thant, to send a special representative as an objective observer; thereafter, Ambassador Max Dorsinville compiled a report ending with the opinion that some “unchecked popular reactions had been made only in regions difficult to access, and ‘where the Government had little control because of the lack of troops.’”\textsuperscript{60} After the ’63-’64 incursions, two years of peace ensued, then in 1966 another wave of attacks from Burundi. Micombero formed a republic in Burundi in November, and five months later his country came to an agreement with Rwanda to control the refugee problem.

\textbf{The One-Party State}

Kayibanda’s government, after an initial period that tolerated a minimal multi-party presence, settled into a single-party system. Opponents were purged by threats, arrests, physical violence and sometimes bargaining.\textsuperscript{61} Kayibanda, speaking at the first commemoration of independence, stated that he “preferred a party of a huge majority

\textsuperscript{58} Though in Uganda by early 1962, Obote refused to allow the Mwami to settle in Uganda even though there were over 35,000 Rwandan refugees there. However, Burundi, even with its 45,00 Tutsi refugees, gave sanctuary to UNAR. (Lemarchand, 1970: 207).
\textsuperscript{59} Kayibanda, cited in Paternostre, op. cit.: 195.
\textsuperscript{60} Dorsinville, Service de presse des Nations Unies, SG/SM/24 du 3.3.64, cited in Paternostre, op. cit.: 193. On 30 September 1964, “a parliamentary mission constituted upon a request from Grégoire Kayibanda traveled throughout the country. Though it had originally been created to investigate the decadent condition of the judicial system, its conclusions also mentioned the administrative and political domains. The report remained unpublished” (Reyntjens, 1985: 387, cited in Viret, op. cit.).
\textsuperscript{61} The ethnic identity cards issued by the Belgians 30 years before were maintained. They regulated all commercial and public relationships.
against a minor opposition,” and that “the proliferation of political parties represented the
distraction of people, incoherence for the country's progress and stagnation for the
nation,” following the ideas expressed above on one-party governments by Nyerere and
others; in 1965 legislative and presidential elections, his PARMEHUTU party was the only
one putting forward candidates.

Although Kayibanda instituted a one-party state apparatus, and largely failed to
create a democratic government, it is necessary to place his (and his government’s) actions
and policies within the wider and surrounding African environment in order to see how
unremarkably “common” they were.

Most new African rulers were preoccupied with controlling power, and accordingly
they revised, revoked, or simply disregarded the democratic independence
constitutions that gave birth to their parties. Rarely did competitive democracy last
as long as a decade after independence, and in only three countries [as of 1986] has
it been retained (Botswana, The Gambia, and Zimbabwe) . . . But each of these
countries is dominated by a ruling party, its government has never changed hands,
and the opposition presents no real electoral threat. Elsewhere, nationalist parties
have been destroyed by a coup d'état or abandoned or absorbed into the one-party
systems that have been established by some military or civilian regimes. But ruling
parties are institutions of popular legitimacy in very few countries, the majority
being auxiliary instruments of personal power rather than authentic organisations
of public opinion. [my italics].

The primary problem plaguing Kayibanda and his political cohorts (and the population),
was an almost complete lack of experience in and exposure to a democratic socio-political
traditional structure. It is, even in the space of decades, impossible to construct, ad hoc, a
non-native state. As education, a monetized economy, and colonial interference slowly
phased out, or eroded, the traditional socio-political structure of the nascent African

---

62 Cited in the Chronique de politique étrangère, Institut royal des relations internationales, 1964, Brussels: Belgium.
countries south of the Sahara, “traditional authority [could not] be used as the foundation of the post-colonial states”\textsuperscript{64}. There was no available blueprint for replacing it. The response among almost every state was the one-party state. M. Malik, a former Sudan Consul to Uganda, in answer to the question as to why Sudan has abandoned democracy, said:

Briefly put, the chief problem facing African leaders today is that of nation-building. . . . The African masses have to be persuaded to transfer their loyalties from an association they know and understand—the tribe—to something impersonal, abstract, and as yet non-existent, called the nation. They are also engaged in a search for the basis, content and validity of a secular morality and politics.\textsuperscript{65}

In Rwanda’s case, the tribe was represented by lineage and clan structures. And the problem of a secular morality, as embodied in constitutional government and a democratic judicial system, was bound to create difficulties regarding the power of the Catholic Church and the habits of customary, unwritten law; these are questions directly related to authority.

Another reason that African leaders renounced Western democracy was, as Ogot indicates, that it is founded on a liberal tradition

which assumes some sort of common ground on which conflicting groups can genuinely pursue the national interest without engaging in suicidal struggles. This common ground is lacking in the new African nations.\textsuperscript{66}

Yet many of those leaders share the concept that an “African democracy” can be constructed on what they consider to be a particularly African precedent, or history, as if all Africans possess a common socio-political and cultural past. This misplaced stereotype

\textsuperscript{64} Ogot (1963: 17).
\textsuperscript{65} Malik, former Sudan Consul to Uganda, quoted in Ogot (Ibid: 27).
\textsuperscript{66} Ogot (Ibid: 28).
about Africans as put forward by African rulers is understandable as a political fabrication aimed at trying to form a large union of countries on the continent, but it grossly ignores the reality of the enormously diverse and complex range of peoples who inhabit an area three times the size of the United States. Nigeria, alone, is the 7th most populous country in the world, has over 500 ethnic groups, of which the three largest—the Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa—are fiercely separate, where the nation is largely split by religion into a Muslim north and a Christian center-south. What common “African” precedent, even without considering different languages, could one find among Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Madagascar? It might make sense to try to find common ground among the states that make up the Great Lakes Region in central-eastern Africa, because of many historically shared or connected elements like the language group, farming techniques, and roughly similar socio-political systems, yet, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania have developed along very different political lines after gaining independence, none of them with a fully-working democracy, either of the Western or the African kind, Nyerere’s Ujaama (villagization) experiment in Tanzania a miserable and abandoned failure. Still, in Kayibanda’s time there was around much of Africa the consensus that the traditional chief could be replaced by a president, the chieftain structure by the one-party state and local government, and the tribe, clan, or lineage by the nation.67

Pressing for a one-party system in the Ghana National Assembly, S. Idrissie argued that it fit the African traditional institution of chieftaincy, which “had no provision

---

67 “Virtually every African educated overseas had embraced socialism.... whose doctrines placed the state at the very center of economic development.” (Collins and Burns, 2007: 359).
Another claim for supporting a one-party state is that the period following independence is exceptionally vulnerable, economically and politically a “time of emergency”, when opposition “in the Western sense, would have little place”. For Guinea’s president, Sékou Touré, a “unified party” is a way of life based on a set of African revolutionary principles; it is the expression of some particular life, some particular theory of existence. It is, in fact, the State.

Sékou Touré . . . has repeatedly emphasized that the party and the State are the same. What is good for the party is also good for the State. The decisions of the party are final . . . The Party . . . represents the whole mass of the people. The government is merely its executive arm.°°° [my italics].

But the actual operation of such regimes as put forward by Touré have been anything but democratic. As Tunteg indicates in the “gap between what the party s supposed to do and what it actually does,”

The measures frequently adopted by one-party governments are precisely the opposite of those required to achieve their stated objectives. If the functions of political parties must include interest articulation and aggregation, African parties would hardly merit that designation.°°°

He cautions against the difference between a political machine and a party, noting that “whereas political parties seek to mobilize public opinion in support of their objectives, the sole function of a political machine is to win and retain political power at all costs,” and believes that “with very few exceptions, all African one-party governments belong to this [political machine] category.”°°°° His suggestion that

---

°°°° West Africa (April 4th, 1959), cited in Ogot (ibid).
°°°° Pannikar, K. Revolution in Africa. (1961: 147), cited in Ogot (ibid: 30). “The African tradition is not to take a vote, but to decide the general sense of the meeting and give effect to that.” (Pannikar, op. cit., p.149).
°°°° Tunteg (1973: 662).
°°°°° Ibid.

211
there is nothing inherently democratic or otherwise in the one-party system. The success of any party system tends to be influenced by factors quite apart from the number of political parties or groupings. Much depends on the political culture and the extent to which the leadership tolerates dissent and other practices usually associated with democratic government.\textsuperscript{73}

It is in this last sense, particularly, that Kayibanda’s government bears scrutiny and comes up short.

Touré’s belief that the party and the state are the same is found in Kayibanda’s thinking, as well, and gives some insight into Kayibanda’s formation of a one-party state. Additionally, as agreed upon by many African leaders, one rationale for instituting a one-party state was the need to push forward an “unopposed” economic and socio-political agenda in the “emergency” period after independence; Kayibanda clearly ascribed to this concept, believing opposition parties would significantly hamper economic development and progress toward democratization, UNAR egregiously so. His government’s response to this was \textit{Article 10} in the 1962 constitution, which appears to provide for a multiparty system:

\begin{quote}
Political groups fulfilling the legal conditions shall compete at the polls. They are formed and they exercise their activities freely provided that they \textit{respect democratic principles and do not undermine the republican form of the state, the integrity of the national territory and the security of the state} [my italics].\textsuperscript{74}
\end{quote}

But phrase one—\textit{respect democratic principles and do not undermine the republican form of the state}—is clearly aimed at preserving the overthrow of the Mwamiship, and phrase two—\textit{the integrity of the national territory and the security of the state}—allows for the government to interpret such broad and abstract terms in any way it deems fit, including

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{74} Center for Conflict Management, National University of Rwanda (2010: 90).
\end{footnotesize}
harassing, as well as preventing the formation of, opposition groups. In the largest political sense, Article 10 can be used to validate a one-party state.

What prevented Kayibanda from embracing the idea that the whole of traditional Rwandan culture could be adapted to and transformed into the new republican state was his marriage to the Roman Catholic Church, and the negative socio-political aspect of Mwamiship. He did, however, harbor the idea and the need for the country to have a type of nationalism centered around the concept that the Hutu were the traditional caretakers of the land, and thus the foundation on which the country stood (a view picked up by Habyarimana and made a center piece of his administration: the agriculturalist as the country’s salvation), as expressed in the following speech excerpt:

"If a Nation loses its culture . . . it loses its soul. And losing its soul, it loses its deepest and most lively strengths. It is then shaken by all the winds of ideas and thought, and does not have a base anymore where it can establish its development. It does not know how to democratize what no longer exists, or is in total confusion: the transformations which torment the development happen at random, and neither the people nor the leaders have a reference to help orient the necessary changes".  

Kayibanda is once again reinforcing the notion that the Hutu are the “true inhabitants” of Rwanda, and the Tutsi the foreign interlopers, thus Kinyarwanda is the “true language” and French is the language of interlopers—the Belgians, and by extension the “foreign” Tutsi. This point is doubly important when applied to the Tutsi RPF invaders and their leader, Paul Kagame, who, after taking power, made English the official language of Rwanda, thereby apparently attempting to nullify the influence of an ethnically saturated Kinyarwanda language. The only problem with such a move is that it betrays his “otherness”, forever labeling him as an outsider (i.e., a Tutsi) which ironically is what the

Kayibanda regime, then the Hutu Power radicals, had worked to accomplish. It could also be argued that President Kagame and the Tutsi refugees, most of whom had grown up in Uganda, were more fluent in, and thus more comfortable with, English. Additionally, considering President Kagame’s drive to partner with and attract foreign companies and investors, as well as to modernize the country, especially in the IT sector, he would have reason to bring the country onto the international stage quickly and more competently by having the majority of the work force English speaking (as preparation for education abroad, as being “internationally” literate and thus able to fluently conduct business and access documents of all kinds, stay current, etc.). That is, Rwanda, as a tiny, land-locked country, and surrounded by un-performing countries with massive problems of their own, is absolutely forced to be an international player (in the roughest sense, the way Japan, Korea, or Vietnam, were/are forced into global relationships). This last point is much beyond the vision and philosophy of Kayibanda, who said in a speech in 1963, echoing the inward-looking philosophy of Nyerere and leaders of other Great Lakes countries during that period,

Rwanda, crossroads in Central Africa, has a considerable role to be played. If it has no pretension to political leadership, no chauvinism, if it has a nuanced judgment concerning itself as well as for others, this is due to its geographical position, due to its psychology, due to the cohesion of its educated children—an important place and a duty from which it cannot shy away, namely to maintain true African values, especially the cultural values, of the central part of the continent, and to participate in the actions which will guide these values.76

Again, Kayibanda expresses a confused and divided view: on the one hand “unity” through traditional “African” values (which he never makes clear in terms of socio-political and

76 Speech given 3.11. 63 at the inauguration of the Université Nationale du Rwanda.
economic relevancy), and on the other hand going forth into the wide world to develop a “modern” Rwanda, putting Christian principles (certainly not a “traditional” element of African culture) at the center of this development.\(^{77}\)

In August of 1963, only a few months before the Inyenzi incursions, Habyarimana married. He had been promoted to captain earlier that year and, being a successful and respected leader in the army, with a secure and adequate salary, he could support a wife. The woman he married, Agathe Kanziga,\(^{78}\) was well educated, having attended primary and secondary school, then Karubana Social School in Butare,\(^{79}\) and her father, Gervais Magera, was a Bushiru luminary from the same clan (Abagesera) as Habyarimana’s mother. Agathe knew Habyarimana’s two sisters, who were nuns\(^{80}\), from their shared hometown parish, but actually got to know Habyarimana on independence day, 1 July 1962, when he was invited to the Karubana school for its first graduating class, which included the future Minister of Social Affairs and Public Health in Kayibanda's

---

\(^{77}\) Paternostre, ibid: 216-217.  
\(^{78}\) Rwandan women did not traditionally take their husband’s surname at marriage.  
\(^{79}\) “The main objectives of the school were the following: (1) To offer education ‘whose aim is to train rural indigenous social assistants, in a spirit of tolerance and respect, and beyond any form of proselytism’; (2) To ‘train young autochthonous girls so that they will be in a position to manage little rural social centers that will multiply in the two countries under the auspices of the Government and the Chiefdom Council’; (3) To take care of the rural mass not yet involved in Western education. The explicit aim was to train social indigenous assistants who could work specifically in the foyers sociaux. The implicit aim, mentioned by Ngendakumana in his work, was to shape potential wives for the évolutés, educated in the Groupe Scolaire. The educational program encompassed four years. The first year was equivalent to the sixth year of primary school and a general background was given: French, history, sciences and geography were taught. Three years of theoretical and professional social studies followed: psychology, law, social organization, anatomy, pediatric nursing, maternal and child hygiene were the main subjects. The practical part included home economics courses and internships at the foyers sociaux,” centers for the “domestic and familiar education of the indigenous woman” (Buscaglia and Ranell, 2002: 70-78). Also see République Rwandaise (2006: n.p).  
\(^{80}\) One question at this point considers the role that religion played in Habyarimana’s and his wife’s lives, he studying at seminary and eventually giving up the idea of being a priest, she wanting to be a nun, but giving that up to get married.
government, Madeleine Ayinkamiye.81 Surprisingly (or coincidently), the very few women in government while Habyarimana was president had all studied at Karubanda Social School: Agnes Ntamaabalyaliro, Minister of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Artisans, then Minister of Justice82; Immaculée Nyirabizeymana, a deputy and a politician; Pauline Nyirama-Suhuko, Minister of Women and Family;83 Agathe Uwilingiyimana, member of the opposition and Prime Minister of the Government and assassinated the first day of the genocide; and the notorious Pauline Nyiramasuhuko,84 Minister of Equal Opportunities from 1992, who was found guilty of genocidal acts. “They all had a background as social assistants. Until very recently, this had been the only path for women towards ‘emancipation’”85 But what does it mean, this apparent contamination of a large portion of such a small number of “emancipated” women who had risen to positions of power in government?

At the independence day celebrations, Agathe was with her brother, Protais Zigiranyirazo, just a year older than Habyarimana and who would become an influential businessman and politician.86 Also in their company was Msgr Bigirumwami, the first

---

82 She was also “minister-in-exile in Zaire. 1991 Secretary General of Parti Liberal, 1993/94 Co-Leader-in-exile of a Faction of PL, which was in favour of the former government, which was ousted after the civil war.” (http://www.guide2womenleaders.com/Rwanda.htm)
83 “Sentenced to life in prison for her role in the genocide and the rape of Tutsi women and girls by the United Nations War Crimes Tribunal in 2011” (http://www.guide2womenleaders.com/Rwanda.htm)
84 In June 2011, Nyiramasuhuko was convicted of seven charges and sentenced to life imprisonment. She was the first woman to be convicted of genocide by the ICTR, and the first woman to be convicted of genocidal rape.
85 Buscaglia and Ranell (ibid).
86 He would be governor of Ruhengeri province for 15 years (1973-1989). "He continued to be the man who pulled the strings even after he quit his post of Governor . . . He called himself the 'prince of the great north' and carried out illegal activities with impunity," (Sagahutu Murashi Isaie, quoted in “Mr. 'Z' Regained Stature After President's Death - Des Forges,” Africa News Service, March 6, 2006). "The ordinary Rwandan regarded “Z” and the Akazu with a mixture of respect and fear," (Alison Des Forges, ibid). Zigiranyirazo was indicted by the ICTR for genocidal crimes, but was acquitted in November 2009.
A native Rwandan bishop (1952-73), and a Tutsi.87 Already, at 25 years of age, Habyarimana was the highest ranking Rwandan officer, and a leader, in the army (there was no navy because the country is landlocked, and no air force because of lack of need and funds), and was moving among the country’s elite and future power holders. In 1965 He was named Minister of Defense (an office he kept until 1991, along with being president), a remarkable nomination by Kayibanda, the rationale for this appointment seeming to be a political maneuver in the hope of bringing on board (or at least mollifying) the recalcitrant and independent northern Hutus, replacing his longtime friend, Calliope Mulindahabi, from the Kabgayi region (Kayibanda’s stronghold in the center of the country), with the northerner, Habyarimana. Kayibanda’s MDR-Parmehutu Party was in constant tension among various groups and personalities, and he needed to secure some form of unity among the regional factions. After becoming Minister of Defense, Habyarimana was promoted to Lt. Colonel (1967), Colonel (1970), and Maj. General (1973, just months before the coup d’état), the highest rank, and the title he would keep throughout his reign in equal position alongside that of President; this insistence defines one very important aspect of the character of the man—the deep pride he had in achieving the highest military honor and command, and the place of the military in his mind. A curious parallel with France’s de Gaulle is in the wearing of a military uniform at formal

87 Mrs. Habyarimana had kept all the friends from her youth: Philomène Mushyoma, who took the road to exile two or three years after 1994, knew Agathe while she was in training in Kibuye, where she developed a friendship with Scholastique, the director of the school, coordinator of foyers sociaux at Kibuye, and wife of Ramutsa Marcel. The artist, Cécile Kayirebwa, daughter of Vénuste Rwabagabo, former director of the prison at Kigali, also graduated with Agathe. . . . She had kept close contact with the Habyarimana family before 1994. She lived abroad for awhile, where she had contacts inside the RPF: she asked the presidential family if she could return, and Habyarimana responded that no one had chased her away, that she could come and go as she pleased. The ex-queen, Rosalia Gicanda, was also very close to the presidential family. She lived in a villa kept by the Rwandan state, was received for her charitable works, and given a van by Habyarimana. (Shimamungu, op. cit.: 170-71).
The naked display of power implied by being “commander in chief” of the force(s) that ultimately control the country, was not lost on the military, political opponents, allies (potential or existing), or the public.

In an extraordinary development, from 1965, Habyarimana served as commander of the army, director of the police, and head of national security, as Defense Minister. Any one of these positions is a heavy responsibility that would keep a person deep in work, but to hand all three jobs to one man indicates some manipulative process in which the politics of control represented in a one-party state philosophy seek to condense all the arms of the physical power of the state into a single entity overseen by one agent; the aim supposedly being to avoid any possible conflict among any of the three arms, just as in the one-party state there is the belief in the need to avoid conflict among different political parties. One agent holding the reins of all three arms of state physical force can, therefore, be directed by the president to use those forces in any way he desires, essentially without checks and balances. This is one of the primary dangers, and abuses, of a one-party state. The flip side is that the agent holding the reins can easily use them against the state, and this is what happened in the 1973 coup against Kayibanda, and it was a particularly easy coup to coordinate because the majority of men in the army came from Habyarimana’s home region. The assumption that Habyarimana, as a “northerner”, would be at odds with a “southern” Hutu, like Kayibanda, was so strong that it prompted François Rukeba, a
UNAR leader responsible for Inyenzi attacks, to make a bold about-face and offer his support to Habyarimana in overthrowing Kayibanda (as expressed in the following letter):

I definitely have separated from all those who I commanded before the events of 1959, because they have proven that they haven't worked for the interests of the people … In reconsidering that the monarchist system is without recourse, I have broken with the former Mwami Kigeri V. It is not necessary to believe that for us the return of refugees implies the return of the monarchy … I don't want, then, to return to Rwanda by shedding blood. I don't want, above all, to continue to see the loss of Rwandan soldiers: but for me, even the loss of only one soldier is an irreparable loss because without soldiers we can't have national peace.88

It was a sign that some Tutsis refugees saw in Habyarimana the possibility of even a minimal rapprochement between Hutu and Tutsi, while it equally expressed the deep-seated belief that Kayibanda’s government would relentlessly continue its anti-Tutsi stance. Habyarimana, then, had at this time the image of being outside the Kayibanda government’s realm of a racist ideology, and to some extent being fair minded.

As for the young officers, they had started to seriously consider the changeover of civil government. There were factions in the army that, by 1972, when Kayibanda severely cracked down on Tutsi citizens in response to the flood of Hutu refugees fleeing from the Burundi Tutsi government’s slaughter of civilians, were ready to perform a coup, but Habyarimana, for not well-understood reasons, “stood as a veritable shield for the regime”,89 at that time.

---

89 Shimamungu (op. cit.: 45).
Habyarimana and Kayibanda

Habyarimana and Kayibanda had at least a mutual respect for each other, and were sufficiently close, at least in the beginning, that Kayibanda was asked to be godfather to one of Habyarimana's sons, and Habyarimana’s sister, the nun Godelieve, became godmother to Kayibanda's youngest child.

From time to time after a holiday in Gitarama we would pass the time together at president Kayibanda’s home. Often we went to his house with the other ministers. President Kayibanda lived alone in Kigali, and from time to time he called before dropping by our house. He would also arrive at any moment without warning. I know that he didn't eat, or not much, because he lived alone. Sometimes when he came by I noticed that he had nothing to eat and I quickly prepared something for him. He was at ease at our house. Sometimes he came a little late.1

Shimamungu relates that “All that Habyarimana knew regarding the security of the state, he put at the disposal of Kayibanda,” and he was regularly updated by the president of the national assembly and the Minister of the Interior, so that when two captains under his command, André Bizimana and Jean-Baptiste Seyanga were given ministerial portfolios without Habyarimana being consulted, he was naturally insulted. Additionally, Nöel Mbonabaryi, a close ally of Habyarimana’s, cautioned him that things were not going well, added to which several luminaries complained to Habyarimana that they were being discriminated against because they had dared to criticize a government matter, and that Kayibanda was overstepping his mandate by wanting to give the presidency an unlimited

1 Ibid: 46.
They expected Habyarimana to do something. The fact that Habyarimana was seen as an alternative to Kayibanda put him in a precarious position, and which came to a head in 1973, only three months after being promoted general of the army. According to Shimamungu, Kayibanda made government decisions primarily at home in the evening, without “consulting the official political organs and the political partners within the Parmehutu Party,” surrounded and influenced by a coterie of sycophantic followers, which “resulted in relative unknowns, or surprise candidates being proposed as ministers . . . without knowing the organs of the party,” while Kayibanda’s wife worked nearby in the fields and tended the livestock, and household employees looked after the president.

Through the late ‘60s and early ‘70s, while Habyarimana climbed through the ranks of the military and accumulated markers among a variety of power brokers, Kayibanda was on the descent, finding it increasingly difficult to make PARMEHUTU the State, the State subordinate to the Party and cooperant. Kayibanda, the great organizer of the Hutu Movement, as long as everybody on board believed in the same rather reactive goal—getting rid of the monarchy and establishing a Hutu government—was not capable of coalescing the various Hutu factions into a democratic framework that that allowed for competitive ideas. Regional antagonisms persisted, and resulted in the president transferring out of government three of the officers that had graduated from OE (École

---

2 Ibid: 47
3 Ibid: 48-49. Kayibanda was often referred to as the ‘hermit of Gitarama because he lived on such a small budget in a modest house in the countryside near his hometown.

Kayibanda’s Failure and Decline

Paternostre, in his unabashedly one-sided paean to Kayibanda, goes at length to paint a benign administration with the president trying to guide everyone toward democracy. But the media, the basis of a democratic government, was censured from the start of independence, and the leading publication, Kinyamateka—even though being the paper on which Kayibanda was editor and which he used to great advantage for the Hutu Movement—was forbidden to publish from June 1968.

After independence, Kayibanda tried to put into effect an austere regimen regarding the political leaders and other public employees, Kayibanda himself choosing to drive a Volkswagen Beetle, rather than a luxury car. But, all too predictably, this attempt failed, giving over to a wide variety of corrupt behavior, resulting in a parliamentary commission of enquiry in 1968. It’s report was rejected and the MPs who supported it—including two signatories of the Bahutu Manifesto and the president of the national assembly—were cast out of the MDR-Parmehutu party. This fomented some strong rivalries, and a minority hostile to the government managed to survive, even though rejected by the party. At the core of the one-party state were some powerful personalities from Gitarama who considered themselves the authentic creators of the revolution. New elections were held in

---

4 On 26 March 1973, Kayibanda appointed Gen. Alexis Kanyarengwe, the military’s second-ranking officer, [and chief of police] to take over St. Joseph seminary (Carney, op cit.: 383). Reyntjens (1985: 502-504) notes that “Kanyarengwe was also seen as Kayibanda’s greatest rival in the military. . . . appointing him to take over Nyundo seminary served Kayibanda’s political purposes of isolating a potential leader of a coup d’état.” Major Nsekalije was assigned to a tea cooperative.”
September 1969, as a result of which 26 ministers and MPs were excluded from [the state party] and were denied any meaningful role in the affairs of state. This further damaged the cohesion of the party.\(^5\)

But the internal tensions had always been there and were simply camouflaged by the rush to independence, the ’59 violence and its aftermath, and the problems of creating a new nation. Power brokers from the Gisenyi and Ruhengeri northern regions were insistent on preserving their traditional land rights’ system (ubukonde), and those notable from the deep south, around Butare, were divested of power as APROSOMA party died out and the PARMEHUTU central region usurped as much power as they could. With the competition among various groups, there was naturally the problem of assigning personnel to administrative positions around the country, with bourgmestres and préfets in ferocious competition for access to jobs.\(^6\) Efforts were made to try to reduce friction, such as reducing the number of municipalities in April 1963, from 219 to 141, and holding new local elections four months later, the results of which gave PARMEHUTU almost unanimous control, while effectively pushing APROSOMA and RADAR off the political map. This result was what he had expressed in his First Anniversary of Independence speech, when he bemoaned the harm to the nation caused by the proliferation of political parties. From this point, even Paternostre, the most uncritical admirer of Kayibanda, admits “the party would from now on no longer have safe-guards or counterbalances, nor anything which forces it to a certain self-assessment.”\(^7\) Kayibanda’s rhetoric from the first

---

\(^5\) Ibid: 55-64.
\(^6\) Viret, op. cit.: 21. Also see Lemarchand (op. cit.: 230-233, 247-249); and Reyntjens (1985: 474-484, 486-494).
\(^7\) Paternostre, op. cit.: 184.
years as president follow more nearly the stereotypical social-communist lines rather than any kind of social-democratic leaning: as paraphrased by Paternostre,

all the citizens must collect very concrete fruits from the common weal . . . by the interplay of the different forms of cooperatives, by genuine social solidarity, by the participation of the employees in ownership of enterprises. Thus, this “third way” [between socialism and liberalism], was an argument of unity. It would become integrated one day, thought Kayibanda, into the ‘new world economic order’, taking into account all the aspects of human life, not just the economic aspect. [my italics] 8

These ideas reflect a “spiritual-socialist” ideal—as found in Kayibanda’s private library, consisting mainly of religious writers—where a seminarian discipline and order outweigh freedom (which, somehow, is supposed to appear from devoting oneself to a, somehow, constructed order), appears out of touch with the social-political realities, and is too remindful of a theocracy and a devotion to God’s order, from which one will receive freedom in the form of grace (also in this same vein, remindful of Sir Thomas More, whose religiously-grounded moral conflict with the socio-political reality within the kingship ended tragically (as did Kayibanda’s fall from grace end in a coup and a delayed death). Holding civil servants away from private economic ventures may have seemed a viable move in side-stepping corruption, but in a social situation where any economic activity or incentive was sorely needed (which, besides, would often mean the difference between a meager existence or an adequate one), such a demand was as poorly conceived as it was poorly received. He confides in a letter, that “most of the social sufferings in the world were due to the forgetting by the politicians of the ‘superiority of Love’ . . . and, far from being empty smoke, this kind of idealism was, on the contrary, ‘an effective strength

---

8 Ibid: 184, drawing from Kayibanda’s letter, May 1963, to Ambassador Logiest at the beginning of his mission in Rwanda.
planned by God in the steps of the history of the world.”

He travelled all over the country, meeting with local authorities, often taking his lunch with him to eat on the side of the road.

By reshuffling the general assembly and restructuring his administration, Kayibanda hoped to streamline government and its functions, and revitalize the economy, but was hamstrung by internal political wrangling. One problem with postcolonial development efforts was that the colonial regimes obviously did not set up a foundation for a national economy, because they were not in the business of growing autochthonous states, or of seeing states develop out of the colonialist politico-economic structure, which remained externally oriented to the metropole. States whose “economic power remained concentrated at the gate between inside and outside,” have been labeled as gatekeeper states by Cooper. The political importance of this condition to a regime is in the fact that its opponents can afford to lose; they have other avenues for wealth and other loci for power. Gatekeeper states are in danger for the simple reason that rulers temporarily in control of the gate want to sty there. Hence ruling elites tended to use patronage, coercion, scapegoating of opponents, and other resources to reinforce their position, narrowing the channels of access even further. . . . Africa’s present did not emerge from an abrupt proclamation of independence, but from a long, convoluted, and still ongoing process. . . . What is problematic about gatekeeper states is the focus of patronage systems on a single point and the

---

9 Ibid: 185. The monthly magazine *International Afrika-Forum* of January 1965: “Kayibanda is a convinced Christian, an idealist without any material ambition, for his circle of acquaintances as well as for himself. He is a man of iron will, not knowing compromise, and is an indisputable authority” (in Barahinya, 1988: 21). Linden (op. cit.: 245, n 106) believes that “social Catholicism, rather than any other philosophy, informed his [Kayibanda’s] actions and planning.”

10 Ibid: 186, Hategekimana interview (September 1992: 4) by Ms Karwera Mutwe. Hategekimana was the president’s chauffer, and Kayibanda “asked him to be godfather to one of his children”.

11 . . . despite the social Bahrutu revolution of 1959-60, the situation for most rural dwellers—who belonged to the same ethnicity as the government after 1960—did not change fundamentally. On the contrary: because of unchanged economic parameters during the first republic of President Kayibanda from 1962 to 1973 and the second republic of President Habyarimana from 1973 to 1994 deterioration of living conditions seemed inevitable” (Baechler, 1998: 130).
undermining, in the midst of intense rivalry for that point, of alternative mechanisms for influencing decisions and demanding accountability.  

The one-party state would appear to be ‘internally’ connected to this system of patronage, coercion, scapegoating of opponents, etc., and ‘undermining’ “alternative mechanisms for influencing decisions and demanding accountability”. Kayibanda, in the capacity of one person, was undermined by the structure he had both inherited and helped to construct.

The educational system was still fraught with Tutsi/Hutu conflict, as Linden points out,

As the republic was purged of the Tutsi class, Tutsi Abbés closed ranks. Thanks to their academic pre-eminence they took up key positions in seminaries and, since so much of Rwanda’s education was de facto, though after 1964 not de jure, in clerical hands, it seemed as if the Tutsi controlled secondary education as a whole. The culturally conditioned disdain for ‘le petit Hutu’ meant that Hutu pupils in minor and major seminaries still experienced the humiliating contempt of their superiors, which acted as a brake on their attainment. . . . in the post-colonial period the Hutu experienced no psychologically satisfying academic success, and attributed this continued failure to the prominence of Tutsi in positions of power within the educational system. . . . a disproportionately high percentage of Tutsi seminarians passed through seminary education in the decade after Independence . . . [as] Tutsi were trying to gain through the Church what they had lost during the revolution in the State. . . . [also, a] resulting lack of communication between priests and their Bishop facilitated a process in which the Tutsi Abbés became increasingly antipathetic to the Hutu and were seen as aliens. 14 [my italics].

What is revealed here are structural social elements of belief: traditional and recently constructed contempt—the elite Tutsis’ disdain for the Hutu, and the MDR-PARMEHUTU’s disdain for all Tutsi, not just those leaders of the past that had

---

12 Cooper, 2002: 5, 159.
13 See Sayer (1984); and Bhaskar (1975).
14 Linden, op. cit.: 283-84. Also see Mvuyekure (2002: n.p.): I also remember that during the last years of Kayibanda’s presidency, the Hutu who were not from Gitarama had a hard time finding jobs or passing the national exam for secondary schools. As a matter of fact, corruption was so rampant that the names of those who had passed the national exam were erased at the commune level and replaced by children from rich or well-connected parents.
represented a clear challenge to the Hutu Movement. In an attempt to Hutu-ize education, the government introduced four salient provisions in 1966:

It declared as state property all school buildings ever constructed with state subsidies; it placed the hiring and firing of all personnel, lay and religious, in all state-subsidized private schools under the supervision and control of the state; it removed the admission, promotion, and expulsion of students in these schools from exclusive control of school authorities; and it also removed the choice of textbooks and curriculum content from the sole jurisdiction of school authorities.15

Two of the volatile results of these policies were that the small percent of Tutsis with public jobs steadily decreased, and the increase in Hutu educated at the secondary and tertiary level, especially among university graduates, created a large surplus of disaffected educated youths who couldn’t find employment.

Kayibanda’s administration also introduced a new course in the primary and secondary education curriculum, namely Civics, to inculcate the new political ideals into pupils’ minds. The Hutu Revolution needed to have its own history taught because ‘Revolutions have their own relevant past’16. For the Tutsi, the course rather aimed ‘to propagate hatred and to preach the Parmehutu ideology to the school-going Hutu youths’.17 Before that law and just after independence, Kayibanda had appointed himself as Minister of Education besides his functions as president18. Despite that law, the Catholic Church remained in control of most private education, even in post-genocide Rwanda19.

Kayibanda’s government was following, in its educational policies, the core idea of the Hutu Movement platform, which was to eliminate all vestiges of the monarchy, but the idea of actually attempting to replace actual history by creating a new “historical memory” in which the Hutu were the original Rwandans and the Tutsi were interlopers, or aliens, had developed after independence. Again, one sees how the structure of the one-party state

15 Mamdani, op. cit.: 136  
fortifies itself by generating realities within and about itself. This structural element repeats in its particular agency the purpose of the abiru in the Mwami’s court: that is, the constant production of historical reality. In this sense it is no different from the Mwamiship.

Another Mwami-like structural element of Kayibanda’s government is that regarding his personal agency:

Like the Mwami, the President is inaccessible, inviolate and unaccountable. His inaccessibility enables him to avoid taking up overt positions on specific issues, and thus to create around his person and his policies an atmosphere of ambiguity which makes them immune to criticism. But even when commitments cannot be averted, his decisions remain well beyond the pale of accountability. Just as in the past, the Mwami used his advisers as a cat's paw in order to deflect hostility against his entourage, Kayibanda has consistently endeavored to shift the onus of responsibility for his policies upon individual cabinet members. But since political office is still regarded as a gift of the sovereign, no amount of political pressure from the National Assembly or from anywhere else can force him to remove a member of his cabinet, or prevent him from appointing a favorite.20

All observers of the Kayibanda government through the late ‘60s and early ‘70s commented on the shift towards regionalism and racist separation, with Kayibanda

---

20 Lemarchand, 1966: 325, n 23. Lemarchand adds, regarding some differences with the powers of the Mwami, “... no matter how strongly reminiscent of the autocratic methods of the past, his [Kayibanda’s] authority is not absolute. Kayibanda is deeply indebted to the old-guard Hutu politicians (the so-called " révolutionnaires de la première heure"), and although he may feel the need to replace them by younger and better educated elements, he cannot always afford to do so. His authority does not depend exclusively on the sanctity of office but also on his ability to reconcile divergent viewpoints and factions within the ruling oligarchy. More often than not this has meant " playing both ends against the middle . . . . The story goes that in trying to mobilize support for his ideas Kayibanda went about the countryside saying that the purpose of the revolution was to give the Hutu a Mwami of their own. If this is true this goal has been fulfilled beyond all expectations . . . . whether in the long run the incompetence and arbitrariness of some of the governing elites, and the growing demands for increased political participation of those outside the government, will not bring insuperable pressure to bear upon both the office and the occupant. But until this happens, the stability of the Rwandese political system will continue to depend to a considerable extent on the legitimacy of Kayibanda's presidential Mwamiship.” Also see Sebaganwa’s article in Kinyamateka, No. 29, August 1966: 3, “In fact, we are fighting for nothing, let us rejoice and feel satisfaction because our ethnic group has power. Every one should appreciate his or her job. We should not have ‘bourgoumestres’, ministers, etc… who cling and fight for positions. No one seems to be satisfied with his/her job. It is surprising that Bahutu brothers in PARMEHUTU party are now busy fighting for power among them. Tutsis are now ordinary citizens and other parties have no power, and this means that Hutus in power can do whatever they want; then why should you fight among yourselves? It is very sad to see PARMEHUTU members fighting among themselves—a thing that gives our enemies, the Tutsis happiness”. See Guichaoua, 1989: 170-171, on the economic plan of ‘66-’67.
becoming increasingly isolated and unable to control the resulting tensions and dissention within the party (which was the government). A more serious problem, outside this political rupturing, and the one which plagued Habyarimana more than any other (save the increasing refugee demands) throughout his reign, was the pressure created by the fast population growth: how was the country to feed itself? Kayibanda’s administration’s fundamental response was to try to increase agricultural output and to make available more cultivatable land. The use of land for grazing cattle, who added little to the economic productivity of the country, was reduced, banana plantations were targeted for a more balanced, and cash production, rather than being used largely for making beer, and plans for building more processing plants for agricultural products were drawn up. Even though some improvements in agricultural production and the opening up of more land could be accomplished through the volunteer labor of the peasant-farmers (which Habyarimana made a permanent part of his administration’s efforts, and was called Umugundu). Funding for moving ahead with any reasonable scale of development attempts, however, was not available through state derived revenues, meaning that development aid would necessarily have to come from external, and international, donors. The appeal for and dependence on international aid became a structural part of the Rwandan government’s operations, and has remained so until today.

Kayibanda may have been politically isolated within the country, but he established relationships with foreign governments as part of a necessary effort to secure funding and

---

21 “Habyarimana had great personal respect for Kayibanda, but grew increasingly disturbed by the president’s lack of progress in dealing with the country’s difficult economic problems and the continuing ethnic strife...” (Lipschutz and Rasmussen, 1989: 267). Also see Van Hoyweghen, 1996: 382.
export/import arrangements. Some of his successful efforts were a new commercial road to Tanzania funded by a loan from China, which led to a friendship with Tanzania’s President Nyerere, a bridge across the Nil-Akagera funded by Germany, a modern telephone exchange financed by Belgium, a connection to geostationary satellites, with financial and technical support provide by the Netherlands, a 50kW broadcasting transmitter provided by Germany, and a 25 hectare industrial park outside Kigali financed by the European Development Fund. The first tertiary institution, the National University of Rwanda opened in 1963, thanks to the help of Canadian Dominicans and a yearly endowment from the Canadian government, the Faculty of Medicine funded by the University of Ghent, and the Faculty of Literature aided by the French. In spite of all this, Kayibanda was not, however, a polished diplomat, as one Canadian government functionary relates:

“As a junior protocol officer arranging the Ottawa programs of visiting heads of state and government coming as official guests to help celebrate Canada’s centenary in 1967, I organized the schedule and prepared the briefing material for Rwanda’s first post-independence president, Grégoire Kayibanda, when he paid an official visit to Canada. I remember that I was unable to interest any francophone cabinet minister in meeting with the president; his country was, it seemed, too unimportant. . . . The president’s only official call in Ottawa was on Prime Minister Pearson. The encounter was awkward. The president was so shy that he was uncertain whether to offer his right or left hand when he greeted Canada’s leader. The prime minister sought to put him at ease by dispensing with the services of his interpreter, and launching into an animated explanation of the significance of 1967 for Canada and Canadians. I doubt if Rwanda’s leader understood a word of Lester Pearson’s fractured French. And Kayibanda’s diffident demeanour belied the fierce leader who, several years earlier, had led the Hutu uprising that dispossessed the Tutsi ethnic minority of Rwanda of its lands, at a cost of more than 10,000 lives.”

Some important developments in Rwanda’s relations with other countries occurred in the ’66-’67 period. In a revolution, Captain Micombero replaced the monarchy in Burundi with a republican government, which allowed the potential for a rapprochement between the two countries when Kayibanda, Micombero, and Zaire’s Mobutu (as arbiter) signed an agreement in March 1967 specifying that the Inyenzi in Burundi must be disarmed, that Rwandan and Burundian representatives meet regularly under Mobutu’s chairmanship, and, most important, the safe return of the Tutsi refugees to Rwanda would be enabled by a permanent commission. (All three countries had one-party governments at the time). In addition, some joint economic projects were approved.

Shortly after the Burundi-Rwanda accords on the refugees were signed, however, Mobutu broke off diplomatic relations with Rwanda because Kayibanda had “refused to hand over the white mercenaries who had fled from Bukavu in eastern Congo, near the border between the two countries, to Rwanda.” This ended Mobutu’s willingness to continue his role as arbiter in the Rwanda-Burundi refugee problem. Around the same period intrigues were rife among members of MDR-PARMEUTU, and a number of founding leaders, along with half the parliament,

25 “Soon after the coup in Burundi, Rwanda’s President Kayibanda sent a message to Micombero congratulating him for deposing the monarchy: ‘In this way, all the Burundi people are freed from the retrograde myth of feudal monarchy’” (Mwakikagile, 2012: 235).
26 Ibid: 235. “The dispute between Rwanda and Burundi was also fuelled by the continued presence of Rwandan Tutsi royalists in Burundi who were still determined to overthrow the Hutu government of Rwanda and reinstate their king, Kigera V.”
27 Ibid.
were ejected for having “deviated from the party line”, and replaced by neophytes after a 1968 government commission on corruption “returned with a damning indictment of what it termed Kayibanda’s ‘Gitarama clique.’”

Parliament also accused Kayibanda’s government of being corrupt. Kayibanda responded in a speech on the sixth anniversary of Rwanda’s independence:

Don’t let yourself be seduced by the current intrigues, they are often the intrigues of those whose stomachs are already full. . . . Rwandans, Rwandans, it is my duty to tell you the truth; certain fellow countrymen (they are not many) have started to deviate from the fundamental principle of the PARMEHUTU party: that of working for the well-being of the people. They have started to introduce small "meetings", and intrigues, and to create small divisionary groups among you, ideologically belonging to this or that. Citizens, you all belong to PARMEHUTU, and you make up the majority. The only enemy of the Republic against whom it is necessary to fight is “criminality”. Fight against this enemy as you did against feudalism and colonialism. . . . The intrigue, the corruption, the small demagogic arrangements, are vulgar cowardice. The bourgeois mentality is a derision, an insult to a people still underdeveloped, and who appeal to their loved children to be leaders, technical or administrative executives, and dynamic organizers of a democratic progress. . . . Only the emancipation of our people will unite us.

And, in an attempt to “insure the impartiality and the objectivity of certain decisions (appointments, promotions, judicial or disciplinary penalties, auctions, etc.), Kayibanda rotated public authorities so as to prevent them from establishing a network of clientele for their own patronage system. “Even the Catholic media, the great allies of the Hutu emancipation movement in the late 1950s, found themselves under attack,” after writing an article about government corruption—the editor of Kinyamateka, was imprisoned, and the

29 Carney, op. cit.: 374.
31 Paternostre, op. cit.: 190.
Italian general editor deported, followed by the newspaper being temporarily banned. The revolution was eating its own parents.  

Kayibanda’s administration was acutely aware of two major, nonpolitical, problems at the end of the ‘60s—the vulnerability of transporting its primary export products along the single route through Uganda, and the over-population stress approaching crisis levels, exacerbated by the fact that neighboring countries were facing their own unemployment problems, which was having adverse affects on Rwandans migrating in search of jobs and land.  

Despite the economic and overpopulation problems, as well as the governmental infighting, Kayibanda was reelected president in September 1969 with close to 98% of the vote. Any semblance of peace was short-lived when a reactionary ethnic cleansing erupted in Burundi in the spring of 1972 following a Hutu rebellion against the Tutsi military regime, killing some 100,000 Hutus, with another 200,000 fleeing into Rwanda for safety. The Kayibanda government’s reaction was to persecute its own Tutsi population, producing another large wave of Tutsi refugees. The government had long before instituted a quota system limiting Tutsi to 9% of public and private sector jobs, tertiary school enrollment and teaching positions, and in the wake of the Burundian debacle, and as a

---

32 “Lemarchand notes the similarities between PARMEHUTU cadres in the 1960s and French Jacobins in the 1790s: a reign of terror gave way to an embracing of public virtue. In Lemarchand’s words, this facilitated a shift from a Catholic-clericalist vision to a nationalist-secularist alternative, culminating with political centralization and dictatorship” (Lemarchand, Rwanda and Burundi, 258-59, cited in Carney, op. cit.: 374). Also see Adelman and Suhrke, op cit.: 64.

33 “With 3,600,000 people in an area the size of Sicily, and with no rapid secondary or tertiary sector growth to absorb the population surplus, the migration ‘safety valve’ is of prime importance. The present population will double in less than 25 years and there is land only for another 40,000 families. . . . Since independence, Uganda has become increasingly aware of its own unemployment problems and has been introducing labour legislation discriminating in favour of its own citizens on plantations and in factories” (Baker, 1970: 151).
political maneuver on Kayibanda’s part to pump up the perception of Hutu solidarity in the face of increasing dissention among the northern Hutu leaders,

vigilante committees … scrutinised the schools, the University, the civil service and even private businesses to make sure that the ethnic quota policy was being respected. Those eager to carry out this ‘purification’ … were educated people who could expect to benefit from kicking the Tutsi out of their jobs.\

“The result of this witch hunt backfired when the ‘peoples committees began to attack the authorities as well as the Tutsi.”

Meanwhile, Uganda’s president, Idi Amin, was convinced that Rwanda was trying to overthrow him and threatened to invade Rwanda, and relations remained bad between the two countries until Amin was deposed, but the fear that Uganda might take up arms against Rwanda –its military superiority would have allowed it an easy victory—caused considerable unrest among the government. In addition to this 1971-72 dispute, fighting broke out again between the Hutu and Tutsi inside the country. Things were starting to fall apart: “If independence had satisfied the majority of the population, the mid- and late-1960s had become affected by terror and discord.” A UN Commission of Inquiry reported that the population’s anxieties had been caused by the government:

The bourgemestres, the prefects, the ministers and certain deputies no longer have the people’s confidence, because they have become involved in intrigue, commercially or politically, or because they are preoccupied with their personal affairs and shy away from the public concerns for which they are responsible.

---

35 Adelman and Suhrke, op cit.: 6:
36 Pottier, 1993a: 11.
37 Cited in Reyntjens, Pouvoir et Droit, p. 390.
TRAFIPRO, the giant cooperative of which Kayibanda had been a board member, was at the center of the ‘intrigue’:

With its headquarters in the South, at Gitarama, TRAFIPRO favoured southern politicians and businessmen. The UN public inquiry led to the serious but justified allegation that the country's largest producer-consumer cooperative had enriched the political leaders. The economic power of TRAFIPRO was much feared in Rwanda's northern prefectures. Controlling 27 shops nationwide and 70 buying-up points for coffee (in 1966), TRAFIPRO was accused by influential Northerners of running a monopoly that strangled other forms of economic enterprise, especially in the North. The northern view equated successful state intervention in commerce with unlawful private enrichment. By 1968, TRAFIPRO had become 'le bras économique des révolutionnaires de Gitarama', the backbone of an authoritarian regime, while northern businessmen found themselves pushed out of business and out of politics. TRAFIPRO's regional bias, corruption and the climate of terror it supported led to determined opposition. The concentration of political and economic power by a small elite of 'Gitaramistes' ended with the 1973 Coup d'état by Habyarimana 38

The army was restless with discontent: Kayibanda had made the mistake of replacing numbers of soldiers originating from the north, who had made up the bulk of the army from its inception, with recruits from other regions than the north, by merging the national police and the army, resulting in a majority of southerners. Kayibanda, in a blend of callousness and a display of presidential power, placed Habyarimana on the committee given the directive to initiate the merger. In an even-tempered speech in August 1973, he reflected on Kayibanda’s decision:

Abolishing the national police had been brutally imposed on us. That is the past. For the control and maintenance of the country’s domestic security, it seemed to us,

---

38 Pottier, ibid: 11. Also see Kamola, 2008: 65. C.f. Paternostre, op. cit.: 207, “In the effort at commercial streamlining, a major role was given to cooperatives, and mainly to the TRAFIPRO cooperative (helped since 1963 in a remarkable way, technically and financially, by a Swiss cooperation), which was also authorized to import, and which did it by addressing the cheapest world suppliers. So by arbitrating the prices, and by forcing the other storekeepers to maintain their profits in reasonable limits, TRAFIPRO could, for the biggest good of the population, lower on the whole market the prices of most of the goods of the popular mass market: hoes, salt, fabrics, and many others—not without meeting certain oppositions!” TRAFIPRO had a training school and newspaper, *Umunyamuryango* (The Co-worker) in the Habyarimana stronghold of Gitarama.
however, necessary to think of creating in the near future a police force, light but very effective.\textsuperscript{39}

Addressing the removal of some of his best officers, who had been sent to inconsequential civil positions far from Kigali, he called the decision "dramatic stunts, often not well considered, and dashed off irresponsibly in the corridors and antechambers," and pointed out that

The scattering of these officers to the different corners of the country for functions inferior to their rank—a program moreover, that was only in its early stages—was already the symbol of the politics of disintegration the former regime wanted and set up.\textsuperscript{40}

The ethnic cleansing carried out in Burundi in 1972 had also helped ignite, in February 1973, the smoldering racist atmosphere among young educated Hutu and Tutsi;\textsuperscript{41} Tutsi students were chased from the university and the classrooms around the country\textsuperscript{42}, then spread to all areas of the private sector and public institutions, where people were fired from their jobs. De Heuscht says that this movement "found no echo in the rural areas", and Claudine Vidal, who was then in Rwanda, observed

a real racist hate among the new generation: Young educated Hutu and Tutsi experienced for one another a total aversion which went far beyond rivalry. There were evidently many exceptions, but the general tone of mutual loathing had taken on a racial character; everything about the Other was disparaged, his physique, his way of eating and speaking, his origins.\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{39} Shimamungu, op. cit.: 68-69.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.: 68-69.
\textsuperscript{41} According to Filip Reyntjens (1985: 502-503), “… far from restricting oneself to 10% of the paid workers, the Tutsi had taken over more and more importance in the economic machinery, social and administrative, of the country. The secondary and higher education institutions often accounted for nearly 50% of Tutsi student enrollment … 120 Tutsi (or 46%) out of 260 students in the school at Butare, and 200 Tutsi (40%) out of 500 students at the National University, in 1972, to cite only those two examples.”
\textsuperscript{42} “… ‘pure’ Hutu students checked the noses and fingers of their colleagues to ascertain their ethnic origin. Even the government spoke of attacks on people ‘en raison de leur appartenance raciale’. The type of explicit reference to physical characteristics that occurred was necessary in the mixed environment of the classroom, unlike in the hill communities, where lineages were known” (Linden, op. cit.: 286).
In the countryside, the violence consisted mainly of vandalism and the burning of huts.\textsuperscript{44} The government stood by while the violence and continued, and only after most of the unlawfulness had run down was the army called in\textsuperscript{45}, but the army’s intervention was badly regarded. But, General Habyarimana, who as a professional soldier, decided he could not passively stand by, mobilized soldiers to stop the massacres, without an OK from the president, and in the course of events confronted a leader of the violence, demanding "Who gave you the order to kill the Tutsis or to destroy their homes?" while the man pugnaciously replied, "We received the order to burn the Tutsi huts like in 1959, and you, you come to interrupt us! And on top of it all you threaten to arrest us? Why are you interfering?\textsuperscript{46} which illuminates an important aspect of the 1959 violence concerning the nature of it being directed by high-level authorities. It also shows how little regard the leader of the violence had for the army’s authority, and his temerity to speak to a general in such a tone. He clearly saw his directive, no matter how unlawful, as a matter to be carried out in relation to his immediate supervisor’s demands, which superseded all other authorities. This bureaucratic “unthinking”, as Arendt has mentioned, also provides some insight into the easy way that violence can be instigated, uncritically, among the rank and file. It was this mindless agency driving the violence that Habyarimana spoke out against in his address of August 1st:

We admit that pupils and students must, from this moment, progressively prepare themselves for the responsibilities waiting for them in national life. But let it be

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid: 71-71.

\textsuperscript{45} “The school disorders were something of a dress rehearsal for the army’s seizure of power in July. Northern students were involved in many of the violent incidents, and the army demonstrated its discipline and power in the country by bringing the situation rapidly under control” (Linden, op. cit.: 286).

\textsuperscript{46} Mrs. Habyarimana, in an interview with Shimamungu (Shimamungu, ibid: 76).
noted once and for all, it is not the high school and college students who run the schools.\textsuperscript{47}

And later, at the beginning of the 1973-74 school year at the national university:

Unproductive agitation cannot in any case favor the tranquility so indispensable to university studies … no serious work can be done in a country if the laws and rules aren't respected and if public order isn't assured … it is not up to the high school or college students to assume the power to steer the educational institutions.

Some students in secondary school and university organized groups like the \textit{Mouvement des Étudiants} (Students Movement), and the \textit{Comité de Salut Public} (Committee of Public Safety), posted lists naming the Tutsi students, who were threatened to leave.

Notably, some of the Hutu students in the \textit{Comité de Salut Public} became important actors in the Habyarimana régime, such as: Pasteur Bizimungu, who will become close to the president and will be named director of Electrogaz (Rwanda’s electricity company), but will break with Habyarimana after his brother is assassinated; Léon Mugesera, a future high-level functionary in Habyarimana’s MRND national party, is on trial for inciting genocide; and Ferdinand Nahimana, an historian who would become director of the RTLM (broadcasting station), and Habyarimana’s speech writer, will be sentenced to 30 years’ imprisonment for incitement to commit genocide and crimes against humanity.\textsuperscript{48}

In the same national university address, above, Habyarimana referred to the collapse of the Kayibanda regime:

All attentive observers have remarked for a long time that the former regime was completely out of steam. The power and the authority were dissipated in the bickering of an insensitive politics slow to understand. In all the echelons of government, intrigue, nepotism, and regionalism has caused gangrene to set into public activities. Thus the noble ideas of our revolution of 1959 and the acquisition

\textsuperscript{47} In Shimamungu, ibid: 75.

of our national independence had been betrayed. You must have in your memory several fresh examples of this situation. To mask your powerlessness and distress, this regime agitated ethnic conflicts and stirred up regional hate.  

Concerning Kayibanda’s involvement in the violence, some observers have suggested that he initiated the expulsions, and one White Father, “having witnessed the 1973 uprisings, . . . confessed that Kayibanda’s ‘racist’ ideology overcame his social justice ideals. ‘Kayibanda had lost his head.’ Because instructions were conveyed through the administration, they may have come from Kayibanda’s staff, who were called on by the Comités de Salut Public leaders, in the presence of Athanase Mbarubukeye, Executive Secretary of MDR-PARMEHUTU, Minister Anastase Makuza, who was in the same class at seminary with Kayibanda, Alexis Kanyarengwe, the Chief of Police, and an accomplice of Habyarimana, who would later turn against him, and was from Ruhengeri. The point is that Kayibanda, from all the reports, was aware of the underlying tensions, and the dangerous activities of the anti-Tutsi groups, and then did nothing to prevent or stop the violence until it had run its course. His party machinery was still enough in his control that three months later the National Assembly voted to let him run for a third term and,  

---

50 For example, Reyntjens, 1985: 502-03.
51 In Carney, op. cit.: 382, n 85, (attributable interview with author, May 2010).
52 Chrétien, 2003: 269.
53 Knowing this, and other damning examples of Kayibanda’s reign, one reads Decraene’s description of Kayibanda in his article in Le Monde (7 July 1973) with surprise at such political ignorance or purposeful whitewashing: “Although he was in power for 13 years, Kayibanda kept the life-style of a simple peasant. This uncomplicated and modest man, who did not like public appearances, felt most at ease in his village, to which he returned every evening, preferring it to the residential residence in Kigali. He lived there in a simple house with his only wife, who gave birth to their ten children and who, like the other village women, kept working on the land. He was a dedicated catholic and believed deeply in justice and equality. This democratically inclined president was never contested, and every Muhutu identified with him and was thankful to him for his courage during the monarchic times against the Batutsi regime.” (cited in Bizimana, 1989: 154).
additional, passed a constitutional amendment lengthening the presidential term of office, while the presidential age limit and the vice-presidential office were eliminated altogether. The Assembly rewarded its own by extending the term of its deputies. Presidential elections were to take place in September.

By the middle of 1973, several thoughts feature among Kayibanda’s bankrupt presidency:

- Kayibanda had started his early career as a lay Catholic committed to Christian values, and wedded to the concept that education was the cornerstone of society; his knowledge was largely theoretical after leaving seminary. Working within the world of Church organizations, especially at Kinyamateka as an essayist, he became a powerful rhetorician and organizer, which allowed him to effectively voice a platform for what became the Hutu Movement’s championing of the abolition of the Tutsi monarchy. This activity, become a cause, fit Kayibanda’s Christian zeal and he became very successful at propounding his new ‘mission’.

There are different kinds of knowledge appropriate to different contexts, as Sayer points out, and Kayibanda’s knowledge corresponded well with constructing himself as a figurehead for a ‘righteous’ goal, and it gave him an identity that was waiting to coalesce; in this way his selfhood and the Movement were inseparable.

- Kayibanda was unfamiliar with and, ultimately, incapable of controlling the reins of a nascent nation’s governmental struggles; he failed to promote laissez-faire, incorporate compromise, impose a strong and transparent direction, or to appoint and manage the most effective people at the most sensitive and important
positions—which necessarily means not only reaching outside regional cronies and relatives, but into the opposition—in order to be made aware of divergent ideas and endemic problems.

- Kayibanda, in one sense—and this should not be taken in any way as a parallel to German national socialism—made the same mistake that Hitler made: he allowed a racist ideology to corrupt statesmanship, to the detriment of the nation. By largely disenfranchising the Tutsi population, he deprived the workforce of a significant number of educated and experienced entrepreneurs and civil service personnel, in the short and long term. This hamstrung development and prevented a healthy and necessary interaction and competition among varied minds, which stunted and, even in many cases, prevented the free flow of ideas—economically, politically, and intellectually.

- Unlike the socio-economic milieu in West European territories before the Peace of Westphalia led to the concept of state sovereignty, in which a set of conditions existed that included sophisticated infrastructures regarding the law, systems of central government, reciprocal trade agreements, a developed middle class of merchants, writing, book-keeping, transportation, science, navigation, war-making, technological development, farming and animal husbandry, and medicine—all of which had been developing for many hundreds of years—none of the African territories that suddenly became sovereign states in the 1960s, as did Rwanda, had such a history of development, and, thus, had none of the established prerequisites for becoming a modern state as we have come to recognize it, especially an
immersion in trans-regional trade, which required a *lingua franca* and widely accepted and dependable systems of transaction. The great barrier to this, of course, was the predominantly self-serving nature of the leaders of the newly sovereign states, exemplified by military juntas, dictatorships, one-party rule, kleptocracies, and various attempts at tradition-based (even ‘tribal’) paternalistic ‘socialism’ under the rubric of republicanism\(^5\). President Kayibanda found himself the leader of a new country that was not prepared to be a sovereign nation, having none of its trappings, and surrounded by countries in the same situation. Moreover, the amount of time and money necessary to elevate Rwanda’s legal, economic, and educational systems, as well as its civil services (water, sewage, road-building, communications, drought control, medical care, and so forth), was not forthcoming because the entire country existed on a subsistence agricultural level, without functioning towns, or a network of roads, and severely hampered by being landlocked, as well as having a topography consisting primarily of high hills, which prevents using mechanized equipment and thereby large-scale agricultural production and the export of foodstuffs or raw materials like grains, legumes, cotton, hemp, sugar, or tobacco, for example. Coffee (and some tea) were export commodities that brought in revenue, but not a large enough volume of coffee could be produced to drive the economy, and its volatile world prices created havoc in Rwanda’s almost single-export trade.

\(^5\) Of the 46 first presidents in the newly independent states, 12 held office for more than 20 years, half held office for 14 years or longer, and 9 were assassinated, executed, put in prison, or had ‘accidents’.
• The instability of the four countries surrounding Rwanda, especially Burundi, with its own Tutsi-Hutu conflicts, and Uganda, with its turnover in leaders, especially the drastic rule of Idi Amin, greatly hampered Rwanda’s attempt at trade, because the export of its commodities were dependent on being trucked through Uganda to the port in Kenya, and because the export-import duties and tariffs on goods were blatantly arrogated by each country’s border and government officials throughout the chain of command, who demanded their cuts, and whose corrupt dealings bit deeply into profits and prevented normalization of trade, expansion, and discouraged start-up businesses.

• The “new republicanism” proclaimed by Kayibanda quickly dissolved into a one-party state consumed by regionalism, party factionalism, patronage, and a racist agenda. By 1973, it was effectively a failed state.

However, Kayibanda was just one person among the many agents that shaped and drove forward the Hutu Movement, resulting in independence and the formation of a new socio-political system. There were many facets to the man, as with any person, and among those were abilities and inabilities operating in proportion to the vast number of problems and contingencies he faced. He helped construct a system, as much as the structure forced him to meet its demands. In this regard, one of the most important things to keep in mind is what Lemarchand called the Thermidorian Syndrome. The word Thermidorian is taken from the French name for the eleventh month of the French Republican calendar used from 1793 to 1805, and 9 Thermidor, 1794, is the date of Robespierre’s fall, resulting from the reaction of moderates against him after the revolution. Thermidorian means a reaction
against the upheaval of change, as experienced in a revolution. This is, to some extent, what occurred in Rwanda after the dissolution of the monarchy and the installation of the MDR PARMEHUTU’s one-party government. People were rightly disappointed with Kayibanda’s new government, which had promised a significant change from the old patronage system, clientelism, and corruption, but had failed to make good on that promise. This is when system is overthrown and a new one put in place, but where the new system in many respects resembles the one it replaced, and thus becomes redundant. Reyntjens has made a good case for this happening in Rwanda:

Unity, concord, mutual support, confidence, co-operation, patriotism all have lost their meaning and have ceased to exist. These values have been replaced by condescension, hatred, egoism, antagonism, dishonesty, race for money, dissension and regionalism. The popular masses feel that their leaders have betrayed them when saying that the revolution of 1959 would free them from injustice. They realise now that this was merely a way of getting hold of functions; once these were occupied, injustice became worse than before. They are not afraid to say that the old system to invest chiefs was better than the present electoral system, the latter meaning in practice that meritorious people are debarred and those not worthy are nominated as candidates.55

Reyntjens goes on in detail about the similarities between the old and new administrations, but there must be, however, a strong word of caution against expecting the first government after independence to be able to overlay a republican mentality and a new set of behaviors onto a chiefdomship socio-political structure and culture which had been in place for hundreds of years. Kayibanda wasn’t a Mao Zedong, Pol Pot or Stalin, murdering and uprooting whole regions and cities of people in order to force an ideology on the country. He naively believed that, by sending cadres of highly educated Hutus into the countryside, he could accomplish, over time, a transformation among the

population to an awareness of the values of democracy. What he couldn’t grasp was how thoroughly the old, traditional socio-political cultural structure permeated every aspect of people’s lives, and that it wasn’t some superficial covering that could be thrown off like a blanket. The deep and complex relationships among chiefs, subchiefs and local ‘big men’, from the central court to the prefecture to the family hill, of course was not going to disappear just because a president in Gitarama wished it so. The old Chinese saying, “When the king is far away, I am the king”, is particularly apt in the Rwandan case; socio-political structures cannot be changed overnight, and local relationships survive.

But the Thermidorian Syndrome cannot be universally applied across strongly dissimilar socio-political economic cultures. What was true for post-revolutionary France at the very end of the eighteenth century, in the era of the Enlightenment and the industrial revolution, is not true for twentieth-century undeveloped Rwanda, where 95% of the people were subsistence farmers whose technological tools were limited to the machete and the hoe; not that there was a Thermidorian Syndrome at work in the country, but that the revolution and its promises never reached the peasant-farmer to begin with. Kayibanda promised them that, as a result of their vote to rid the country of the Tutsi monarchy, their lives would be better, because they would be more empowered.56 However, removing most of the Tutsi elite only removed people, it didn’t remove the structural elements of

56 “Neither patterns of asset distribution nor institutional conditions in rural areas are accidental. Indeed, they each derive from the broader relationships between politics, economy, and society that drive and undergird the overall patterns of rural development”(Bebbington et al., 2006, cited in Ansoms, 2008: 10). And “The élite-peasant relationship in Rwanda is rooted within various layers of identity. Though historic research has focused principally upon ethnicity, other factors (e.g. regional background, kin, social class, occupation, gender, etc.) have influenced these identities. . . . three main cleavages . . . undergird Rwanda’s political economy: ethnicity, regional background and the rural-urban gap” (Ansoms, ibid). [my italics].
bureaucratic patronage and rent-seeking, which filled up its vacant posts immediately with other people. The king was far away, the locals were king. There were no officials on the ground in every commune in order to enforce democratic norms of behavior, and since democracy had never before existed, there were no automatic mechanisms to give it birth. The continuation of structural elements was *entropic*, not Thermidorian.

One of the most important things in understanding Kayibanda’s and MDR PARMDHUTU’s inability to create an instant democratic state (a naive notion) was that the 1959 revolution was not a peasant revolution, not a people’s movement to achieve an idea that they had embraced and were primed to carry out at independence, but a revolution from above, orchestrated by a small number of évolutés who were able to exploit the unequal social conditions suffered by the Hutu. As Freire points out, when explaining closed society and the democratic experience (in his case, Brazil, but which equally applies to Rwanda), “Lack of democratic experience is a major obstacle to democratization.”

“Mind in all its manifestations is never only what it is, but also what it was . . .” That is, the Hutu masses had been primed by the Hutu évolutés (who gave voice to the peasant-farmers’ sense of inequality, etc.) to vote the monarchy out, but they were absolutely unprepared to imagine the next step after independence, 60% of them still illiterate and never having experienced democracy; the new order conceived of by the évolutés had a certain immediate force, or reality, but it was only a partial overlay on past social structures that made up the *habitus* of the masses. Only major economic changes can affect the structural system which maintains the closed traditional society and prevents transition.

---

57 Freire, 2013: 19.
58 Barbu, 1956: 9, cited in Freire, ibid.
That is, the economic changes are tied to practice, which means transformation of the environment; it is not a matter of rhetoric instituting change by its single application, as the ‘school teacher’ in Kayibanda thought was possible, by sending cadres of Hutu évolués into the hinterlands to ‘instruct’ the masses, because it is “not a question of knowledge developing autonomously first and then (perhaps) being applied in a practical context later: knowledge and practice are tied from the start.”

It is relatively easy to look at Rwanda after independence, and to observe that the new government’s bureaucrats were reproducing many of the governing elements of the Mwamiship, but that does not explain how that happened. In fact, those elements never disappeared, so it was not a matter of them being (re)produced but of being obscured by government rhetoric that overlay premises impossible to enact. This is very different from, say, the American Revolution, which was an act by a people in a developed and sophisticated socio-economic system claiming that system for their own, rather than being governed by a metropole that no longer represented them; nothing ‘new’ or foreign was created or put in place of the system they had developed and were used to; they were the system, and the only thing that changed was the connection with England. This is what Freire means when he talks about the “absence of the preconditions for the development of participatory behavior by which we might have constructed our society ‘with our own

59 Sayer, op. cit.: 27.
60 This ‘automatic’ process was brought home to me when I was living in a lower-class apartment building in southern India in 1990. The 17-year-old illiterate servant/cook was bound to work for many years in order to pay off her father’s loan debt to the landlord. She always appeared cheerful, quiet, and a bit shy, until one day the landlord and his family went away on vacation, then she almost immediately assumed an air of imperiousness, becoming unfriendly and outspoken; she had become the landlord.
hands”61—the democratic social structure in the American colonies had been constructed “by their own hands”, rather than having been left out of the experience. Barbu elaborates on this necessary element:

In order to make their society “by their hand” the members of a group have to possess considerable experience in, and knowledge of, public administration. They need also certain institutions which allow them to take a share in the making of their society. But they need something more than this; they need a specific frame of mind, that is, certain experiences, attitudes, prejudices and beliefs shared by them all, or by a large majority.62

The vast majority of Rwandans, under the power of the Mwamiship, and for most of colonization until the middle ‘50s, lived under and adapted to conditions hostile to the acquisition of democratic experience.

This habit of submission led men to adapt and adjust to their circumstances, instead of seeking to integrate themselves with reality. Integration, the behavior characteristic of flexibly democratic regimes, requires a maximum capacity for critical thought. In contrast, the adapted man, neither dialoguing nor participating, accommodates to condition imposed upon him and thereby acquires an authoritarian and a critical frame of mind. . . . Without dialogue, self-government cannot exist.63

By contrast, the agrarian communities in Europe, as Costa says, “evolved under a regime of political experience”.64 Whereas the Rwandan masses’ center of gravity in public and private life was situated in external power and authority. If Belgium had rigorously applied human and financial resources for forty years to the development of a democratic socio-political framework in Rwanda, the country might very well have stood a chance of edging into independence with manageable disorder, compared to the

---

61 Freire, ibid.
62 Barbu, op. cit.: 13, in Freire, ibid: 25.
disarray and conflict resulting from the seismic shift they actually encountered, unprepared.

In all colonized African territories there was this same disinterest in the welfare of the autochthonous peoples by the colonizing administration, but what made Rwanda’s case especially dangerous was the Belgian decision to draw up national ID cards (indangamuntu) that featured the ethnle of the bearer. Everyone knew, more or less, who was a Tutsi, Hutu, or Twa, before the introduction of ID cards, so that the ID’s ethnle designation simply put that knowledge in written form. Yet, before the ID cards, those three identities were not immutable, but had a certain flexibility, particularly in different regions of the territory. Suddenly, having one’s ethnle made permanent focused the government administration’s awareness on identities rather than on ‘persons’ and their ability; this was an open door to discrimination—school administrators, almost all of whom were Tutsi, could easily look at student applications and pick only Tutsis until they had exhausted the number of positions available; the same blatant discriminatory practices operated throughout public service jobs.

Kayibanda (along with the other signatories) deserves severe criticism for requesting the continuance of the ID card’s ethnle inclusion in the Bahutu Manifesto as a means by which to constantly maintain surveillance on Tutsis as agents of hidden and ‘subversive’ preferential practices, and for maintaining this discriminatory ID card and surveillance

---

65 Mme. Habyarimana recounts the following about ID cards: “However, about this Hutu/Tutsi identity card issues, this was an order that started way far before the 1959 revolution when the Tutsi Kings were so particular about this divisive identification. I remember I was asked to produce my identity card to prove that I was either a Hutu or Tutsi before I was admitted into Ecole Sociale School de Karubanda. I can recall the Tutsi King’s Queen Gicanda used to visit our school” (personal communication).
through his presidency.

There was probably no single carryover from the colonial administration to the new republic that was more important, more divisive, or more destructive (both in the short and long run) than this permanent *ethnie cum* race policy and mindset, and the fact that Habyarimana, in turn, continued it in law is more than a little troublesome for those who insist he was a ‘friend’ of the Tutsis. (An alternative view would be that Habyarimana was impotent on important matters throughout his reign, submitting to the threats and demands of power holders either in his own party or in opposition parties, and there seems to be evidence that he was something of a shadow figure in the months before his death).

However, as destructive as the *ethnie* mindset and policies were, within the destructive dynamics was also the conflict between regions (which would also continue through Habyarimana’s reign), and between ‘class’; a *rentier*\(^{66}\) class had developed, with interests in coffee trade, and which was connected to the organs of political power.\(^{67}\) Additionally, as Clay *et al* point out,

> The inheritance and accumulation of landholdings explain much, but not all of the income inequalities observed among farm households in Rwanda. . . . Households that have managed to secure both land resources and the skills necessary to participate in the non-farm sector are in an exceptional position to generate higher incomes and to accumulate wealth. Households of this type also tend to use their resources to their fullest advantage; by working off the farm themselves and hiring large amounts of farm labor, they maximize income from farm production. At the other extreme, are the near-landless farm householders with little formal education and no training for alternative employment.\(^{68}\)

---

66 Unearned revenue.
Moreover, off-farm employment income was too small a percentage of total income to have a real impact on the reduction of economic inequality.

The Coup d’État of 1973

On the 1st of July, 1973, at the annual festivities celebrating independence, Kayibanda was rudely interrupted during a speech he was giving. Ribanje, from the Ministry of Information, had grabbed the microphone and shouted “Leave office. We are tired of you!” while at the same time the officer second in command of the national guard, Lt. Col. Kanyarengwe, got up and left. Habyarimana sat passively. Kayibanda continued,

I wish a very happy celebration to all you citizens . . . and that no one comes to sow discord among you, nor look for ways to divide you; look at how many there are of you and tell me why you are looking for division into factions. . . . Watch over the preservation of peace among you. As for all that was said, why should I hush it up if you yourselves say it? You want to make a coup d’état! Go ahead, do it! Go ahead!

This is not the optimistic Kayibanda writing before and, in the few years after, independence, but a weary president who said after the coup, “To the twelve articles which compose the creed of the Christian, . . . it would be necessary to add to it a thirteenth: ‘I believe in the unreliability of the people,’” a sentiment that expressed his feeling of betrayal by the very ones whom he honestly thought had believed in him as much as he had been concerned for them. To the end he had not been able to step out from

69 Shimamungu, op. cit.: 12-13
71 “Our own life is the instrument with which we experiment with the truth” (Thic Nhat Hanh).
under his Christian bell jar and take stock of the socio-political and economic realities in all their conflictual self-interests and contradictions. It was not just that he rejected the ‘messiness’ of democratic wrangling, but that neither he nor his colleagues ever seriously questioned how enormously impossible it might be to knock down the entire mwamiship system from top to bottom, permeating every aspect of society, and replace it with a completely new system, in many ways simply antithetical to the existing one. Impossible because democracy depends upon so many structural elements that did not exist in Rwanda, and which take a very long time to germinate, grow and form the foundation for democratic processes. One can’t simply walk out the door of their house one day and into a democracy—the house itself, and everything in it, has to be an integral part of it. Kayibanda and his ‘educated’ confrères were victims of an intellectual and political abstraction that had no foot on the ground: they did not understand the essential nature of work.

As Sayer\(^{73}\) has observed, “work is the most transformative relationship between people and nature.” And the essential aspect of work, that the évolués never ‘got’, was that work is “both a material process and a conscious one: it cannot be reduced either to pure physical behavior or passive contemplation.” They were stuck in national and regional political infighting instead of trying to solve the practical problem of the transformation of work, by which the peasant-farmer masses could free themselves from the old exploitative and repressive system and perform, or try, any kind of work they could, entrepreneurial or otherwise, without being exploited and hampered. Prime examples were: the

\(^{73}\) Sayer, op. cit.: 21-22.
unavailability of small loans for farmers to increase their land holdings, while moneyed officials and successful businessmen bought up valuable acreage; and the state mandate for planting coffee, even though it was more profitable for farmers to grow cash crops for local sales; and allowing the Catholic Church to repress birth control negatively affected the economy because of the lack of land and the increase in the population; migration was extremely limited and the constant division of farmers’ already insufficient plots into even smaller ones, as they had to provide land for their sons when they married, was creating a Malthusian-like trap. Camus has said that “all modern revolutions have ended in a reinforcement of the power of the State”, but in the Rwandan case there was rather the continuation of state power, just under a different rubric. Kayibanda, in the ‘50s, did argue for

the irreducible need to truly open up lines of communication-and to recognize the mutual dependence-between peasants and political elites, and that the burden for such initiatives lay with the elites. Such an approach was important not only to combat the growing political hegemony of an increasingly closed political class but also to protect leaders from being implicated as accomplices of the oppressive system.74

But this notion, if say applied to keeping in office all the Nazi bureaucrats, from city councils to mayors and regional governors, after WWII, then sending around college educated youths to ‘instruct’ those bureaucrats in the lessons of democracy: how effective would communication be in changing structural relationships, and how much of the old system would carry over? Actually, success was much more achievable in Germany than in Rwanda because of the high degree of development in all areas of the country, especially in law. Promulgating democratic principles in coordination with new laws (with

74 Newbury, Catherine and David, 1994: 54.
the help of the media, schools, a responsible police and court system, etc.) was not an overwhelming project, especially since a knowledge of modern forms of government, and the philosophy of government was well established and the infrastructure for attaining democracy was readily at hand. Again, it is a question of how ‘work’ had transformed a country (Germany, in this instance) over many hundreds of years, with invaluable input derived from intermittent but continuous war (and its attendant economic and technological developments) and trade, into a complex system of structures that were capable of and ready for an idea like democracy, as opposed to a country like Rwanda, whose ‘work’ history had not progressed in technological and infrastructural development to the point of being ready to implement democracy: a country without towns (the capital, of 25,000 people, has five paved streets), no large commercial agricultural regions with private ownership, no large commercial enterprises, and no economic system capable of creating new jobs to employ the mass of workers overpopulating the hills, or to develop import/export currency, Rwanda has remained dependent on foreign aid simply to continue necessary public services. Such continued dependency does not encourage the prospects of democracy, because endemic poverty does not fund prosperity.

Still, and this is a point purposefully repeated in these pages: the changes wrought by the Belgian administration, by the Church, by the fall of the monarchy, and by independence and a new constitution, set Rwanda on a new and irreversible course that would inevitably power the country away from traditional forms of socio-political and economic structures and behaviors, so that, even though Kayibanda’s First Republic could not transform most of the existing structures in its short decade of rule, it championed such
change, and that effort should be, in the large historical sense, its most positive legacy, while keeping in mind that the persecution of the Tutsis is a serious stain on that legacy, and one that Habyarimana could have made an effort to correct during his twenty years in office, but didn’t.

On 5 July 1973 the presidency of President Kayibanda came to an abrupt end after a coup d’état performed by Defence Minister and General of the Army, Habyarimana. Kayibanda had harbored a strong distrust of the northern-dominated military, and rumors of a coup had circulated; officers were fed up with the president’s meddling with the army, especially his combining it with the national police, with his regional favoritism, and with the economic and social stagnation (3.5 million people with only 85,000 steady jobs). The military had begun to sometimes disobey him. When Kayibanda removed some key officers from government positions, Habyarimana voiced his concern and Kayibanda reportedly answered,

Listen, Habyarimana, you’re a hard worker, you rush along and think everyone is standing behind you to cover your back. No! You’d better look out. Not everyone shares your ideas. You want to defend your men, but do you think that everyone, in return, supports you?

75 “Habyarimana, . . . organized the 1973 coup; he had accused Kayibanda of not being able to resolve the ‘ethnic problem’” (Scherrer, op. cit.: 130-31, n 11).
76 Aloys Nsekalije, one of the deposed officers, whom Habyarimana defended, graduated with Habyarimana in the first class from Officer Training School, held different posts in Habyarimana’s administration, including Foreign Affairs Minister, but later broke with Habyarimana over ideology. Nsekalije, in what would appear to be an overt show of support for one-party dictatorships, wrote a small book titled Kim Il Sung, Defender of Chajusong (Foreign Languages Publishing House, Pyongyang, Korea, 1984). Chajusong was Kim Il Sung’s philosophy of social communism. In Nsekalije’s book it is never precisely spelled out, but is effusively praised in a hazy polemic. It is hard to discern whether Nsekalije wrote this paean with the aim of getting aid from North Korea, or whether he actually thought Chajusong had some possible relevance to Rwanda.
77 In Bararengana “Combined Response” file: “As far as I know, the relations between Habyarimana and Kayibanda were good, as was the relation between their two families. Kayibanda and his wife were even the godparents to one of Habyarimana’s children. Habyarimana’s relation to Kayibanda was of an officer to the head of state—of service to the nation under the authority of the head of state, to whom he owed allegiance. What I heard is that the period which preceded 5 July 1973 was marked by an ethnic and regional climate more or less unhealthy. Tutsis were unwelcome in some jobs. There also existed a tension between the “North” and the “South” of Rwanda. In spite of all that, Habyarimana kept his allegiance to the head of state.”
It appears that Kayibanda never gave sufficient thought or attention to the role of the military in a republican government, especially since the military in almost every other new African country south of the Sahara acted as a support for dictatorships, plus the fact that the military is non-democratic in nature. However, it is not just the government structure in democracies that safeguards against military takeovers, it is equally necessary that the military personnel hold democratic beliefs. Here, we are again faced with the problem of set structures; because the military personnel were not inculcated with democratic beliefs, this—along with the military not being a democratic structure—made it doubly difficult for Kayibanda to expect the army to be a ‘partner’ in developing republicanism in the new state. Additionally, the army mindset was one of discipline formed around respect for and obedience to rules. When Kayibanda abrogated government rules, when he did not govern properly, this violated established codes of procedure, which was particularly unacceptable to the philosophy drummed into the military mind.

Habyarimana was politician enough to adopt a certain laissez-faire attitude toward relations with the head of state, but he could only defend Kayibanda to the point where he could no longer risk losing command over his officers. Immediate events would force him to lead his officers into action.

On the fourth of July, 1973, General Habyarimana had gone by himself to his home town, in Gisenyi Prefecture, to arrange the marriage in August of his brother. 78 When he returned home in the evening, his wife, Agathe, informed him that Kayibanda had been

---

78 This narrative of the coup is taken from Agathe Kanziga’s recounting of it to Shimamungu, op. cit.: 15-22.
looking for him. Tired from the trip, and it being late, Habyarimana decided to eat and then
go to bed. Emissaries from the president continued to arrive, asking to see the general, but
were turned away, until a trusted army captain came with the message that Kayibanda was
insistent on seeing Habyarimana. The general got dressed and drove off alone to the
president’s home. He was wary of the situation, though, when he arrived, and parked in
such a way that he could leave quickly, if needed. As he approached the house, Jean
Birara, governor of the National Bank of Rwanda, was leaving. Birara, it was known, was
under suspicion of helping foment a coup, so Habyarimana was put on alert. Before
entering, Habyarimana caught sight of a group of men close to the president, who, when
they saw the general, quickly disappeared. When Habyarimana entered the house,
Kayibanda thrust some papers before him demanding Habyarimana explain his connection
to their contents—they were political tracts. Kayibanda left the room several times to
confer with his cohorts, only to return and hurl new accusations at the general. The papers
were damning enough\(^9\) that Habyarimana knew he would likely face prison or execution.
It was then that he resorted to the idea of an immediate coup, as a means of survival,
preeventing any political considerations. When Kayibanda left again to talk with his
colleagues, Habyarimana decided to make a run for it, knocking aside a man guarding the
doors, who shot at the general as he sped off in the car. After Habyarimana returned home,
he called Captain Gasake to meet him at army headquarters, then he and Captain Sagatwa\(^8\)
left. Soldiers were called together to arrest Kayibanda (who had remained at his home),

\(^{9}\) “A pamphlet was shown to him in which important people from the North complained of things in Kayibanda’s
government they had rejected. Also presented to him had been a list of people to eliminate” Filip Reyntjens (1985),
cited in Shimamungu, op. cit.: 17.

\(^{8}\) Secretary to Habyarimana and a relative of his wife, Agathe.
and his colleagues who had been at the house (but had gone together to he home of the
Minister of Youth and Sports, André Bizimana). Officers in Habyarimana’s high command
of the national guard immediately met to decide about taking over the government. The
decision was made to drop leaflets by helicopter into all military camps in order to inform
all the troops that the general had instigated a coup d’état, and to reassure them he was in
control of the situation.

Kayibanda was relegated to house arrest, at his home in Ruhengeri prefecture.
While he was under arrest, his wife died, then he was moved to his house in Gitarama
Prefecture. A year later, on 29 June 1974, he was condemned to death, but his sentence
was commuted a month later to permanent house arrest. Paternostre de Mairieu described
the president’s death at home as follows,

In the morning of December 14th at 9:30 am, [president Kayibanda] complained
about pains in the region of his heart; and his son, Pio, had to notify the guard
room, which called for a doctor from Kabgayi hospital. This doctor, who had never
attended the president, arrived about 7 pm and, during a fast visit (about ten
minutes), found Kayibanda “lucid, smiling, and pleasant”, with the appearance of a
man in good health. And though Kayibanda had nothing to say, the doctor noticed
an abdominal affection, that Kayibanda “was just slightly unwell”, that he was
not seriously ill, and was content with prescribing some medicines, which were
brought by the hospital’s pharmacy. At night however, the malady started again
and, at 4:00 in the morning, President Kayibanda expired ... it was December 15th,
1976.

81 Habyarimana later confirmed to the Belgian chief of mission that the decision had been taken by the head of the
national guard. See Shimamungu, ibid: 22.
82 This condensed narrative, taken from Agathe Kanziga’s recounting to Shimamungu, is the only testimony to the
events of the 4-5 July coup, and if true gives valuable insight into the deteriorated relationship between Habyarimana
and Kayibanda.
83 Interview of Dr. Ben Dedale by Karwera Mutwe, November 1992.
84 Paternostre, op. cit.: 235.
Kayibanda’s cohorts, arrested at the same time, were executed without being tried, their families untold of their fates. It has been claimed they were brutally tortured. Days after the coup, Habyarimana, in an interview with Le Soir, affirmed that it had not been premeditated:

I never planned the coup d’état. For a long time I tried my best to inform the president, who was my superior, about the real reasons behind the persistent tension . . . Often, he didn’t listen. I think that the members of his entourage had convinced him that I wasn’t to be trusted . . . We have the highest esteem for Kayibanda . . . I had the opportunity to work with him . . . A man of integrity. But having worked so hard for our country, he was worn out. Some people had profited off of him. To use him for dishonest purposes . . . And, a handful of incompetent lower-level bureaucrats fed their ideas to the president, who was no longer able to resist their machinations.

On the 5th of July, all activities of MDR PARMEHUTU were suspended. The First Republic was dead, long live the First (Second) Republic; an old (new) era had begun.

---

86 Le Soir, 10 juillet 1973, cited in Decraene, 1974: 68.
Photos of Kayibanda

As a young man. Early 1950s.

Grand Séminaire, Nyakibanda, where both presidents were educated
(photo Vivant Univers)

With wife, 1958.
Photo: Paternostre de la Mairieu

Photo: Paternostre de la Mairieu.

With Parmehutu leaders (l. to r.) M.V. Kayuku, Kayibanda, D. Mbonyumutwa, B. Bicamumpaka, 1961
Photo: Infor Rwanda.

Queen Fabiola and Mrs. Kayibanda, each carrying a Rwandan baby on their backs. At right are Mrs. Bagaragaza and King Baudouin. Early 1960s.
Photo: Paternostre de la Mairieu

Meeting with JFK and his advisors, Sept. 1962.
Photo: Kennedy Library and Museum
At a ceremony for Habyarimana’s promotion to general, 1 April 1970.
Photo: flickr.com.

Summit of eastern and central African leaders, in Kampala, Uganda, December 1967. Pictured are the first or early presidents of newly-formed States, many of whom would become important in African history. Kayibanda is in front row, far left. Mobutu is on far right. The group represents the vagaries of rule: six would be deposed, three would define corruption and ruthlessness. Jomo Kenyatta and Haile Selassie (side by side, front row center) as well as Julius Nyerere (back row, third from left), would become well-known internationally.
Photo: Ibrahim Sh.Ahmd

Reviewing the First Officers Training School Graduates, 1961, Col. Logiest behind. Habyarimana is at right, with gun.
Photo: Paternostre de la Mairieu.

Outside Kabgayi Cathedral, with Archbishop Perraudin, 1963.
Photo: Paternostre de la Mairieu.

At a ceremony for Habyarimana’s promotion to general, 1 April 1970.
Photo: flickr.com.

On cover of November 1991 issue of Kangura. Title reads “Tutsi: Race of God”, and text to the left reads “Which weapons are we going to use to beat the cockroaches for good?”
Photos of Habyarimana

When a student at Lovanium University, 1959

Officers Training Cadet, c.1960
Photo: Source unknown

After Graduating Officers Training School, c.1962
Photo: Source unknown

Wedding, 17 August 1963
Photo: Shimamungu, 2004

1973 Coup Officers
Photo: Source unknown
An “animation” performance, late 1980s.
Photo: Shimamungu, 2005.

With Prime Minister Nsengiyaremye (MDR), and Defense Minister Gasana (MRND), c. 1991-92.
Photo: Shimamungu, 2005.

First multiparty government, 30 December 1991, with Prime Minister Nsanzimana.
Photo: Shimamungu, 2005.
Source: Shimamungu, 2005.

With FAR troops during the war with RPF
Photo: Source unknown

With Mobutu, late 1980s.
Photo: Source unknown

With Mitterrand, late 1980s
Photo: Source unknown
Photos of the Interahamwe, RPF, and Paul Kagame

French troops training Interahamwe 1993-94
   Photo: source unknown

Kagame Training at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, U.S.
   1990
   Photo: source unknown

Kagame with RPF troops, c. 1994
   Photo: Source unknown
PART FOUR A: HABYARIMANA AND THE 2nd REPUBLIC;
THE FIRST PERIOD (1973-75)

CHAPTER 11

FOLLOWING THE COUP D’ÉTAT: THE CPUN

Following the Coup d’État: the CPUN

Habyarimana’s twenty-year presidency can be divided into three recognizable periods: 1973-75 / 1975-90 / 1990-94.

• The first period starts after the coup d’état, with his setting up a temporary government named the Committee for Peace and National Unity (CPUN), composed entirely of military personnel, throughout the country, and ends with the creation of the National Revolutionary Movement for Development\(^1\) (MRND) in 1975. This period is marked by the effort to examine what kind of government the coup leaders, headed by Habyarima, wanted.

• The second period occupies a fifteen-year period when the new, MRND single-party government attempts to tackle the demands of running a still-nascent country until, forced by serious economic shortfalls, and land shortages and unequal allocation (the result of poorly-conceived and failed programs, mismanagement, and corruption) and mounting pressure from opposition groups and foreign aid donors, it must accept multipartyism and a more open, democratic system.

• The third period, 1990 to 1994, is marked completely by the invasion of the country by

\(^1\) Mouvement Révolutionnaire pour le Développement.
the Tutsi rebel army (the RPF), and the Rwandan government’s attempt to broker a peace accord. The emergence of new political parties and the ensuing jockeying for power divide the government and prevent a unified response to the invasion and the RPF’s demands, and the wartime four-year period ends with Habyarimana’s assassination, followed by the onslaught of genocide.

Habyarimana inherited a fledgling country which was not yet a nation-state; it couldn’t support itself without foreign assistance. And the demographic pressure on the land was already becoming severe enough that Habyarimana and his government were forced, from the beginning and through his entire twenty-year presidency, into a reactionary posture; they had to ceaselessly give attention to the basic, and overriding pressure of finding ways to feed the people while, at the same time, trying to curb population growth which, if allowed to continue unabated, would result in regular starvation of large numbers of citizens. The social reaction against the government that would be caused by such a situation was not difficult to vision.

Few of the structural characteristics of the Habyarimana regime distinguished it from its predecessor.² Table 4 gives an abbreviated comparison between Kayibanda’s and Habyarimana’s presidencies.

² “... ministerial cabinet positions were distributed among clans, ... [and] ceremonies adopted the organization and dances of the old regime” (Lemarchand, 1970: 268, 265). The overlay of Kayibanda’s republican trappings tends to obscure the actual continuity in the operation of power before and after independence, exemplified by Habyarimana’s regime.
The pre-independence Belgian Trust Administration introduced modern agricultural techniques and production, and an intensification of land development and use, which remained the core economic approach of the First and Second Republics, as can be seen in Kayibanda’s “Eight points”, and Habyarimana’s “Five objectives”. Intensified land use, reforestation and population control would increasingly force themselves upon

Table 4. Comparison of First and Second Republic Primary Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kayibanda’s <em>Plan Intérimaire d’Urgence</em> for 1966-70 (to tackle was the economic pressure caused by rapid population growth)</th>
<th>Habyarimana’s Development Plan applied after 1977 (giving priority to the agricultural sector and aiming for the achievement of food self-sufficiency)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eight points to cope with the problem:</td>
<td>Five objectives of the program:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• land preservation,</td>
<td>• prioritization of measures about food crops and livestock,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• general improvement of the yield,</td>
<td>• regional optimization of production,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• amelioration of cattle management,</td>
<td>• intensification of food exchange with neighboring countries,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• more rational use of banana plantations,</td>
<td>• alleviation of the dependence on food aid,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• development of new land,</td>
<td>• promotion of other parallel measures such as the diffusion of information about nutrition and health care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• promotion of industrial crops,</td>
<td>Four courses of action to achieve these objectives:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• reform of the economic structure by developing the service and processing industries, and</td>
<td>• increased productivity and diversification of food crops and livestock,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• alleviation of population pressure by migration.</td>
<td>• population control,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71.7% of the funding for this program was required from foreign sources; 40% of the internal funding was to be covered by Rwandan peasants without payment.</td>
<td>• improved storage and processing, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• organization of food marketing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As for the measures directly related to food production, the program illustrates the following actions: promoting use of modern agricultural inputs; optimal use of the land; strengthening the production-supporting infrastructure such as education and agricultural finance; promoting auxiliary action such as apiculture and fisheries.

Habyarimana’s government’s primary concerns as the demographics changed. Though the core socio-economic and cultural structures didn’t change significantly from the First through the Second Republic, Habyarimana had the opportunity to engage in a wider reach, both within Africa and on the international stage, partly because Kayibanda’s government had established an operative foothold, and because external relations were becoming (or had become) a necessity: Rwanda was now counted among the world’s nation-states, which demanded attention to and participation in diverse diplomatic relationships, opening and maintaining consular offices abroad, and hosting and attending conferences; the economic viability of the country depended on the laissez-faire business of export-import; and as begun in Kayibanda’s presidency, in his dependence on Belgian support—carried over from the colonial period—foreign aid had become a necessity for the very survival of the nascent State, which was still woefully unable to support itself. A limited number of businessmen (including Tutsi) orbited around the coffee and tea export industry set up by the Belgians, and gathered in proximity to new projects made possible through foreign funding and support (a concrete plant, hydroelectric installations, telecommunications, bridges, roads, etc.), especially from socialist countries, such as China and North Korea, though France increasingly became a significant donor.

If the Habyarimana family’s account of the events in the evening that precipitated the coup are true, it would mean that Kayibanda had discovered Habyarimana’s

---

3 See Bonaventure (2012: Chapter VII, Section 33), who posits that Théoneste Lizinde recommended the coup, Lt.-Col. Alexis Kanyarengwe crafted it, Aloys Nsekalije supported the “shy and desperate person Juvenal Habyarimana” the night of the coup, and that Habyarimana, thanklessly spurned those involved. Bonaventure is almost virulently damning of Habyarimana, portraying him as a ruthless akazu “playing with the lives of the Rwandan people”. As it pertains with several Rwandan writers on Habyarimana, the tone of the texts falls too closely into a category of personal diatribe, attacking the person of the subject, and clearly following an agenda, making it difficult to ascertain
involvement in planning an overthrow of the government and, after consultation with close advisors, was going to arrest the major-general. There are no available details concerning how long the military had been considering unseating Kayibanda, but certainly before the 1st of July speech, four days before the coup, when he shouted at the crowd during his speech, “You want to make a coup d’état! Go ahead, do it!” And, although among the officers resentment against Kayibanda had been simmering for many months, it is impossible to discern how much thought Habyarimana might have given to becoming president, but it appears he was prematurely caught out by Kayibanda and had to hastily unseat the president in order to save his own life. Thus, rather unprepared, he found himself in the seat of power, over a government made up of and controlled largely by men from the central-south area, who were no friends of Habyarimana and his circle of acquaintances and supporters from the north. He essentially had little choice but to dissolve this antagonistic government and place his trusted officers in positions of authority.

The day after the coup, a military government, the Committee for Peace and National Unity (CPUN), was set up, consisting of Habyarimana and fellow officers who had graduated from the Officer’s School.4 Habyarimana and the CPUN promptly instituted martial law, dissolved the National Assembly, and shelved the Constitution. Habyarimana already had complete control, and being named president was but a formality, and regional favoritism, the big criticism of Kayibanda’s regime, was already in force.

---

what is objective or true in the text. As well, the account of the events surrounding the night of the coup given by the Habyarimana family must be taken with a grain of salt, and remains open to disagreement or falsification. Worth noting, however, is that in both Bonaventure’s and the Habyarimana family’s accounts, Habyarimana is a relatively less-in-charge actor in the coup compared to Lizinde, Kanyarengwe, and Nsekalije, for example.

4 The CPUN was headed by Habyarimana, his Interior Minister, Alexis Kanyarengwe, and nine army majors. The cabinet consisted of eight civilians and four army officers.
Habyarimana controlled the chain of command of all the security services as chief of staff of the army and the gendarmerie, as well as of the intelligence service. Recruitment for the positions of commanders of units and for the Military Academy were exclusively reserved for Gisenyi, in particular his Bushiru native region, and almost totally excluded the Batutsi and Bahutu from the south.\(^5\)

Additionally, the CPUN suspended Kayibanda’s recently instituted National Office of Trade (ONACO), which enjoyed an import-export trade monopoly. It appears the CPUN objected to the organization, believing it communist.\(^6\) This is particularly odd in light of Habyarimana’s closest advisor, Nsekalije, having such admiration for North Korea’s Kim Il Sung, and Habyarimana reaching out to China (and other communist countries) for considerable assistance, early on and over the years, and mentioning in interviews that he followed no one particular political platform but was concerned with fashioning one that fit Rwanda. This was more than a little disingenuous since he adopted most everything from Kayibanda’s government structure. And it is curious that Habyarimana would make the same mistake as his predecessor, setting up a dangerous opposition by excluding regional power holders.

\(^{5}\) Gatwa, 2005: 119. Gatwa also believes that Habyarimana inherited the ethnicization of the army from its Belgian initiators\(^7\) (ibid).

\(^{6}\) Reyntjens, *Pouvoir et droit*, p. 505.
Each préfecture is named after the town that serves as its administrative center, and is supervised by a prefect, appointed by the president. The prefect has the power to discharge the burgomaster or any council member.

The commune burgomaster was the chairman of the MRND and influenced people’s lives in every aspect, from mediating conflicts over property, to hiring and firing commune staff (including the communal policemen who were at the burgomasters' command), to finding places in secondary school. The burgomaster was the ultimate authority at the local level, and each was appointed and could be removed by the President personally. Each commune submitted frequent reports of births, deaths, and movements in and out, while each burgomaster sent information to agents of the government's pervasive secret service about any strangers seen in his district.” (Des Forges, 1999: 41-42). It was also the burgomaster who was in charge of the weekly planning and implementation of Umuganda (though it was the cellules and hill groups that were the agencies for the actual implementation of Umuganda), and for picking special dance tropes for the animations.

Communes were designated “nodules of development”. Authorities were called on to “seek funding from external donors for local development projects and to generate enthusiasm among rural producers for a new government program of agricultural intensification” (Newbury, C., 1992a: 195)

Though there were de jure elected councillors at the Sector, Cell, and Colline level, they essentially carried out the burgomaster’s wishes. “The cell had an elected committee of five persons, headed by a responsable(cell head), who were charged more with executing orders from above than with representing the views from below. That small part of the population employed in urban salaried jobs participated in the party at their place of work, where the work unit was also a party cell.” (Des Forges, ibid).

“Collines made up the country’s main geographic and social points of reference and, at every moment, each was visibly rife with centrally-appointed administrators, chiefs, security agents, policemen, and local party cadres of all kinds” (OAU, Chap 4). The grass-roots cells, and the nyumbakumi, were introduced in the 1970s, purported to have been introduced from Habyarimana’s admiration for the Stalinist system (Scherrer, 2001: 108).
Habyarimana was no intellectual or ideologue; by CPUN continuing, relatively unchanged, the fundamental structure of Kayibanda’s government, it is clear that the coup d’état was not planned by the major-general as a strategy to implement a personal, well-considered blueprint for responsible government, but was rather a simple and direct response to Kayibanda’s incompetence as a leader. Losing control of the government may have been, for the military, as unacceptable as an officer losing control of his men. Most military coups have occurred as just such a response, in order to restore a certain sense of order, usually as a result of gross corruption and extrajudicial crimes carried out by dictatorships and one-party regimes, whose power holders can only be dislodged by the armed forces, because the political opposition has been effectively crippled and silenced by real and threatened persecution.

This ‘restoration role’ by the military would speak to the raison d’être of the institution: it exists to protect the nation, therefore not to act when the State becomes delinquent would nullify its purpose, its duty. In undemocratic systems of governance, there can exist, then, a ‘watchdog’ tension between the armed forces and the State’s leadership. As Habyarimana said in his address to the nation after the coup,

Yesterday you became aware of important decisions taken by the command of the National Police to save the country from the disorder which was going to degenerate into panic. The National Police, which has always protected you, kept its sacred duty to protect the peace and national unity. . . . The National police intervened as the country was falling into the abyss, and has just saved the peace, this peace which we want to be long-lasting and sustaining the progress of national development. You all have the duty to work for restoring peace and national unity; it is for your interest and the good of your families. It is for the prosperity of the whole nation. Love your fellow countrymen without distinction of ethnic or regional origin. Reject any propaganda of a regionalist character. Indicate to the authorities anybody who urges you to work against national unity. . . . As for you particularly, member citizens of the National Police, the nation is proud of you.
You have once again just saved it from destruction. Separatist elements tried in vain to divide you. You repelled them, because your role is not to create splits in the country. You are the national unity.\(^7\)

It can be argued that Habyarimana’s foundational philosophy of governing the State was founded on his experience as a soldier: he was ‘bloodied’, as it were, as a young leader in battles against insurrectionists comprising Tutsi: first in coordination with Mobutu in a stopgap campaign along Rwanda’s southwest border, against the UNAR Tutsi invaders in ’63-’64, and then in the violence against the Tutsis applied by Kayibanda. These trials of combat were all connected to threats against the country’s unification of the different populations, and it would be safe to speculate that they influenced the consideration of dethroning Kayibanda, who was considered a threat to unity, of instituting a temporary military administration after the coup, and subsequently of establishing a one-party State, in order to prevent ‘disruptive’ oppositional elements.\(^8\)

Yet, Habyarimana was not unaware of the fact that all his neighbors and almost every other recently-formed African State had opted for one-party or dictatorial rule. And interwoven into the MRND framework was the African socialism which Auma-Osolo and Osolo-Nasubo describe in their 1971 treatise,

The sharp class divisions that once existed in Europe have no place in African socialism and no room or parallel in African society\(^9\). . . . The class policy in Africa

\(^7\) Habyarimana, July 6, 1973, “Message to the nation from the President of the Committee For Peace And National Unity on the occasion of the July 1973 coup d’état.”

\(^8\) An apt anecdote from Evan Osnos (“The grand tour”, The New Yorker, 18 April 2011: 59), “On a bus tour of Italy, the Chinese tour guide, extolling the superiority of the one-party system of government to the Chinese tourists pointed out the window to the highway and said “that it had taken decades for Italy to build it, because of local opposition. If this were China, it would be done in six months! And that’s the only way to keep the economy growing. . . Analysts overseas can never understand why the Chinese economy has grown so fast,” he said. “Yes, it’s a one-party state, but the administrators are selected from among the élites...”

\(^9\) “This is why many African states, such as Tanzania, advocate the one-party system in order to do away with tribalism and thereby solidify political freedom and equality. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah also had this strategy. Similarly our martyred hero, Patrice Lumumba, believed and preached the same prophecy, ‘Division brings suicide of Africa’.
is largely one of prevention, aiming especially at (1) eliminating the risk of foreign economic domination and (2) planning development so as to prevent the emergence of antagonistic classes. Above all, African peoples bear in mind that the construction and reconstruction of Africa and its vitality requires unity of purpose dedicated to the freedom of man and justice of all. . . . In addition, it is not by accident that some desirable traits from the East and West are injected in order to fill the gaps in our governmental system. We believe that our democratic African socialism does not compete with state ownership of all means of production, but that our state ownership duly vests ownership in the “Wananchi” (people).\textsuperscript{10}

Among the ‘desirable’ traits of the West that Habyarimana would ‘inject’ into his government was the adoption of the principles of the American Constitution as the core of his new constitution for Rwanda in 1978. Yet, at the same time, Habyarimana turns his political and ideological attention to a Rwandan mythical and romanticized past in what appears a nullification of his new constitution’s ideas:

Capitalism or socialism are for us the same: imported ideologies that profited the systems they conceived within the framework of their realities, according to their people’s thoughts, and held to count by a variety of factors corresponding to their times and regions. We have already said that each ideology or economic doctrine does not contain in itself the mystery of development. That which interests we Rwandans is the development of our country, to see Rwandans get out of poverty.\textsuperscript{11}

Still, Habyarimana’s uni-visioned insistent call for peace and unity\textsuperscript{12} is rooted in his military experience.

Before the coup, he had been head of the national police as well as the army; his job had been to keep order. But the rules governing the army found in the military manual

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item[\textsuperscript{10}] Auma-Osolo and Osolo-Nasubo, 1971.
  \item[\textsuperscript{11}] Habyarimana, 1975: 31.
  \item[\textsuperscript{12}] There are several influences on Habyarimana and the Movement concerning ‘unity’. The Church is one. Habyarimana and his closest friends, fellow officers and advisors had all gone through missionary school and seminary training. The following letter from Rwandan bishops to their congregations could be an exhortation lifted from one of Habyarimana’s speeches, with the references to the Church changed to the MRND party: "Dear Christians, be one. The Roman Catholic Church is one. The big misfortune for the Church is the dissension. The Church is not only the Pope, nor only the bishops, the priests, the monks nor the nuns, it is all the Christians. And you also, then, you ceaselessly have to do all you can to strengthen this unity in the Church" (\textit{lettre pastorale des évêques du Rwanda à leurs fidèles, Mgr Bigirimwami et Mgr Perraudin, 27-29 août 1959, à Nyakibanda}).
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
and the Rwandan Constitution, as well as the guidelines for the national police, represent a stiff framework within which officers’ decisions are regimented ‘by the book’. There are no daily and tricky compromises to be made with political opponents, no difficult economic planning affecting the population. As head of the army, Habyarimana oversaw a very small force, who were undersupplied and underpaid. There had been the blustering threat of invasion by Idi Amin, but with Tanzania and Zaire as allies, Habyarimana did not see Amin holding his bellicose posture long or seriously rebrandishing it in the future. There was no reason to increase the size of the army or spend State funds on sophisticated weaponry that, in his opinion, would never be needed; since Habyarimana had become an officer, the army had repulsed attacks from outside the country, and put down interior demonstrations.

Regarding the national police, the country had few courts, judges, or lawyers, and little money for jails, housing prisoners, police salaries, uniforms or equipment. A director general, appointed by the president (Habyarimana), supervised the national police, who were assisted in law enforcement by the army and Belgian advisors. Most of the police were assigned to the prefectures, where they were commanded by a brigadier and administered by the local prefect. The army was small, made up of around 5,000 men (most of whom were Hutus), all volunteers since there was no draft or compulsory service. The president (Habyarimana) was defense minister and commander in chief. Habyarimana arranged the country into an army-like chain of command, from the smallest unit to the commander in chief/president, from hill groups (Platoon), up through cellule.  

---

Barahinyura (1988: 291) sees Habyarimana as being, in one sense, a continuation of the monarchical structure: “Power is centered on one single person; as in the past, it was on the person of the King. As in the past, the King
named his Chiefs, General Habyarimana names his prefects today. As the King named his sub-chiefs, Habyarimana names his burgomasters today. The celebrated ‘Bamotsi’ (rousers in the past, who had the duty to stimulate the rural population to go do forced work, who also had the duty to denounce those who refused the royal orders) are replaced by the cellules leaders of today.
Habyarimana’s aim was to have a system that would allow for the efficient mobilization of people for effective agricultural work. He had learned from his initial army experience how relatively easy it was for outside agitators to infiltrate border areas and, because Rwanda was a country where people were largely socio-politically and economically isolated from
others on their respective hills because of the extreme geography, it was necessary to establish a government structure that reached among the countless hilltops and small valleys in order to unify the country, for tax purposes and public services, but primarily for economic development.14

Writers on Rwanda have made much of the Second Republic’s government penetrating so thoroughly into society, right down to hilltop families, but what is overlooked in this Eurocentric criticism is the nature of Rwandan existence: in 1973, when Habyarimana took over, in the entire country there were hardly any ‘towns’ (certainly not in the Western sense) of significance besides Kigali, the capitol, in the center of the country, Butare, in the south, where the ten-year old, single university was situated, and Cyangugu, on the south-west border. There was a fractured series of open-air trading centers for locally-grown foodstuffs and artisanal products, and an insufficient infrastructure for connecting the various economic areas of the country. Habyarimana’s reaction to this rather desperate situation, compounded by a lack of government funds, and given the already emergency nature of the need to feed a population outstripping its agricultural output, was to attempt to mobilize human resources in an attempt to ameliorate the largest problems facing the government and the nation.

14 The GDP and even the GDP per capita increased in the seventies. This is indeed an achievement for a poor country. Some scholars credit Habyarimana for this. High international coffee prices and the cultivation of all available lands helped the president to achieve economic growth in the first half of his reign: (Verwimp, 2000c: 4).
The MRND Party

Habyarimana formed the MRND party (National Revolutionary Movement for Development) on 5 July 1975. He declared it the only legal political entity, outlawed the PARMEHUTU, and made every citizen a member from birth.\footnote{Rugiririza (2003) is of the opinion that the MRND incorporated the entire population in its party following the model of Mobutu’s Popular Revolutionary Movement (MPR).} The ‘party’ paralleled a military structure, probably because that is what Habyarimana and his military associates knew best; it worked for unity and mobilization, and it was efficient.

In his first months in office, Habyarimana ordered important government employees with master’s degrees or higher to take military training, apparently with the intention of providing one more channel for instilling habits of obedience to orders.\footnote{Des Forges, 1999: 40-43.}

He named himself President Fondateur of the MRND, President of the Republic, Prime Minister, Head of Staff of National Defense, Minister for National Defense, President of the Central Committee of the MRND, and President of the Higher Council of the Magistrature. He was, throughout his reign, addressed with the combined title “Major-General and President”, a reminder of the double-edged military and executive power that spoke to his conception of government and administration. The State was the party, the party-state was society, and the party-state-society matrix was inextricably and inseparably bound together in the process of development and unity, and, therefore, peace; in effect, if...
everyone belongs to the party-state-society then there is no one left outside to challenge it, and there can be no internecine fighting because that would amount to a person fighting themself. Like the army, it was a seamless framework.

It has been suggested that Habyarimana saw himself as the champion of the peasant-farmer, even to the exclusion of urban development. To address this notion it is necessary to step back a moment and look at how the MRND party was formed, because in

---

**Organogram 5. MRND Governing Structure 1973-78**

![Organogram 5. MRND Governing Structure 1973-78](image)
its philosophical roots, or foundation, are some answers to how Habyarimana and his circle of advisors formulated policy.

When looking at the words in the MRND party’s name—National Revolutionary Movement for Development—the first thing that might appear out of place is ‘Revolutionary’, because there was certainly nothing revolutionary about Habyarimana, the major-general, and his conservatism, nor was there a ‘revolutionary’ agenda or spirit behind the coup d’état, which we have seen was almost as much response as plan, but not an attempt to overthrow a system. The origins of that word (along with ‘development’4) for the MRND name have multiple sources, for example from Habyarimana’s close friend and fellow officer, Col. Aloys Nsekaliye, who had graduated in the first class from Officer’s School with him and was part of the CPUN. Nsekaliye had an MS in economics and political science, wrote five books, from 1978 to 1985, concerning politics and the economy, and was awarded with high administrative functions (including Cabinet posts) by President Habyarimana (until they had a falling out in the ‘80s). Among the books Nsekaliye wrote was one titled *Kim Il Sung, Defender of Chajusong*, an unusual paean to North Korea’s leader. What is important about this work in regard to the MRND name is Nsekaliye’s enthusiasm for Kim’s *Juche*5 socialist ideology and policies. In the first ten pages of the book, Nsekaliye mentions revolution 25 times. He was 47 years old when he wrote this, and had been an officer for 22 years. He was enamored with Sung’s *Chajusong*

---

3 Mobutu’s Popular Revolutionary Movement should also be considered as a significant influence on Habyarimana’s choice of words for the MRND name.
4 Uvin (1998: 24) posits that Habyarimana renamed the ruling political party the *Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement*, and parliament was termed the National Development Council, in order to attract international investors.
5 *Juche* is considered to have been a failure in North Korea. Countering this opinion, Yu (2005: 5) cautions against condemning *Juche*’s methods themselves, saying that within the larger whole of industrial agriculture . . . the inadequate inputs to support *Juche*’s methods, points rather to the larger context of existing agricultural problems.

282
belief that long-oppressed people must rise up and “remodel their destiny independently and creatively,” that Chajusong is an age of “deep-going . . . revolutionary change, and that the Juche idea holds that the popular masses . . . play the decisive role in the building of a new society”. . . . Juche “thoroughly defends the popular masses’ interests,” and their decisive role “shows the fundamental legitimacy of the change and development of the actual world.”6 As Habyarimana said of the MRND’s formation, it “reflects all opinions, and creates national cohesion and unity”.7

The importance of the Juche-socialist idea was the emphasis on the masses being the center of development, something which Habyarimana, himself, did recognize in several speeches, pointing out the peasant-farmer’s foundational role8 in the country’s well-being. But Habyarimana’s emphasis was not unique, agriculture was seen as the backbone of most African countries south of the Sahara, and given priority.9 Following this, the president’s goal was to install a sense of national responsibility in the peasant-farmers, so they would find ways to produce more. Again, there is the military metaphor—instilling a sense of duty in soldiers so they will perform to a certain standard. (One typically finds this kind of exhortation to the public in state-run economies, where the majority of people are engaged in agriculture).

---

6 Nsekalije 1984: 9, 15.
8 De Lacger (1939: 3) points out the important image of the Hutu farmer in 1939, an image that threaded through Kayibanda’s and Habyarimana’s presidencies: “It is the farmer who grasps the earth, transforms it, gives it the stamp of humanity and creates an historic landscape ... In Rwanda this conqueror, this transformer, is the Bantu farmer, the Muhutu. It is he who emerged from the forest, made the first network of long-lasting paths, strew the countryside with green enclosures and homes; he, who, multiplying as the stars of the sky and the sand of seas, filled with his presence sixty thousand square kilometers which speaks to him his language (cited in Linden, op. cit.: 5),
9 Gandhi, as well, echoing general Indian thought, said, “To forget how to dig the earth and tend the soil is to forget ourselves.”
Another influence for the use of the word ‘revolution’ in the MRND name is its value carried over from the 1959 Hutu revolution—an important rallying symbol for all Hutu, and useful as a way to arrogate the ‘charged’ memory of Kayibanda’s government’s accomplishment to Habyarimana’s and the MRND’s side; after eliminating the PARMEHUTU, the president needed to insert the MRND in the historical gap. It is probably more correct to say, then, that the naming of his Revolutionary Movement for National Development had first of all to free itself from the ethnic/racist PARMEHUTU name, which it had just ousted, while keeping the signal importance of the revolutionary ’59 Hutu Movement more or less intact\(^{10}\), hence the words ‘revolution’ and ‘movement’\(^{11}\). The word ‘development’ would have addressed the country’s sorely underdeveloped condition and the hope that the people had in a new government, and would be used as a catch word employed constantly to refer to a forward-pointing outlook that was both political and socio-economic.

\*\*Umuganda\*\*

Nsekaliye’s Juche presence is felt, as well, in Habyarimana’s decision to institute on 2 February 1974, the socialist-tinged (though traditionally based) practice of \textit{umuganda}, as well as the Kim-inspired performances around a personality cult, found in the

\(^{10}\) However, “Hutu of central and southern Rwanda resented their loss of power and saw the killing of the first generation of Hutu leaders as a betrayal of these leaders of the revolution” (HRW, 2006: 4).

\(^{11}\) Shimamungu (2004: 78-79) says that the idea of ‘movement’ for the party “is not . . . Habyarimana’s invention [but] . . . is derived from the ’58—’59 years, during the decolonization of the Congo, when . . . Congolese students in Belgium introduced this terminology from a communist inspiration to signify their opposition to the multipartyism practiced in Europe. These students thought that it wasn't possible for Third World countries to attain the level of developed countries, so they worked against the construction of multipartyism. This same idea drove Lumumba’s MNC Party and, later, Mobutu’s MPR party, but with a different perspective. This terminology was not accidental . . . for Habyarimana, who had studied in Lovanium, [and] . . . was motivated by [his] will to mobilize the population; multipartyism was considered a waste of energy and a brake on development. The idea of "movement" is devoted without question to a single party system under the pretext of refusing to continue politics for politics sake, which had undermined the Kayibanda regime.”
Habyarimana explained the rationale behind umuganda in a speech at the Third MRND Congress, 17-20 December 1980:

development . . . will be accomplished only thanks to the combination of the efforts of all the children of our people. It is to translate this conviction to reality and have it shared by everyone that we established Umuganda. Our progress is, before all, the fruit of our own sacrifices. I am happy that the Rwandan People became aware of this necessity for their survival. So, every person in charge, at any level, has to convince themselves of their role of organizer of progress and the obligation which falls to them to promote even more everyone’s participation. . . . especially the programs of water conveyance in rural areas, the construction of schools and health centers, the realization and the maintenance of roads, as well as the construction of bridges, . . . the construction of public buildings at the municipal level, the increase of seeds selected for distribution to the public, reforestation, and anti-erosive work. . . Umuganda cannot, on any account, become a system of hard labor in which only the weak are forced to comply. . . Umuganda is, above all, the occasion for the leaders to show their duty to the people by being an example of the most appropriate way leading to development. It falls to the leaders to . . . dedicate all their efforts to it, or to leave their position if they can’t fully participate. The State, for its part, has . . . to stimulate its fervor and emphasize the impact of its accomplishments.

He further elaborated on this in a press conference with Rwandan journalists in 1985:

Concerning animations, among other things, Shimamungu (2004: 121) suggests that it was China and North Korea from whom the MRND was inspired “concerning its structure and the mobilization of the people. Everyone noticed this influence, especially in the production of medallions with the effigy of Habyarimana, where he appears in a blue Korean shirt, and slanted eyes, in spite of his black skin. Or, again, at the time of national celebrations, the popular rallies called ‘movement together’ [animations]; gigantic human panoramas whose technique of formation was imported from North Korea under the direction of Koreans.”

Habyarimana had a close connection with the Church throughout his life, and it figured large in the operation of his government and society. The following passages in Nichols (1997: 4) concerning the hierarchy of the Church, its use of force, and the reified inequalities resonate in Habyarimana’s ideas of government: “. . . ecclesial hierarchy ought to be a participatory hierarchy, which does not seek to dominate, but to draw persons into participation in the life of Christ and the Spirit. . . . Only through a participatory notion of hierarchy can the Christian Church realize a unity that also preserves diversity.” Also in Nichols (ibid: 5), quoting Riane Eisler (1988), “As used here, the term ‘hierarchy’ refers to a system of human rankings based on force or the threat of force,” and quoting Leonardo Boff (1986), “Through the centuries, the church has acquired an organizational form with a heavily hierarchical framework and a juridical understanding of relationships among Christians, thus producing mechanical, reified inequalities and inequities.” (my italics). And when Habyarimana refers to “all the children of his people”, he is subscribing both to the paternalistic rhetoric of chiefs addressing their subjects and the clergy addressing their flock. As much as rhetoric describes the speaker’s state of mind, so can Habyarimana’s thoughts be examined as being influenced by chiefly tradition, as well as Church philosophy and structure.

Prunier (1995: 79) describes umuganda as a system in which “farmers were supposed to spend two days of their time, often lasted four days or more. And unlike the enthusiastic description given by the party cadres, the work was far from voluntary. In some cases, it was closer to forced labor. Paternalistic ILO criticism condemning these practices fell into deaf ears, Rwanda and abroad.” See Baines, 2003: 482;

Umuganda . . . is the politics of depending on yourself and we think that, being centered on the individual, it is necessarily a group plan, and by extension one involving the whole country, but one counting first of all on oneself. . . . But the process, of course, has limits, one always has resort to outside help, from friends and neighbors. . . . As for the intellectual class—we ask them to go dig holes for putting in telephone lines, well, it’s not just their telephone. To build a health care center in a certain sector, with a hospital, and it will be free. So, if the intellectual class adheres to Umuganda, their selfish interests diminish.16

Supporting Prunier’s observation that umuganda was far from voluntary, is Barahinyura’s comment that

A graduate or an engineer, earning about 23,000 RwFs a month [US$ 247], a salary, compared ironically by the Rwandans to a serum (which allows rather a survival than a life), is obliged to give up a tenth of this salary to General Habyarimana’s Movement, under the pretext of a contribution to the development of the country. . . . Nevertheless, the same engineer will be hunted down if, once he has not participated in Umuganda—whatever his reasons are—he is not considered serious!17

And among the Rwandan voices opposed to or criticizing umuganda, Bonaventure Habimana, Secretary General of Habyarimana’s own MRND, said

Umuganda . . . must be prepared by the members of the committee of the cellule (community unit), who have to meet often to exchange ideas on the ideals of the MRND and the directives of the President Founder. Is it with the dreadful daily animations of the MRND, the insane extra work, and much other nonsense that Rwanda will be built?18

Habyarimana, himself, alludes to the reluctance of bureaucrats to take part in umuganda in an interview he gave to journalists in Nice, in May 1980:

It’s aimed not only at the food situation. Umuganda is a philosophy which is at the base of a political principle that, from any point of view, says we should be self-

18 Bonaventure Habimana, Secretary General of MRND (Imvaho, No. 404, 1981), cited in Barahinyura (ibid).
Regarding the misuse of umuganda, Uwimbabazi (2012: 43) reveals that “As the years went by, umuganda could be called upon more frequently than one day per week, depending upon the government’s need. Generally, umuganda was used for political mobilisation and to pass on the government and MRND’s messages. The days allocated to umuganda increased as political instability increased.”
sufficient. We have to count at first on our own efforts. If I want to build a road, if I want to build a hut, I don’t have to wait for a stranger to come build it. I’m going to begin the work and I know that the neighbors—it’s our tradition—the neighbors will bring what they can to help me build it. What they bring is what we call Umuganda. . . . There is a certain reluctance among technocrats. You’ll see them standing around when I ask them to go to Umuganda: they have beautiful suits, they were always at school with paper and pencil—they work with their brain. When we ask them to work with their hands, they’re reluctant to get dirty. They’re not used to manual labor. But we push them, and we tell them that what counts is the example which they give. Office work is necessary; the work of planning and reflective consideration is irreplaceable, but it’s necessary to come down to earth from time to time to see if what you planned corresponds well to the reality of things, and show the people. Take a farmer, for example, he hears over the radio, or in the papers how he has to cut his coffee tree, plant his cabbage, but what would be more helpful and practical to these farmer’s is if the agronomist actually goes to the farm and shows him how he has to cut his coffee tree, how he has to plant his cabbage. That’s the philosophy of Umuganda. The results are very positive. And, naturally, there is a negative side, which we try to correct, especially in the case of the intellectuals in charge. [my italics]

Mukarubuga describes how important umuganda in precolonial Rwanda was for the peasant-farmers’ security through the necessary communal action of grouped households in preparing the land for planting. It was not a development scheme but a collective survival adaptation to conditions of poverty and its attendant vagaries of drought (which has been common throughout Rwandan history), personal tragedies and so forth. The Belgian colonial administration changed it from a local, community encapsulated mutual-

---

19 This concept of self-sufficiency, as argued in this paper, is derived from contemporary African attitudes, as well as from the Juche principal.

20 This criticism of intellectuals, or technocrats, reveals Habyarimana’s own prejudice in favor of the peasant-farmer, and dovetails with the Hutu Power concept of the peasant-farmer as the only true Rwandan. It is arguable that he never freed himself from this myth concerning traditional, historical Rwanda.

21 Uwimbabazi (2012: 2-3) explains how traditional, precolonial umuganda, was “a form of collective action, participation and belonging, can be compared to Russian peasant communal work, in the social unit called the mir in the 1800s, before the socialist and communist revolution of 1917 . . . Within the context of the African continent, umuganda is similar to the indigenous initiative of harambee (meaning ‘pulling together’), which is found in Kenya [and later manipulated and used for political purposes]. The same forms of community work are present in many other post-independence African countries, notably, ujamaa in Tanzania or humanism in Zambia. However, in most cases, politicians have manipulated these indigenous initiatives for their own political interest.” Also see Mukarubuga 2006: 20.

help relationship, into a centrally directed territorial law that required every Rwandan to work unpaid for government-dictated projects in an attempt to make the territory economically able to support the colonial administration and its various public expenditures so as not to be a drain on the metropole, with the primary emphasis on coffee and tea production and building roads to get those two products to market (it is appropriate that the world ‘colony’ comes from the Latin *colonia*, meaning ‘a place for agriculture’).

It is the Belgian bastardization of the practice of *umuganda* that Habyarimana adopted as a way to help develop the Rwandan infrastructure.

Keeping in mind Habyarimana’s military-oriented mindset, which holds that everyone must work together for the good of the whole, and considering the formidable problem of trying to run a country without enough tax revenue to be able to build roads, clear forests, and dig terraces, irrigation and anti-erosion channels, then ‘volunteer’ work fits his philosophy and the State’s needs in a particular fashion. It is, in essence ‘dictatorial’, but the underlying concept is also found in democratic countries; for example, in John F. Kennedy’s Peace Corps program for volunteer work abroad, as well as the VISTA AmeriCorps program for volunteer work at home in the U.S. This kind of ‘volunteer’ work for the betterment of the community also constitutes a large part of Christian philosophy and engages a sizable number of parishioners, who feel that action is a necessary part of religious faith. The Church played a significant part in Rwanda’s socio-political and economic life, and Habyarimana—being educated by the Church, and some clergy being directly involved in the MRND party—could have, since his childhood,
absorbed the “duty of Christian volunteerism.” In the past, in many countries, churches were built largely by volunteer labor, and the Amish in America are famous for their community barn-raisings.

From another point of view, of ‘forced’ volunteerism for the social good, umuganda can also be likened to paying taxes and having those revenues utilized in the service of the community: taxes come from people’s labor ‘indirectly’ in the form of money, while umuganda is a form of ‘tax’ that is paid ‘directly’ in labor, because the impoverished citizens don’t have money (or enough money) available for payment (and the original umuganda was instituted at a time when there wasn’t a monetary system).

Although the Belgian colonial government abused the original practice, it is questionable whether Habyarimana, from the outset, implemented it purely, or primarily, as a political ploy. It appears, rather, that he adopted it as he adopted so many other things, from the previous administrations, as indicated in a published address to the people in 1975:

Some pretend that Habyarimana looked to re-establish the forced work of old. I believe what we, the Rwandans, refused in 1959 is to work for a chief, to cultivate a field in which one can’t harvest, to clear a road that leads to a chief’s bar, and while you work for him, he comes to inspect it, or you are made to suffer a beating again. That is what we refused. . . . But if we help each other to open up a road that leads to communal administration, to building a maternity ward like the one we inaugurated today, to open up an OCAM road that has an interest for the country—if you call that ‘corvée’, then this corvée we will accomplish.

This is not to say that umuganda as was practiced and directed by the Second Republic developed into a long term successful policy, it couldn’t possibly take the place of a need for a growing economy in a ‘modern’ State, nor begin to cope with

---

23 Habyarimana’s (Discours et Entretiens, 1976: 12) authentic connection with the Church is clearly seen in his quote above about ‘animations’, contradicting the notion that the animations were simply, or only, political machinations.

24 Habyarimana, 1975.
the shrinkage of available land for a Malthusian demographic. However, the Rwandan precolonial tradition of volunteerism was a positive and useful heritage centered in the small hill communities, that could have been utilized by non-profit and NGO organizations during the Second Republic to provide valuable social services, and this failure points out the problem with top-down central governments like Habyarimana’s, having unaccountable bureaucrats in charge of public programs. Habyarimana either colluded with the administrative kleptocrats²⁵, turned a blind eye to them, or found it impossible to corral them. In any event, umuganda became as much a political entity as a ‘developmental’ one²⁶. Habyarimana even sent his MRND secretary general, Bonaventure Habimana, a man considered number two in the administration, around the country promoting umuganda²⁷.

It has been argued that umuganda made a large contribution to the country’s development and social needs. In the period from 1973 to 1981, for example, “communal work built 400 to 500 classrooms per year, passing 11,244 in 1974, to reach 17,816 in 1983, constituting an annual growth of 5.8% greater than the population. . . . [and] Each prefecture had to set up a technical school. umuganda was often the most important way to accomplish some projects; . . . Most of the projects couldn’t be accomplished without this contribution of the people, who, in 1986, raised 15 billion Rwandan francs, and in 1990 more than 16 billion on projects.

²⁵ Prunier (op. cit: 87) says that umuganda was “performed on lands privately owned by the regime’s cronies” by peasant-farmers “already overburdened with a variety of taxes.”

²⁶ The achievements of Habyarimana's first decade in power were considerable: unprecedented stability and genuine moves towards development. In particular, communal work (umuganda) by cooperative work groups (Interahamwe) succeeded in furthering many rural development projects, such as terracing hillsides and growing woodlots. With tragic irony, the name Interahamwe was later used for the MRND militias” (African Rights, 1994: 8).

²⁷ Shimamungu, op. cit.: 132.
together.” In 1988, the evaluation of the program “Health for everyone by the year 2000” showed that the Rwandan medical network was well-developed; . . . some health stations could be built at the sector level in the framework of umuganda (communal work) with the help of international cooperation, which had been mobilized for this program.  

Habyarimana’s wife, as well, claims the value of umuganda regarding her orphanage:

Though they were not enough, there were many orphanages led by Churches around the country, . . . My church friends and I then saw the need for an orphanage, because at the time there were only two functioning ones around Kigali. The Umuganda group of women in our Kiyovu cellule and I, together with friends in our church, then decided to open and run an orphanage at Masaka near Kigali. . . . The Church did not provide the funds, so we had to raise our own. . . . Umuganda work proved very helpful for making clothing for the orphanage.

But the kind of umuganda Habyarimana’s regime enforced was tied to government policies as opposed to the wide array of traditional volunteer activities woven into the communities, as described in the following explanation by a Republic of Rwanda publication:

The volunteer culture in the Rwandan society was natured and fostered by the institution called itorero, which trained and inculcated in the minds of Rwandans of all ages a set of values (indangagaciro), and preached against taboos and vices (kirazira) which provided benchmarks for the value system upon which the Rwanda Society is founded. . . . Volunteerism in Rwanda is exhibited through provision of services to the community such as Umuganda (community service), Ubudehe (communal work), Umusanzu (communal service) (Communal self-help activities based on solidarity), Abunzi (mediators), volunteer local government councils (Njyanama), traditional judicial court (Gacaca) judges, electoral commission agents, community health workers (abajyanama b’ubuzima), traditional birth attendants etc., that do not involve any salary payment in return and done out of free will for the purpose of benefiting the whole community.

---

28 Shimamungu, op. cit.: 131-32, 110, 109. The practice of umuganda even attracted the attention of Burkina Faso’s resident, Thomas Sankara, who entertained the idea of initiating it into the country (ibid.: 159).
29 Anonymous communication.
All these examples need to be balanced against a recent SWOT\textsuperscript{31} analysis of volunteerism in Rwanda which revealed that:

- Most people regard voluntary work as wasted time;
- Potential employers do not consider such ‘work’ as real experience for job applicants;
- There is the problem of opportunistic politicians and businessmen, who are motivated by personal agendas, posing as volunteers;
- There are conflicts with the local labor and tax law provisions.\textsuperscript{32}

The persistent use of *umuganda* for political ends, such as trying to build unity or solidarity among the people is witnessed by the fact that the current president, Kagame,
who so vehemently criticized Habyarimana’s policies as the rational for invading the
country, is nonetheless following in Habyarimana’s footsteps regarding the political use of
umuganda.

Photo 1. Successive Rwandan Presidents Promoting Umuganda

Animations

Umuganda ‘community’ work was supplemented and reinforced by animations,
whereby groups of singers and dancers from around the country competed for ‘honors’—
best performance and costumes, and songs that best flattered the president and the party,
overseen by local MRND leaders (responsables and/or the nyumbakumi), and any person
who didn’t participate was fined. A personality cult of sorts developed around
Habyarimana, as his picture was displayed in homes and mandatorily in government
offices and places of business. Habyarimana’s rationale for the animations is explained in
his 1983 address to the country:

*Animation* thus includes … the necessity of aiming at the mobilization of the
population for a common ideal, the improvement of living conditions. Simple and
easily acceptable themes of animation must be found. These popularized themes,
then, must aim at the protection and improvement of our soil in view of sufficient
food production, the improvement of and increase of socio-cultural infrastructures
(health centers, additional water, schools), and finally economic infrastructure
(roads, storage silos). Thanks to animation and to an adequate framework, the
people better understood the sought after goals and participated voluntarily and
massively in the envisioned actions.\(^3\)

Habyarimana used the animations as a propaganda tool for motivating the people to
perform *umuganda*, through “popular dances but also through poets, musicians, and artists
of all stripes”, and one could hear in concerts or nightclubs songs with titles like *kubaka si
ugusenya ni ukugereka ibuye ku rindi* (To build is not to destroy, it is to put one stone on
another), which was used for the government’s designated ‘year of the habitat’, and *Ni
utema kimwe ujye utera bibiri* (whenever you cut down one tree, don’t forget to plant two)
for the year of the tree.\(^4\) Habyarimana saw animation, in particular, as a way to ‘rouse’
people to *umuganda*, even evoking religion in this cause, and to also quell criticism:

*Animation*, for me, must serve to stimulate people, inciting them to work
together. But I noticed that some people ignore animation. I have even read
in the *Kinyamateka* newspaper, that it cried out against it … at the time of
meeting with *Kinyamateka* journalists, I asked them this question: “Why
have you written that animation, whose goal is to stimulate the people, why
are you writing against it?” I know that most of the journalists and editors at
*Kinyamateka* are Catholic, so I asked the question: “When we are chanting
energetically in church, where there is love and charity, God is there. Are we
protesting?” Myself, I believe that when we sing about this love we are

\(^3\) Habyarimana 1983: 10.
\(^4\) Shimamungu, op. cit: 124.
celebrating the charity that is the reason God is among us. That is the role of animation within the movement. We must render homage to the movement because we believe in it. We must celebrate peace because we believe in it. We must sing the directives of the movement because we are assured that they aim at development … Also, to animate the people is not an end in itself, animation must incite people to work. 35

Still, animation, like umuganda, was a forced program in which non-participation was punished, “a more pernicious fate awaiting those who were less enthusiastic, in particular for those who opposed the ideology of the national party” 36 Regarding umuganda and animations, the government’s propaganda reached across all aspects of society, even in the school curriculum, as described in the following statement by a civics teacher:

We used to speak about the administrative structure. Students ended up knowing all about the ministers and their ministries by heart. There was never any interest in people…. Nobody had the right to change anything in the programme given the coercive political system. There were no teachers capable of opposing it. This teaching contributed enormously to radicalizing ethnic identities. And of course what was taught in the civics course was repeated in the popular political gatherings where the song was the triumph of republicanism over the monarch, of the Hutu over the Tutsi. 37 [my italics]

And, finally, Taylor gives a helpful picture of animation around 1983:

At the time, adulation of Habyarimana was de rigueur for Rwandans; it was a key element in the enactment of their civitas. Virtually everyone had a portrait of the president hanging on a wall at home and many wore the MRND party button on their shirt or blouse. On Wednesday afternoons groups met to practice chants and skits in celebration of the Rwandan state, its overthrow of the Tutsi monarchy, and its rejection of the ubuhake cattle contract signifying Hutu servitude to Tutsi, and most of all to honor the country’s president, Juvenal Habyarimana. Termed animation, it didn’t seem to bother anyone that these Wednesday afternoon get-togethers took people away from their jobs and did nothing to augment the country’s gross domestic product. Even songs on the radio seemed to equate

35 Habyarimana 1976: 120
36 Baines, 2003: 482.
Rwanda, its beauty, and relative prosperity with the person of its president. Of course, much of this adulation was self-interested, as the state, with Habyarimana at its head, was the country’s primary source of patronage, and the country’s prime guarantor of inequality.38

As opposition to the government grew in the late 1980s, and then after the RPF invasion and the advent of multipartyism. Even though Habyarimana promised reforms regarding umuganda and the animations, nothing came of it and “in many parts of Rwanda, people simply stopped participating en masse in umuganda and animation and other unpopular programs”.39 It is easy to understand Habyarimana’s employment, in the early years of his presidency, of a traditional communal work-help system in an attempt to address the problem of infrastructural development in light of inadequate government revenues. But umuganda, along with international aid, would become substitutes for real, long term socio-economic and political development. Animations, on the other hand, would seem to describe an admission of the failure of umuganda to honestly incorporate the people’s hearts and minds: they were not spontaneous performances, nor did they celebrate in any honest way the performers’ experience in enforced ‘volunteerism”. The animations, rather, quickly became part of a cult of personality for Habyarimana, and a propaganda tool for drumming up support for the MRND, and as we have noted, the animations not only resemble but personify the dictatorial or one-party State approach of constantly attempting to unify the population under monolithic ideological policies.

38 Taylor (2005: 152); and HRW (op. cit.); also see Des Forges (1999a: 43, 55), where she points out that from 1992 other political parties held meetings using singers and dancers in a manner mirroring Habyarimana’s animations. 39 Longman, 1994: n. p. Helbig (1991: 98) has an interesting take on the animations, noting that “Culture and information are not present in the countryside, except, perhaps, for a certain involvement of the churches, and for the glorifying animations of the single party.”
Habyarimana’s MRND collectivist philosophy left no room or encouragement for individual initiative or growth toward a democratic society. Using Codere’s three-part diagram (A) model for the Tutsi monarchy’s pre-independence political power, in Figure 4, the MRND’s political power can be inserted into her simple model with similar results. As Codere explains the model:

“Tutsi political power, which was redundantly organized and ruthlessly enforced, determined that the problems of living for all Rwandans be considered first of all in Tutsi terms, and solved first of all for the Tutsi through their capacity to command not only their own activities but also those of others and, most particularly, the Hutu majority of the population. The enforced priority of Tutsi solutions to Tutsi problems, or Tutsi versions of ... general problems ... gave positive support in its turn to Tutsi political power by feeding its material, organizational and motivational resources. To illustrate: Tutsi political power operated through multiple lines of command in which inferiors obeyed orders out of fear of punishment and hopes ranging from those of minimal to those of great rewards.”

---

40 Codere, 1973: 375.
There was a ubiquitous sub-Saharan African notion promulgated from the ‘60s through the ‘80s that took a leap away from the West as represented by the colonial administrations, and turned to the precolonial past in an effort to reconnect with African ‘roots’. Subsequently, because precolonial socio-economic structures were tied to villages and the land, there was an overwhelming emphasis on rural development centred on agriculture. Kayibanda’s administration, though relatively inward-looking by necessity, had to start from the ground up in almost every aspect of developing the new State structure—building public offices, educating officials, providing electricity, water, telecommunications, etc. His administration also hamstrung the private sector because entrepreneurial freedom was viewed as going hand-in-hand with political freedom, which was considered, as we have seen, a destructive threat to the one-party-state’s control.

There had never been a concept of entrepreneurship in Rwanda, so Kayibanda’s attitude, in essence, simply carried forward the top-down directional administration of the mwami, with the power elite jockeying for rents and position, and highly adverse to risk-taking, which is a large factor in entrepreneurship. Banks, as well, were not set up, nor developed, to provide the necessary small loans that start-up businesses require; the need for microfinance, say along the Grameen Bank model, for example, did not reach Africa until the late ‘90s. And as we can see in the majority of cases concerning the governments of sub-Saharan Africa, socio-political structures are wedded to traditional identities, where the concept of banking—moreover the use of money itself—didn’t exist until the middle of the twentieth century, and the practice of building the economy lacked a vocabulary, and therefore an organization. It must not be forgotten that when looking at the change from a
chiefdomship to independence, statehood and the creation of a constitution, that the constitution is only, in the often-pointed-to words of Habyarimana, a ‘piece of paper’—without a socio-political and cultural connection to and absorption of the constitution’s principles by the vast majority of the population, and the adherence to those principles by the armed forces and the public administrators, the constitution remains a null artifact.

Just as we grow up learning social behavior by observing the people around us, so we, as citizens, learn the rules of State governance; in the case of Rwanda by observing that the public administrators co-opted the mwami system of vertical power and bureaucratic rent-seeking, without implementing the democratic values set forth in the constitution and promised by both the First and Second Republics’ administrations. When we examine those respective administrations, we must always keep in mind that Europe took thousands of years to develop into the vastly complex and sophisticated socio-economic, political, cultural, and technological modern States we are now witnessing.

When Habyarimana came into his presidency, Rwanda had only recently, within twenty years, shifted superficially from a territory ruled by a mwami and a system of chiefs, and having a technology that consisted of little more than hoes and machetes. Among all the criticism of his and Kayibanda’s terms in office, this profound circumstance is largely ignored, and their administrations talked about as if they were European entities somehow disaffirming a Western inheritance, when, in fact, they have been facing the demands of being a ‘foreign’ new entity, a sovereign State, and have been expected to enter the international domain with all the tools and resources an established State is supposed to possess. But nothing could be further from reality: both the administrations and the people
are still in the process of having to ‘learn’ what a State is, versus their established social-cultural complex relatively unchanged over hundreds of years, and then adapt. How many years does that take? How long before they reach the same place in which the developed countries now sit? Or should that even be their goal? We must continually put our thinking in the proper cultural-historical framework when we look at Habyarimana and his administration, and their circular dynamic with the Rwandan people, especially as the tiny country is land-locked, with no substantial natural resources, and sits surrounded by its four bordering countries, which are no more developed and are often antagonistic.

From the MRND’s beginning, Habyarimana carried over from the old regime the ID cards and the quota system (équilibre régionale), and though there were no Tutsi préfets or bourgmestres, few Tutsi officers, and only two Tutsi parliament members\textsuperscript{41}, the private sector was relatively open to Tutsis. Quite a few did well in business and found Habyarimana a comparatively benign president, and very relaxed about enforcing the government’s quota policy, allowing the Tutsis more than the official nine percent, in business and public service, schools and universities. The government considered itself ‘democratic’ in a skewed socio-political sense, believing that because the Hutu were the overwhelming majority, containing over 85% of the population, then a Hutu government was ‘democratically’ representative.\textsuperscript{42} Still, by comparison with the previous regime, the Tutsis were better off, and the country was making some progress. As a German missionary later said,

\textsuperscript{41} Voltairenet.org, 2000: 1.
\textsuperscript{42} Also see Ndiaye, 1993: 7; Prunier, op. cit.; OAU, op. cit: Chap 4.
[In the early 1980s] we used to compare the nearly idyllic situation in Rwanda with the post-Idi Amin chaos in Uganda, the Tutsi apartheid in Burundi, the ‘real African socialism’ of Tanzania, and Mobutu’s kleptocracy in Zaire, and we felt the regime had many positive points.\(^{43}\)

**Jurisprudence**

. . . if a regime does not aim at certain political values, and has no arrangements intended to provide for them, then those values will not be realized. But while a regime may include institutions explicitly designed to realize certain values, it still may fail to do so. Its basic structure may generate social interests that make it work very differently than its ideal description.\(^{44}\)

The first years of the Second Republic, as pointed out, were naturally faced with many challenges, among which was the problem of law and order. Two Belgian lawyers, doing a study of Rwandan lawyers, described judicial life at the time:

There is indeed hardly any juridical and scientific forum in Rwanda and legal life as a whole is implicit and diffuse. About 12 Rwandese lawyers educated in foreign law schools are active in Rwanda, of whom only about 4 are in the judicial system. The others mostly hold important offices in the administration and the diplomatic corps. There is no such thing as an organized bar.\(^{45}\)

The small, first graduating class of lawyers from Rwanda’s national university wasn’t until the end of the ‘70s. Meanwhile, the legal system continued procedure instituted by the colonial Belgian administration, which included traditional Rwandan laws. The judges on the Constitutional Court are, as with the other most important offices in the country, appointed by the president (Habyarimana). The two branches of the Constitutional Court


\(^{44}\) Rawls, 2001: 137.

\(^{45}\) Gorus and Reyntjens, 1977: 140.
direct trial courts in each préfecture, three appeal courts, and police courts throughout the community. Traditional local courts only handle minor cases.\textsuperscript{46}

Wright makes a valuable observation about law and an administration’s need to establish trust from the population as part of the social contract:

\begin{quote}
Writing was hardly the only thing . . . that helped solve the trust problem. Another was the systematization of justice: the assurance that cheaters will be punished. But even here, writing helps; legal codes carry more precision and heft when etched in something solid. The informal justice system of a chieftdom just wouldn’t do now that daily life involved so many close encounters with people who were neither relatives nor acquaintances. So the government had to build a new anti-cheating technology, a new technology of trust; trust not just in economic justice, but in the larger social contract, the mutual nonaggression pact that, by relieving people of fear and suspicion, smoothes all kinds of cooperative efforts.\textsuperscript{47}
\end{quote}

This trust was, unfortunately, an unrecognized challenge among Habyarimana’s single-party government, which considered obedience of primary importance, or rather utility. As we have seen, ‘democracy’ was thought possible by most new African States only within the strictures of a single-party government. Nyerere had considerable influence on this view. Thus, trade unions had to be aligned with the party, and local human rights organizations were very slow to develop because of the barriers to their operation. “The party claimed to encourage ‘responsible democracy’, meaning ‘the free expression of ideas on condition that they are seen as useful to the collectivity and are articulated publicly.’\textsuperscript{48}

In this relative ‘vacuum’ of jurisprudence, one operational aspect of the Second Republic’s administration is the ease with which an extra-judicial mindset prevailed: President Kayibanda and most of his cabinet and high officials, for example, had not been

\begin{footnotes}
\item \textsuperscript{46} Pomeray, op. cit.: 4
\item \textsuperscript{47} Wright, 2000: 98-99.
\item \textsuperscript{48} Newbury, C. 1992a: 197, with quote from Mfizi 1983: 61.
\end{footnotes}
banished from the country or tried in court (and what were they guilty of under the law?), but summarily arrested, imprisoned, and eliminated; concerning the violation of human rights Habyarimana was not an anomaly—his government in this regard was little different from nearly every African government south of the Sahara—and there was a persistent underlying attitude among many within his administration that the wrongs Hutus suffered under the mwamiship had yet to be recompensed, and that a slide back into ‘feudality’ was a constant threat that needed to be guarded against. This ‘prevent’ mentality, underlay by fear, manifested itself in repression and control. Freedom of the press was tightly controlled, and

the fate awaiting those Rwandans who did not accept the rules was clear to all. Dissenters were few and far between, and the few nonconformists were subjected to arbitrary arrests, torture, and long stretches in wretched prisons without benefit of trial. The justice system was independent in name only. There was a small, almost exclusively Hutu intellectual elite, including academics at the country’s only university, on whom the government could count for active support or, at the least, acquiescent silence. Job loss was the price of speaking out.49

How is it that Habyarimana failed to grasp the essential dependence of democracy on the law? Again, this may point to the influence of the military on his thinking, but it is also an unfortunate holdover from traditional practices carried out by the succession of mwamis, where the belief was that his authority was unchallengeable, no other law existing, and he ruled at will, which resulted, in Rwanda’s case, in a monolithic, slowly changing society. This repression of social dynamism, embedded in the mwamiship, appears to have discouraged Habyarimana and his associates from appreciating the play of ideas and events outside their MRND bloc; they failed to recognize or appreciate the

49 OAU, op. cit.: para 4.13.
gravity of the refugee problem, the value and necessity of utilizing the peasant-farmers’
expertise and input in economic development (for example, the farmers’ increasingly dire
need for small bank loans for cultivating off-farm employment and cross-border trade), and
from grasping the basic premise of empowering the populace by allowing them the
freedom to develop their entrepreneurial skills. While Kayibanda’s downfall was his
inability to effectively control the government, Habyarimana’s failing was (continued)
over-control by the State.\textsuperscript{50} What may have worked in the army did not work for a nation.
Bourdieu expresses this well in his observation, paraphrased here by Taylor, that

\begin{quote}
Exercising their volition, social actors constantly refashion their world, but they do
so under the constraint of institutions and patterns of thought that they have
inherited from previous generations and of which they may be only dimly aware.\textsuperscript{51}
\end{quote}

Throughout the Second Republic Habyarimana calls for a ‘refashioning’ of Rwanda, but,
in fact, unconsciously carries on patterns inherited from precolonial, colonial, and post
colonial socio-economic and political systems, especially evident in regionalism, top-
down, single party, central government control, ethnicism, and corruption. The peasant-
farmers, keenly aware of this \textit{plus ça change} regarding life at the basic level of the hills,
thereby viewed elections with little enthusiasm.

Habyarimana put forth his promise to the people, in the preamble to the MRND
manifesto, that peace and unity would be the cornerstone of his government policies, and
that the MRND, alongside the people, was committed to:

\textsuperscript{50} C.f. Berlage, J. \textit{et al} (2004: 21), “During the early years . . . the Habyarimana regime still had to establish itself
among the peasant masses. Some classical dictatorial policy measures were taken. In 1975, Habyarimana abolished
all political parties and made all Rwandans members of the MRND. From then onwards, the MRND would be used as
a vehicle for distributing political rents and to build mass loyalty. . . . from 1975 to 1977, this coincided with a rise in
the real international and domestic coffee price. In our typology, such a dictator, who buys more loyalty as well as
more repression when the price of the export crop rises, was said to be totalitarian.

\textsuperscript{51} Bourdieu, 1977.
• An uprooting of the effects of the historical hate and division among the regions and three ethnic groups;
• A combining of all our energies against the under-development of our mental and socio-economic abilities;
• An injunction against a Rwandan feudal mentality, with its spirit of caste and court intrigues, which hinder national development;
• An end to all forms of exploitation;
• A vigorous fight against laziness, lawlessness, and ethnic, regional and religious extremism.\textsuperscript{52}

But the principles of the republic started by Kayibanda and adopted by Habyarimana take a great deal of time to actually realize. The development of democracy is the development of ideas, gathered over time through exposure to a variety of ways of life made possible through trade, travel, warfare, and other means, but also partnered with an economic and legal structure that will support those ideas. Rwanda, to begin with, was landlocked, surrounded by undeveloped territories with whom there was negligible trade or communication; consequently, development was thwarted, circumscribed and slow. Though tea and coffee, introduced by the Belgians, became valuable revenue exports, the geography of the country prohibited mechanized or large-scale farming, and a mono-crop economy didn’t furnish enough capital with which to build the economy and provide public services. A basic problem was State ownership of enterprises, and with little private entrepreneurship outside government interference, people who could make sufficient profits with which to build their own enterprises and invest in others, and thus incrementally grow a middle class having managers, technical professionals, wholesalers,

\textsuperscript{52} MRND, Manifeste et Statuts: 87, cited in Mvuyekure, 2000: n.p. Habyarimana was good on his word regarding a certain laissez-faire toward the Tutsis. As Lemarchand mentions, in the early part of his presidency, Habyarimana “went to great lengths to integrate Tutsi elements into society, and publicly stress the need for national reconciliation” (Lemarchand, 2002: 6, cited in Fujii, 2004: 101). Still, and this double face of the Habyarimana presidency is double knot to untie—marriage between different ethnic groups was also strictly discouraged, when not forbidden; in the army, a soldier who married a Tutsi lost his rank and other benefits.
retailers, and so on, spearheading the development of a successful economic matrix, did not flourish. There existed, instead, a system largely consisting of government rent seekers, who selfishly devoured profits and gave nothing back to the economy. 53

Since the mid-70s, army authorities became interested in business. Militarization of credit allowed powerful officers from the President’s subregion and their allies to invest in all kinds of business, from imports and exports to retail, transportation and industry. This is where the alloy with Tutsi élite originated from. Men in power did not have all the time and expertise required for the running of their business, but they were in a position of using the State to secure markets, obtain credit, facilitate criminal operations like hard currency smuggling. Then the army mission changed from protecting Republican institutions to protecting men in power and this new business partnership. The armed forces were administered in the logic of redistribution. Hybridization of the military and business which facilitated the hybridization of the Hutu élite in power and the Tutsi élite in business facilitated criminalization of public processes, from the administration to politics. 54

This was the Mobutu model, and it operated, as well, on the grants and loans from international funder.

But, what can we say about Habyarimana’s ‘training’ for the office of president: he grew up on a primitive, small farm, with nothing more sophisticated than a hoe and machete as tools. His education at Catholic schools prepared him to be a priest, not exactly a worldly profession. When he entered officer’s school he was 24 and had experienced nothing of the world outside Rwanda except for the few months he had spent at university in the capital of the neighboring, impoverished country, the Congo, and the

53 C.f. Verwimp (op. cit.: 4), “...what Habyarimana meant by the word ‘development’ is very different from the meaning of that word in the development economics literature. In fact, Habyarimana’s ‘development’ is exactly the opposite of economic and human development.”

54 Gasana, 1995: 15. Gasana (ibid; 14) provides another important point concerning the role of the army: “The tradition of use of State violence in the exercise of power has got deep roots in Rwanda's history. It is this violence, and not cattle clientship as such which facilitated Tutsi political domination over Hutu masses. . . . Silence of oppressed groups has always been the golden rule of coexistence with those in power. . . . After the 1959 revolution . . . the army was used . . . to protect Republican institutions against attempts of former aristocrats to return to power. This remained the defence mission . . . and the armed forces were never prepared for external defence until the RPF . . . invasion. The means they had, their structure, and lack of modalities of civil defence are proof that they were there to be used by a group of Rwandans against other Rwandans. [my italics].

306
short training he received at a military base in Belgium. Yet, he was a natural leader, and enjoyed and was at ease in the company of men, in the fraternity of soldiery. Some writers on Rwanda have denigrated Habyarimana’s attention to the country’s vast majority, the peasant farmers, insisting that he paid them lip service but did nothing for their well being, while keeping the country rural and suppressing the growth of urban centres. This notion ignores what we’ve just outlined above: Habyarimana was at ease with farmers because he came from a farm and it was his natural milieu. Farmers are traditionally conservative and frank by circumstances, qualities that Habyarimana admired and which must have seemed a welcome relief compared to the infighting and intrigues of political life. Habyarimana’s daughter’s (Marie-Rose, b. 1968) account of his open delight in driving unencumbered through the countryside and working in the garden/field of his rural home gives a brief insight into the man’s natural inclinations:

Since adolescence, I grew up alongside a father who was strong, courageous, devoted, intelligent and a tireless worker. I remember a model father, who was always there for his family, who surrounded us with much warmth, love, protection and joy. A father always concerned with the well being of his family and with the children’s education. We respected him a lot, not because of his position as head of state, but because everything about him brought out and inspired respect. Though, he was characterized by a simplicity, humility, and generosity. He was respectful, tolerant, composed but cheerful, just and honest. He was a man very sociable, well-trained (through the military school and experience), educated, and a real gentleman, who displayed class.

My father was a very busy man. And, though, in spite of his responsibilities as a statesman, he always managed to find a moment to spend with his family. Every evening, when he returned from work, he would invite everyone into the living room for a chat, because his pleasure was to be surrounded by his wife and children.

With his eight children, his “tribe” as he called us, he told us that we are all equal, regardless of age or sex. In our education, there was the tradition of

---

55 In this regard, it should be noted that he created OPROVIA (National Office for Development and marketing of Foodstuffs & Livestock Products) in 1975, at the beginning of his presidency, in order to promote farming and livestock production around the country.
primogeniture, rather than male authority, that was applied, but with respect and without abuse. I remember that once, just for amusement, the children decided to invert the roles, to give the younger ones a chance to give orders to the older ones. Our parents didn’t even have to remind us of the good manners they had instilled, we just followed their example. For example, in my life, I never saw my father and my mother argue or exchange hateful or hurtful comments. We grew up in a healthy environment, which created in our house a spirit of sharing, togetherness, solidarity and love; but equally, I think, of innocence and naivety. I am proud and satisfied with the education I received from my parents, but the one thing which I reproach them for is not having sufficiently provided against the nastiness one encounters in the world. Maybe they, themselves, weren’t conscious of it!

My father was just, dignified, and a man of his word. His acts and judgments were always thought out. For example, he didn’t blindly believe everything he was told, he first took time to verify things before acting, such that he wanted justice and equality among his children, and advocated them for the Rwandan people.

He was an honest man, who didn’t tolerate lying. When we made serious mistakes, a single look on his part, or the tone of his voice was enough to make us realize what we had done or to bring things back to order. He never raised his hand against us. He was a peaceful person.

He didn’t like all the formalities and protocol reserved for heads of state. At home, he preferred to be attended by his children or wife rather than by domestic servants, whether it be for daily family life or for when there were guests. Even our guests, especially strangers, were surprised by the simplicity and casual atmosphere of our home.

My father was very human and generous. He had much respect for others and learned from everyone, such that he was at ease when dealing with a powerful country, as well as with a farmer, and was respectful to everyone. He was truly a man who had what it takes to be head of state. He told us that we must not feel superior to other kids simply because our father was president. “You are the children of Rwanda, just like everybody else, and you must respect each person, regardless of rank, class or ethnicity.”

I remember that one time we begged him to put us in a Belgian or French school so we could speak “good French”, like the whites, because we had a lot of friends who attended those schools, and father said to us “Why underestimate Rwandan schools? What do you think, then, of the millions of other students who attend them? Is the Belgian school going to teach you Rwandan history, or the values and mores of our country? Instead of paying these western schools, which cost an enormous amount more than Rwandan schools, I prefer to use the money to help impoverished and underprivileged kids.” So, he paid from his own pockets school fees or medical costs for those kids in need, and he donated to charity goods that he had received as gifts from officials and foreign dignitaries.

Coming from a large Christian family, and having in turn founded a large family, he left us a heritage of sharing and togetherness.
As an avid nature lover, my father instituted a tradition in our house of taking the family on trips for the weekend. He got his “tribe” together in the car, took the driver’s seat and we made our escape, discovering the beauties of Rwanda. He took us to learn the valuable and rich aspects of our country. And, for this, we toured all the prefectures, for instruction, but also for leisure. Often, when we lacked inspiration about visiting some place, we took off without a plan, sometimes following impassible trails, but the adventure was always pleasant and rewarding.

We really enjoyed these family trips in the fresh air, where we had picnics, went fishing, met people without having to be formal, rescued lost young animals, searched for wild ornamental plants to plant in our garden, etc. The forests of Rwanda are full of orchids, which my father was crazy about. He put a collection of plants throughout our garden, of which he was proud; trees of all varieties, from all over Rwanda and from different countries. My father also loved animals very much. He was known for being a protector and defender of the environment.

I sometimes served in a private capacity, but in some rare cases in an official capacity, as an interpreter for him when dealing with English speakers. It was in an official capacity that I accompanied him to Tanzania on the 4th of August, 1993, when he signed the famous Arusha Accords. I translated between my father and President Museveni in a private conversation, because in official talks they had professional interpreters. Here, it is with complete frankness that I can give testimony to the real will of my father to find a peaceful solution to a conflict imposed on Rwanda. I saw him grip, with calmness and hope, the hand of those who attacked him, slandered him, and treated him badly, only for the sake of the Rwandan people, to return peace to the country. In spite of what people think and say, my father sincerely believed in the Accords. He fervently defended peace, and was ready to do anything reasonable to bring it back.

He was truly a just man, who carried the interest of his country in his heart. He said that he was the president of all the Rwandan people without distinction of ethnicity or of regions, and that he must protect and defend the interests of everyone, at the cost of being accused of being too protective of the Tutsi by some, and of being an extremist Hutu by others.

He had considerable courage, and was physically and morally strong, because it was on his shoulders that the family rested, as well as all his relatives and the entire people of Rwanda. He spread a feeling of security, in as much as he was strong, composed, and reflective. He was a sportsman, but did sports less and less as he got older. He was a tireless worker, and had a sense of duty and of doing things well. He wrote his speeches himself.

Living with him was a true school of learning, very enriching and pleasant. I found that he knew so many things, in so many fields, and I enjoyed listening to him talk. A nature lover, he knew a large number of plant names, animals and places, but he spoke to us also about literature, philosophy, history, medicine, and other things. Gifted with a keen memory, he needed only one mention of a person’s name, or a place, and he wouldn’t forget it. Often, I dreamed of having even a hundredth of his general knowledge or intelligence. However, he always
remained humble, and never boasted of his accomplishments, his qualities or his knowledge.

He appreciated life and had much love to give. He appreciated good company and was sincere in his friendships. He was truly pleasant company, funny and good at putting people at ease, because he was very sociable. Endowed with a natural sense of humor, he spread joy around him. He often told us jokes and he loved to tease us, and it was difficult to get the best of him. When he was not at home, there was a great emptiness, because his presence alone produced a feeling of security.

When I think of him, I tell myself that I was lucky to have had a father like him. He was a man of so many virtues and I learned so much from him. He equipped me with a love and strength which I have needed to confront life on this earth.  

Putting aside for the moment the many different allegations against Habyarimana, these words by his daughter have a lack of artifice that is difficult to dismiss. At any rate, at this point in his presidency, Habyarimana has a relaxed family life, and the freedom to move unguarded about the country with wife and children without fear. One is also reminded of Habyarimana’s farm upbringing and the place of the Hutu in the popular mind—a place central to the MRND and later taken over by the Hutu Power group—a place echoed thirty years before in an observation by a colonial agent:

> It is the farmer who grasps the earth, transforms it, gives it the stamp of humanity and creates an historic landscape ... In Rwanda this conqueror, this transformer, is the Bantu farmer, the Muhutu. It is he who emerged from the forest, made the first network of long-lasting paths, strew the countryside with green enclosures and homes; he, who, multiplying as the stars of the sky and the sand of seas, filled with his presence sixty thousand square kilometers which speaks to him his language

Habyarimana’s many photo ops taken in rural areas around the country, hoeing irrigation channels, planting saplings for reforestation projects, clearing brush and levelling dirt roads, are obviously politically driven in support of umuganda and the MRND’s development platform, but they are not ‘false’ pictures, whereby the president is injected

---

56 Personal communication.
into an artificial setting, as if, say Mitterrand were photographed propped on a farm tractor in Picardie.
ECONOMIC ILLS AND THE GROWTH OF AN INEGALITARIAN SOCIETY—THE URBAN-RURAL DICHOTOMY

Economic IIs and the Growth of an Inegalitarian Society—the Urban-Rural Dichotomy

But as often happens in Habyarimana’s presidency there is a kind of schizophrenic ‘dualism’, as when, in a 1976 speech he insists that “Our Movement has to support and implement the will to banish ethnic discrimination”,1 while simultaneously imposing a quota system against the Tutsis and continuing the discriminatory ID ethnic designations. Or when he seems to edge near a more open society, in some areas, by opening the door between public office and private ventures, allowing “ownership of rented houses, the purchase of rented vehicles, and interests in both mixed economy enterprises and commercial enterprises”,2 then allows this positive step to lead to serious abuses, as noted by Bezy:

The myth of an “egalitarian republic” had evaporated: a quaternary bourgeoisie (military, administrative, business and technocratic) embezzles for its own benefit an important part of the national income.3 and to a break between the urban minority-rural majority link. As Hanssens puts it, While the actual leaders are still “peasants” at heart, the children of the cadres or office holders take to an urban model and when they are in power they will have lost all contact with reality. Hence the Zaïrisation of Rwanda with an elite that is bound to neglect social infrastructures in order to boost its own well-being.4

---

1 Kayibanda died not long after this speech, on 15 December.
3 Bézy, 1990, cited in ibid.
This inability to corral and lead government officials away from corrupt practices is the same weakness that Kayibanda displayed and that led to his downfall; but also, the ‘quaternary bourgeoisie’ describes a set of relationships that has existed in any number of societies around the globe over the last two thousand years, and is nothing unique to Rwanda. There is nothing to suggest that Habyarimana ever strenuously fought for an egalitarian ‘MRND State’, perhaps because he was politically astute enough to realize he would have been unable to defeat the various powerful individuals and factions arrayed around him.

Although the administration has been described as opening towards the outside world, “in urban growth, in investment, and also in business, with an increase in the number of diplomatic posts”\(^5\), the economy did not sustain the State, and foreign aid became the primary, and in some cases the only, source of funding for public services and much-needed infrastructural development. There were improvements in telecommunications, roads, and access to electricity in some locations, but these were tied to foreign aid and could not be sustained by the economy alone.

In 1976, a year after the MRND was formed, Archbishop Nsengiyumva, an avid supporter of Habyarimana, and who used to sport the president’s portrait pin on his cassock during mass, was nominated to the MRND’s central committee, thus erasing another democratic safeguard, the separation between Church and State; the Church was now formally alloyed to government.\(^6\) One of the most damaging aspects of this cozy alliance was that, amid overcrowding and widespread poverty and the pressing need for an


\(^6\) This seamless joining of Church and State, which Habyarimana inherited from Kayibanda, reveals a blindness to laïcité that hindered Habyarimana’s ability to construct an idea of democracy.
immediate and effective government birth control program, the Church resisted it:

“Habyarimana was strongly supported by the Catholic Church in his advocacy of moral values, the labor ethic, and obedience to authority”, and it, like the president, considered cities harboring depravity, crime and prostitution, dangerous places which corrupted the youth. Prostitutes were sent to a re-education camp in the prefecture of Kibungo. A majority of clergy were Tutsi (as it was one of their few open avenues for non-farm endeavors), but Hutus claimed seven of the nine bishoprics.

Both Catholic and Protestant clergy cooperated with officials by passing on state announcements from the pulpit and by serving on councils, particularly those that reviewed development projects at the prefectural or communal level.8

And, as Longman points out, concerning the Church’s impact on and involvement in society,

In the local community, especially in rural areas, churches represent an imposing presence, frequently offering more employment and having more resources to distribute than the state. As a result, priests and pastors are powerful figures, and local struggles for power may actually center around the church as much as they do the state. With important international connections and an ability to raise funds internally, churches have substantial wealth to distribute, and those who have held positions of power in Rwanda’s churches have used their ability to determine who gets jobs, scholarships, development assistance, and other benefits to advance their personal interests.9

Yet, even though the Church had reached into every aspect of Rwandan life, and had had close ties to the government, it failed to prevent or stop the 1994 genocide. It appears that though the Church had a significant positive impact on Rwandan society from its appearance in the early part of the century—by the introduction of written language and the propagation of literacy, and its involvement in the independence movement—its

---

7 Verwimp, 2000: 11.
8 HRW, ibid.
9 Longman, 2001: 171. Also see Longman, 1998: 51-68, for the Church’s impact on society during Habyarimana’s years.
support of the MRND’s policies, even to the extent of turning a blind eye to massacres, exhibits a larger concern with its own survival as an institution than with fighting for humanitarian concerns. Many people by the ‘90s had, in fact, joined other organizations in light of the Church’s unwillingness to join the struggle against the many and continuing abuses conducted by the MRND. The many ways in which the Church was intertwined with Habyarimana’s regime will be touched upon as we go through the years of his presidency, and it will become evident that the Church was played as much as being a player.

In September 1976, a year after the MRND was formed, Rwanda formed the Economic Community of the Great Lakes (CEPGL) with Zaire and Burundi, with the aim of insuring their mutual security. Rwanda’s interest in the union was partly driven by the concern that Idi Amin, the president of their northern neighbor, Uganda, posed a potential threat. Amin had angered Kenya with his announcement that he thought parts of Kenya had been part of colonial Uganda. Kenya responded by deploying troops on the border and cutting off fuel sources to Uganda. Idi Amin responded by seizing 30 oil tankers bound for Rwanda and Zaire, which seriously disrupted Rwandan industrial output. This points out how important to Rwanda the land route was through Uganda to Kenyan ports, and the difficulty of being landlocked with few alternatives for commercial external outlets, but also how precarious the relationship between Rwanda and Uganda was and would continue.
to be, finally exploding with the Museveni-supported Tutsi invasion of Rwanda in 1990.

The problem of land ownership and dispersion among family members had become a particular problem after independence and Kayibanda’s edict privatizing land. Habyarimana’s administration adopted a statutory order in 1976 that prohibited the sale and purchase of land, with the aim of avoiding the development of a land market, but which largely went ignored. At the same time, the government instituted a plan for resettlement of marshy areas and of undeveloped land in the eastern part of the country. The rural area is still quite separate from the capital, where the only activities not related to agricultural occur. Kigali is still relatively small for a nation’s capital, having about 30,000 inhabitants. James Bartleman, a former diplomatic advisor to Canada’s prime minister, Jean Chrétien, gives this remembrance of Rwanda from 1977 to the later years of Habyarimana’s time in office:

[In 1977]. . . we returned to Africa on holiday. . . this time to Rwanda. . . . There were no tourists and few white people to be seen either in the capital, Kigali, or at Gisenyi on the shores of Lake Kivu, where we spent most of our time. . . . Everyone was exceedingly courteous and kind. . . . I paid more than passing attention to developments in Rwanda and its sister republic Burundi from the time I encountered Grégoire Kayibanda in 1967 until I joined the prime minister’s team in March 1994. The news was always bad.12

This is a time (the late ‘70s) when it seems likely that the ‘friendship’ between Mobutu and Habyarimana became closer, after the formation of the CEPGL and through various meetings in this period (though their relationship would deepen in the ‘80s). There is a similarity in the stated rationale behind the two presidents’ coups, as seen in Mobutu’s explanation of his taking control of the country in 1965,

---

11 It is one of those ironies of history that Habyarimana actually supported in 1984 Museveni’s guerrilla war against the Obote government, just six years before Museveni supported the RPF invasion of Rwanda.

The very existence of the Nation was threatened. Threatened on all sides, from the interior and exterior. From the interior, by the sterile conflicts of politicians who sacrificed the country and their compatriots to their own interests. Nothing counted for them but power . . . and what the exercise of power could bring them. . . . both national and provincial administrations were mired in inertia, inefficiency, and worse yet, corruption. . . . the social, economic and financial situation of the country is catastrophic.\footnote{Young, 1985: 42.}

The two presidents were both educated in Catholic missionary schools, were supported by their army commanders in performing the coups and, immediately after which, both suspended the existing government and instituted military rule. They both paid homage to their country’s previous ‘hero’—Lumumba in Zaire, and Kayibanda in Rwanda—whose deaths are attributed to the presidents, and both presidents formed new one-party governments with names including the words ‘Revolutionary Movement’ (Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution in Zaire, and Mouvement Révolutionnaire pour le Développement in Rwanda), and both would be re-elected unopposed. They both looked upon the people as their ‘children’, developed the ‘doctrine of authenticity’ which they hoped would bring about unity and a strong national identity. By the early 90’s both regimes faced growing dissent and opposition parties, and offered various concessions in an attempt to stay in power. Habyarimana and Mobutu operated in many of the same ways, maintaining control of the media, domestic and foreign policy, the military, and various power holders, and both were dependent on the Church, in its organization and funding, to manage the nation’s schools. The two friends, also, near the end of their reigns in the ‘90s, were unable to make debt payments regarding the Structural Adjustment Programs imposed by the IMF and World Bank. Not unique in Africa (nor in many countries), but
nevertheless an important part of their similar politics, they engaged in a mismanagement of public resources (Mobutu on an incomparable scale) and a nepotism that brought wealth and power to their relatives. Perhaps the most important continuing aspects of their relationship is Habyarimana’s need to have a strong ally against the unpredictable States of Uganda and Burundi on his north and south borders, as well as the unstable situation concerning rebellious groups in eastern Zaire, near Rwanda, who threatened the shipment of valuable natural resources from the region through Rwanda: according to Braeckman, the two presidents’ coteries entertained close business relations, especially between Bemba Saolona, “the richest man in Zaire”, and Silas Majambere, “a Rwandan businessman connected to the Habyarimana family”, who gave Saolona in 1990 “the full powers to manage . . . the shares which he (Majambere) holds in the Rwandan companies of Sogetri, EAR (Nestlé) and Danimo, in case he dies”. 14 Mobutu also offered to Habyarimana land west of Goma, onto which Hutus could expand, but local Zairians attacked them. 15 Paul Rusesabagina, of “Hotel Rwanda” fame, in a 2007 interview, said about Rwanda and the “Congo”,

Habyarimana was trucking minerals from Congo [Zaire]. So was Mobutu. And there was no infrastructure in the Congo, so everything was fleeing the Congo by Rwanda. That was very well known. Smuggling minerals, smuggling coffee. . . . Rwanda was producing more coffee than Congo. . . . If you planted coffee over the whole country of Rwanda, you cannot have produced what we were selling outside. That was smuggling. . . . Coming from Congo, from Burundi, from Uganda—and going back, crossing Uganda again, to Mombasa [Kenya]. . . . You see, in Rwanda, we say that we always change dancers and the music stays the same. Rwanda exports more diamonds and gold, more metals than any other African country. And yet, we do not produce any in Rwanda and we sell so much more than the Congo. 16

14 Braeckman, 1994: 109
15 Ibid: 102
It also seems to be the case that Habyarimana depended on Mobutu for his knowledge of how to preserve the hold on power against opposition groups and other pressures, but this need lessened with Habyarimana’s years of experience in office, even to the extent that by the early ‘90s, as Habyarimana considers himself the “Invincible” he could meet with Mobutu and offer his own advice, and “dreams to become the undisputed, political and spiritual chief of all the Hutus—those of Rwanda, those of Burundi, and also those of Zaire. Mobutu is even driven to reprimand him.” Braeckman also states that Habyarimana’s wife made frequent trips with her children to Mobutu’s home in Gbadolite, causing friction with her husband. Though the Mobutu-Habyarimana relationship has several facets that made it advantageous for both presidents and their entourages, Habyarimana had nothing to gain concerning his reputation by being close to Africa’s largest kleptocrat, nor was his understanding of democracy edified by rubbing elbows with Mobutu’s policies of purposeful pauperization of the country.

Although the MRND’s new constitution, of December 1978, found its inspiration in the French, Belgian, and Tanzanian examples: France’s “arrangement of the powers and their mutual relationships”, Belgian “protection of public liberties”, and Tanzania’s “statutes and the role of a single party,” an important added article declares that “the Rwandan people are politically organized within the M.R.N.D. ‘The only political

---

17 Ibid: 103.
18 Ibid.
19 Jackson and Rosberg (1986: 23), “Patrimonialism in new states often produces a political economy based upon 'spoils', in which corruption becomes the modus operandi of government. Personal rulers can easily appropriate public funds for private use, and their families, friends, allies, associates, and clients are well situated to do the same. . . In Zaire, President Mobutu and several members of his family reportedly withdrew $150 million in foreign exchange from the Bank of Zaire for their personal use between January 1977 and March 1979.”
organization, outside the framework of which no political activity can be practiced,” which is of Zairian origin and shows another of Mobutu’s influences on Habyarimana. However, in a larger, general sense, the MRND’s new constitution and government structure shared characteristics with that of many other African States:

an extreme concentration of power in a personalized Executive, who controls both the Legislature and the Judiciary, one-party or military rule and lack of limited government, and the effective denial of a number of fundamental rights, particularly those that may have a political impact (such as the freedoms of the press, assembly and association).

The constitution permitted the formation of labor unions, yet by 1988 none were in effect. Although Habyarimana participated in and set up at least one conference on human rights, his administration was cited for ignoring the writ of *habeas corpus* (a foundational right underlying the democratic process), and for torturing prisoners, among whom were high-level officials in the former administration. As in many countries, Rwanda’s policy of unwarranted detention was used as a means to silence critics and the political opposition; these practices continued all the while the MRND was claiming “the free expression of ideas on condition that they are seen as useful to the collectivity and are articulated publicly”. How free expression was supposed to be carried out in a State where a sole party was the same entity as the government and ‘blanketed’ the country, was rather a moot point, when

the local administrative authority was, at the same time, the representative of the party within his administrative unit. There was therefore a single centralized

---

22 “Even when the international community descended on Rwanda in 1979 with a human rights focus, no attention was given to the fate of members of the previous government” (Dottridge, 2007: 245).
organization, both for the State and the party, which stretched from the Head of State down to basic units known as cellules, with even smaller local organs, each comprising ten households, below the cellules.24

It wasn’t until October 1989, in an attempt to control the abuses, that “the Minister of Justice ordered the Kigali prosecutor either to charge or to release the 1,900 prisoners held in Kigali central prison without charge or trial”.25 The ‘blanketing’ of the opposition and control of the State, exacerbated by both north-south polarities and sub-regional infighting, did not go unchallenged: a coup was instigated in 1980 by Col. Alexis Kanyarengwe, who had once been minister of the interior (and who was forced to flee to Tanzania) and involved Théoneste Lizinde, Stanislas Biseruka, and Alexis Kanyarengwe—three of Habyarimana’s highest ranking officers—all of whom later joined the RPF (Lizinde joined the RPF after they rescued him from prison following the invasion of Rwanda, and was subsequently made Vice Prime Minister in 1994, then Minister of the Interior a year later, after which he left the country and was murdered in Kenya). In a press release, Habyarimana explained that “officials of the Rwandan state security service had organized a subversive network at the beginning of March, which had attempted to overthrow the regime by distributing tracts all over the country criticizing the government’s policy and accusing the President of corruption”.26 He had dismissed Secretary General, Bonaventure Buregeya, and other functionaries, on charges of corruption, and rather than uniting the regime, this “shifted the nexus of competition to the factions within the north,”27 and Habyarimana “set aside his political allies from Ruhengeri and even within Gisenyi

27 Fujii, 2009: 73; also see HRW, op cit.
prefecture. His political allies from the region of Bugoyi suffered the same fate.” 28 It wasn’t until September of the following year that Lizinde and the other conspirators were tried, and after three months of trial sentenced to death, but eight months later, during the anniversary of independence, Lizinde’s and Ndegeya’s sentences were reduced to life in prison.

Along with the new constitution, there was the merger of the Gendarmerie with the Army, which eventually became F.A.R. (Rwandese Army Force). The army continued to be the one ‘solid’ entity in the country, well-ordered and unified, and the most visible representation of the nation, 29 but Habyarimana’s close relationship with the officers had taken a hit with the coup attempt. He appointed Dominique Mbonyumutwa (the first president of Rwanda after independence) as Chancellor of the National Orders, and kept him close until he died in 1986. Mbonyumutwa was Habyarimana’s ally against those politicians harboring sympathies towards the old MDR-PARMEHTU party; he, along with others, had drawn up a vote of censure accusing the Kayibanda government of corruption and had been expelled from the MDR-PARMEHTU party. Also worth noting in this period: the number of Tutsis, as a result of their persecution and the onerous quota system, had dwindled to 10% of the population, from a high of 17.5% ten years before independence.

Idi Amin continued to be a regional problem, invading Tanzania in November, which turned out to be his downfall; Tanzania countered with a successful military campaign that ended with the capture of the Ugandan capital, and Amin, driven from

28 Gasana 2002: 32?
29 For more on the role of the military see Ernest W. Lefever,1970; and Mazrui (ed.), 1997.
office, never regained power. This was a significant relief for Habyarimana, because he no longer had to worry about the commercial route to Kenya being interrupted. It is also possible that this incident gave Habyarimana a false sense of security, thinking that Uganda’s troops could be repulsed, as Tanzania had done, and perhaps that Tanzania would come to his aid if Uganda invaded Rwanda. This sense of security would later be betrayed by Ugandan president Museveni, with his furtive support of the RPF invasion launched from his country in 1990. But with Habyarimana’s re-election in January 1979 to another five-year term, he felt secure in his ‘mandate’. Development was occurring at a pace that attracted international funding and assistance: there were two hydroelectric and several steam power plants; manufacturing including small processing enterprises connected to the only three significant exports—coffee, tea, and pyrethrum—local breweries, flour mills, small sugar refineries, milk depots, mills for vegetable oil, small soap and tobacco factories, a company making aluminum cooking ware, a paint factory, and a few businesses engaged in assembling transistor radios\(^{30}\) (which radios would become a major propaganda tool for the perpetrators of the 1994 genocide).

In Kigali, two associations for the largest agricultural products were created: for tea, the Société Rwandaise pour la Production et la Commercialisation du Thé (SORWATHE); and for coffee, the Office de Cafes (OCIR-CAFÉ), and would supply Habyarimana and his associates with continuing personal financial and political advantages. The government did not allow other crops to be interplanted with coffee, and the government’s OCIR-CAFÉ bought all the coffee grown in the country, paying a fixed

rate per kilo, raising the price when it wanted to incentivize production, while a cartel company exported it, generating 60 to 80 percent of the country’s export revenue. The administration focused and depended on coffee revenues to such an extent—“to buy loyalty and fund the import of goods for urban elites”—that it made neglecting coffee shrubs punishable under the law, and placed observers at the level of the commune in order to ensure coffee production. OCIR-CAFÉ, itself, was a highly nepotistic affair, controlled by Habyarimana’s relatives.31

The politicization of coffee production limited farmers’ freedom to grow what they wished and how they wished. By imposing price caps for the product and by limiting freedom of contract, the government created a situation that led to frustration and resentment among the country’s many farmers.32

This is reiterated in the feelings and opinions of two small business proprietors in Ruhengeri, Tomas Musafili, a farm equipment salesman, and a butcher shop owner:

Musafili: We are what Americans call ‘at the end of the rope’. . . . Our difficulty is motivation. We must make the argument strongly for small families. Our farming practices have to be made sensible. Twenty-five percent of our land is planted with bananas and 90 percent of our bananas are use to make beer. I would not call this smart.

The butcher shop owner explained that if the Government had its way, the farmers would be in town with harvested pyrethrum, not potatoes. About 40 percent of Ruhengeri prefecture is supposed to be sown in pyrethrum, to be sold abroad to earn foreign exchange. The butcher explained convincingly that he would not spend a day picking a kilo of pyrethrum, which can be sold for about 8 cents when he could spend a few minutes hoeing up a kilo of potatoes, which would fetch 9 cents. Imports cost $180 million, while exports, mostly coffee and tea, earned barely two-fifths of that.33

The relationship between coffee, land and the Habyarimana regime, and the resulting impact on society and the economy is so essentially explained in the following passage by

33 Jaynes, 1980. “Before the 1990s, monopoly export agencies were common in African nations.”
James Gasana, the former Minister of Agriculture in the Habyarimana administration, that it is worth quoting the integral text:

Coffee exports on the 1973-1979 period were three times coffee exports on the 1966-1972 period. However, progress in production was achieved at the expense of the ecological capital. In mid-eighties, soil losses due to erosion removed from crop production an equivalent of 8,000 ha per annum, representing a loss of the capacity to carry 50,000 men. One of the consequences of this growth was an increase in State external earnings from coffee and tea exports. The resulting national budget comfort was used, not to reinvest in agricultural improvement, but to inflate State administration, and to finance inefficient import substitution industries, including those based on imports of quasi-finished material as raw material. Thus a rent economy grew on agricultural and foreign aid rents. Increasing State administration became a tool for resolving discontentment of power and status hungry élites through redistribution of these rents. An administrative bourgeoisie developed, and caesura with the rural population grew.

A financial alloy of the military élite in power and Tutsi commercial élite developed to reap the benefits of the growing rent economy. To facilitate this, a controlled “liberalisation” of the economy burgeoned, in which liberalisation meant allowing the civil and military officials to get actively involved in business without giving up employment with State, and tolerating criminal use of the State to enhance private business. An unprecedented corruption in high spheres of power developed and led to a generalised competition of civil servants for illicit enrichment.

Also developed since the 1970s is accumulation of land resources by those in power and State administration, as the State became the main instrument of accumulation under the Second Republic. Behind rewarding jobs, there was access to land, credit, and foreign exchange. Competition for land resources among people of unequal financial means led to alarming disparities, not only of landholding for different categories of families, but also in the use of their production potential. By the 1980s, it was estimated that 43% poorer families own only 15% of cultivated lands, whose average size of land area per family varied from less than 0.25 ha to 0.75 ha. About 50% of rural families had to hire land to produce for their basic subsistence needs. On the other end of the spectrum, 16% of land-rich families owned 43% of cultivated lands, with average area of more than 1 ha of land per family. Thus, poor farmers have been squeezed onto steep unproductive lands.

34 Gasana (2002: note 17, p. 10): “In absolute terms, these disparities would not be too alarming. But it is necessary to be aware of two things. First, farm differentiation in size developed very rapidly from an egalitarian situation of the 1960s. Secondly, the proportion of those families that cannot produce enough to satisfy their needs because of minute landholdings is too high. What is important then, to note, is the absolute lack of access to land resources for a great number of rural families in a situation of no creation of employments.”
where soil is constantly removed by erosion. Almost all these farmers, like most other poor Rwandans, are Hutu believed by the outside world to have shared power, from their hostile lands, with the tiny Hutu élite of the national bourgeoisie.

As a result of this imbalance, half the population of Rwanda was unable to meet the minimum food energy requirements of 2,100 calories per person per day, their effective food energy consumption having fallen below 1,900 calories per person per day. There was thus a structural famine whose roots were embedded in the inequitable and disorderly land tenure. In 1985 poor families spent 88% of their earnings to purchase food, and 98% of the poor were rural families. The skewed distribution of lands concentrating almost half of arable lands in the hands of wealthier people, who did not need to use its full potential, aggravated this situation. It contributed to the appalling rural unemployment of adults that was more than 30% at the end of the 1980s. By mid-1990, before the October 1990 war, it was already clear that as a result of this inequitable land tenure and high population pressure, the social explosion was a matter of only a few years.

In the second half of the 1980s, the country was severely hit by the deterioration of coffee prices on the world market, and the amount of its external earnings diminished. The exports value which was $US 60 per capita per annum in the period 1976-1979 fell to $US 13 in 1991. With decreasing external earnings, the capacity of the régime to redistribute State resources among its clients and to attract new ones suffered, and disgruntled élites started to express opposition to the political system. Among these were influential Tutsi businessmen who were involved in joint venture enterprises with their Hutu counterparts in power, and who felt they were being parasited under the conditions of a declining rent economy and dwindling State revenues. This led to an intra-élite crisis better described by a French saying that “quand les choses vont mal, les loups se mangent entre eux”.

The 1980s are therefore comparable to the 1950s as years of systemic crisis. While in the 1950s there was a crisis of the inegalitarian land resource appropriation, the 1980s were characterised by a crisis of egalitarian land allocation of the earlier years of the Republic era. But whereas there were unutilized land resource reserves in the 1950s, almost all drained arable lands were cultivated. Agricultural

35 Note 19, p 11: Paradoxically, it is agricultural prosperity that financed the disorganisation of land tenure. The inequitable redistribution of profits from cash crop exports that enabled the rich to accumulate land purchased from poor gardeners.

36 In public choice theory, rent-seeking is an attempt to obtain economic rent by manipulating the social or political environment in which economic activities occur, rather than by creating new wealth. A simple definition of rent seeking is spending resources in order to gain by increasing one's share of existing wealth, instead of trying to create wealth. The net effect of rent-seeking is to reduce total social wealth, because resources are spent and no new wealth is created. In a theoretical context, it is important to distinguish rent-seeking from profit-seeking. Profit-seeking in this sense is the creation of wealth, while rent-seeking is the use of social institutions such as the power of government to redistribute.
production reached a peak in early 1980s, while population continued to grow. The resulting land scarcity led to over-exploitation of smaller landholdings, and accelerated deterioration of crop production environment. By mid-1980s, there was a massive exodus of environmental refugees quitting hostile lands, particularly in Gikongoro and Kibuye prefectures, for Tanzania which repatriated them in 1990 as illegal immigrants.

These phenomena showed the weakness of a development model emphasising a rural development based on activities requiring land, and, consequently, excluding landless social groups. At the end of the 1980, the three decades of rural development projects were a total failure as far as financial resources invested are concerned. Beneficiaries of agriculture development programmes have obviously been families having sufficient land to apply extension programmes. Between 1985 and 1992, whereas the total population increased by 20%, the proportion of poor people grew by 70%. The poor peasantry and youth have not been captured by the dozens of rural development projects, except by occasional salaried employment.

Furthermore, most rural development projects followed State logic and became pipelines of international finance to further develop the burgeoning national bourgeoisie, and to strengthen State power. Rare are agricultural projects which have allocated more than 15% of their resources to finance agriculture. Most of the resources were used on project infrastructure, vehicles, and other imports. The more resources a project had, the more the élites reaped, and the less the target beneficiaries got. Typical examples are most of the World Bank projects, like the G.B.K. Agrosilvo-pastoral project, which have invariably oiled the corruption system in favor of a tiny élite in power. This is why in spite of a heavy financial investment per capita, rural development projects have failed to halt the trend to structural famine and to break the vicious circle of rural poverty.37

Coffee revenues were also redirected toward the tourist industry and the upkeep of the military.38 As we have seen, and as Gasana notes above, the administration’s corrupt public policies caused considerable distrust and disgust and led to a schism in the people’s trust in government. When considering how social cohesion and trust influence the quality of public policies, Knack considers that

37 Gasana, 1995: n.p. On land use in the ‘80s, also see the African Centre for Technology Studies Annual Report (2004: 90); Kamola (2008: 67-68) on rentier class; Chossudovsky (1995: n.p.); HRW (Op. cit), “Habyarimana also enjoyed active support from the heads of the parastatal corporations that controlled public services like gas, water and electricity, or bus transport, and those that oversaw the production and marketing of cash crops. He could call on the heads of private enterprises to contribute materially and politically to his cause, knowing they needed his approval for the state concessions that made their businesses profitable.”

the difference between long-term economic successes and failures is largely a function of incentives facing wealth-maximizing individuals. In some countries, the structure of incentives steers people primarily toward producing new wealth, while in other countries, it is easier to gain wealth by diverting it from others. The relative payoffs of production and predation (or “making” versus “taking”) are determined by legal mechanisms for enforcing contracts and protecting property rights, but also by social norms and interpersonal trust. . . . the private returns to predation increase while the private returns to production fall.39

It is unclear why Habyarimana gave little attention or support to the country’s industrialization; some passages in his speeches regarding industrialization are a kind of double-speak, such as working from a concept of “organic strategy” relying on a “global vision”, with industrial development having to be “auto-centered and endogenous”,

“Our strategy for industrialization will not have two heads (formal and informal sector); it will be an organic strategy coming from a global vision of the problems and the needs. Such a strategy will encourage industrial units of national dimension, but which will not be defined separately, or independent, but organic and in line with what is done for the small enterprise, in order for large enterprises to come to support the small ones and not to destroy them.”40

But what does organic mean to him? He confuses the word by applying it both to strategy and to industrial units, then by conflating the differences between industrial ‘units’ (whatever that means) and small enterprises, stating they will not be defined separately. Furthermore, his strategy for industrialization was to have no separate formal and informal sectors but was to consist of an ‘organic’ approach. But the definition of ‘organic’, when talking about strategies,41 is surely fairly straightforward, meaning that a plan emerges naturally from the situation, as part of its inherent structural elements and demands, so that the parts are in agreement with the whole, as opposed to imposing extrinsic elements into

39 Knack, 2001: 0.
40 Ibid: 41-42.
41 As opposed to talking about organic laws, which determine the fundamental political principles of a government.
the mix that create an artificial and often fractured or ill-fitting approach. As for the informal sector, it is by definition organic, arising from individuals’ responses to socio-economic and political conditions. Thus the informal economy affords income opportunities for “those that have no other means to survive. . . . people also engage in informal economic activities because of excessive taxation and regulation on the part of governments.”42 Seventy per cent of informal employment in sub-Saharan Africa is nonagricultural self-employment, and the informal economy accounts for over 90% of the new jobs. Table 6 compares the informal workforce among three developing regions of the world.

The informal economy is largely characterised by: low entry requirements in terms of capital and professional qualifications; a small scale of operations; skills often acquired outside of formal education; labour-intensive methods of production and adapted technology. Labour relations—where they exist—are based mostly on casual employment, kinship or personal and social relations rather than contractual arrangements with formal guarantees. . . . The informal economy has more of a fixed character in countries where incomes and assets are not equitably distributed. When economic development fails to create enough modern jobs to absorb the increasing numbers of unemployed people, the informal economy does not shrink. The situation is therefore that the informal economy is continuously increasing in most developing countries, even in rural areas. . . . there are many interdepend-

### Table 6. Informal Workforce in Three Developing Regions of the World

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informal Workforce as share of:</th>
<th>Africa</th>
<th>Latin America and Caribbean</th>
<th>Asia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-agricultural Employment</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>45-85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Employment</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40-60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jobs</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


---

42 Becker, 2004: 5.
encies between the informal and the formal economies... In addition, individuals can participate both in the formal and the informal economies... Enterprises in the informal economy have an entrepreneurial potential that could flourish if some major obstacles to growth were to be removed. Furthermore, even if only a fraction of informal enterprises would have the possibility to upgrade themselves, it would probably contribute substantially to increased economic growth.43

It is highly improbable that Habyarimana’s government could have had an accurate, or workable, definition either of what the informal economy was (and how it related to the formal economy) or of how much of the national economy it consisted, because of its intrinsic heterogeneity, there are many ways of defining the informal economy, and estimating the size of the informal economy is problematic, ... The informal economy is therefore not necessarily adequately reflected in the national accounts.44

At any rate, the administration’s top-down attitude drove programs that were not ‘organic’; they were extrinsic, interfering, and self interested—both politically and monetarily, plus being opposite of what the World Bank has come to realize are primary areas of reform related to bringing much of the informal economy into formality: “reducing the number of business licenses, permits, and approvals; streamlining administrative processes; adopting uniform taxes, and enhancing access to capital”.45 As in Habyarimana’s administration, informal economy activities are typically paid little attention, given no support, and discouraged—politicians and formal economy producers see the informal economy as a threat because of its flexible production, low labor and

43 Ibid: 3-8, 11-12, 23. SIDA has shown that “the key drivers for the growth of the informal economy in the twenty-first century [but hold true for Rwanda’s situation in the latter half of the twentieth century] include: limited absorption of labour, particularly in countries with high rates of population or urbanisation; excessive cost and regulatory barriers of entry into the formal economy, often motivated by corruption; weak institutions, limiting education and training opportunities as well as infrastructure development; increasing demand for low-cost goods and services; migration motivated by economic hardship and poverty; and difficulties faced by women in gaining formal employment” (Becker, ibid: 3-12).
44 Ibid: 15.
production costs, bureaucratic freedom (being largely unregulated and free of taxes), it “cuts out or substantially minimizes the material and political power of government agents, and can affect political power and initiatives”.\(^{46}\) Habyarimana’s regime, of course, saw this as completely unacceptable.

An example of how to get around such bureaucratic over-control and discouragement can be found in an action taken by Masaya Hattori, a Japanese economist coming from the IMF and the first governor of Rwanda’s National Bank (1964-70). After failing to procure much aid from European countries he realized “small nations need to get by on their own strength,”\(^{47}\) which was a catchword for many African leaders at the time, and was taken up by Habyarimana as one of his key policy points. Hattori “determined that to rebuild the economy, the country needed to stimulate agricultural transactions and movement between villages, which required a better transportation network”.\(^{48}\) Because buses were the only means of public transportation outside the capitol, Hattori set out to make improvements in the antiquated bus system, which consisted of only 12 run-down vehicles. His experience with buying new buses describes in miniature the debilitating effects of cronyism and corruption. He discovered that the bus company was “being forced to buy expensive buses from an agency”.\(^{49}\) Undeterred, he brought in 20 cheaper Japanese-made buses, then increased the number of bus lines and revamped the bus schedule to make it more efficient, and thereby enabled a large number of people to save hours each day getting to work and back and taking products to market. Hattori’s


\(^{47}\) Kuroiwa, 2013.

\(^{48}\) Ibid.

\(^{49}\) Ibid.
upbringing in a pragmatist culture, along with his empowerment as bank governor, enabled him to cut through the Rwandan bureaucratic quicksand of corruption; when responsible figures act with the public’s welfare in mind, society can be positively affected.

By the mid-1980s, the public’s welfare was becoming increasingly left behind. Habyarimana’s muddied sense of self was reflected in his policies and increasing impotence; he doesn’t know if he is a Catholic layman, farmer, general of the army, businessman, president and politician, or native son to the North; above all, making regionalism, and an even narrower favoritism—to the Bushiru region—a centerpiece of his administration, pitting him especially against those from the Bugoyi region (such as Lizinde and Kanyarengwe, both of whom became RPF supporters). In fact, he was all of the above. As a Catholic, in speeches and interviews in the early ‘80s, Habyarimana puts forward a policy on birth control that he describes as an experiment, with various approaches by “experts”, with the proviso that families are not told they can’t have children, but that information concerning the danger of the population increase and of methods of birth control are available at certain centers and through the media, and each family can make up their own mind about how many children they want—a ‘plan’ without any compelling features, in a country with a 30% functional literacy rate. This seems too much like Church dogma (which, in its opposition to condoms, helped lead to an HIV-AIDS problem of epidemic proportions in the country) couched in political obfuscation. In the face of impending starvation on a large scale in the not-so-distant future, he leaves

---

50 Lemarchand, 1994: 600.
51 Clay et al (1989: 2), “. . . in Rwanda, large families are traditionally awarded great prestige by virtue of their size; children eventually provide their parents with labour, either on or off the farm; Rwanda’s strong kinship system assures parents of support in their old age, and this safety net is strengthened with each additional child.”
population control up to the peasant-farmers, who traditionally have an average of eight children.

In 1981, a fourth Five-Year Plan was inaugurated, with a continued focus on agricultural production.\(^\text{52}\) In November, a parliament—named the National Development Council (again, the Habyarimana regime’s catchword, ‘Development’)—was instituted. *A propos* to the parliament’s title, Herbert Keiner, a German pastor and one of Habyarimana’s longtime backers, coined the term “dictatorship of development” (*ein Entwicklungs diktatur*) for the regime’s political system.\(^\text{53}\) In one sense this corresponds to the suggestion that Habyarimana, with his emphasis on ‘organic’ development, was possibly influenced by the eighteenth-century French economist Francois Quesnay’s notion of organic development, especially concerning agriculture. But even though Quesnay and Habyarimana both studied medicine—Quesnay a trained surgeon, and Habyarimana having had less than one year of pre-med at Lovanium University in the Congo—the suggestion that the two men saw their respective socio-political and economic systems as related to the human body with all the parts working in an ‘organic’ holism, is not substantiated.\(^\text{54}\) Steiner, for one, sees a dissimilarity between medicine and the new

---

\(^{52}\) Lemarchand, 1983b: p. 821.


\(^{54}\) Verwimp (2004c) considers that Habyarimana “viewed the economy as a human body where all organs should function together for the well-being of the whole. This fits perfectly into other parts of his ideology: he frequently repeats that the individual is subordinate to the collective,” but Habyarimana spent hardly a year in pre-med studies in Lovanium University in the Congo before being forced out of the country during its revolution, and that first year of study did not include the teaching of anatomy (Vincent and Borghgraef, 1959: 691), and could hardly have been a compelling experience concerning the formulation of a medical theory of a state system. Certainly more compelling cases can be made for socialist theories of the subjugation of the individual to the whole that were extant in the whole of sub-Saharan Africa from the early ‘60s (and would have been discussed among Habyarimana’s fellow African students), and present in Nsekalije’s close association with North Korea in particular. In addition, the fifteen years of Catholic school and training at seminary would have instilled a philosophy of submission of the individual to God and to the Church in a community of ‘wholeness’ of purpose. And finally, Habyarimana’s years in the military, more than any other influence, would have instilled the notion, in a very real and practiced sense, of obedience to the
science of political economy that Quesnay was interested in initiating.\textsuperscript{55} There are in fact, basic differences between Quesnay’s and Habyarimana’s ideas. Even though they both believe that by creating rural employment, farmers help to sustain the rural population and, in the final analysis, the power of the State, Quesnay sees this happening only through large-scale farming methods that would create a marketable food surplus and infuse dynamism into society at many levels,\textsuperscript{56} whereas Habyarimana unrealistically insists on continued increases in agricultural production on miniscule plots, with no possibilities of increasing farm size because of the ubiquitous, extremely hilly terrain, and with no more uncultivated land available in the country. Quesnay also sees the corvées as leading to an impoverishment of France by preventing the peasant-farmers from devoting their labor to the existence of their farm, and, in the economic field, the State “restricting its intervention protecting private property and free trade,”\textsuperscript{57} whereas Habyarimana has the State intervening in every aspect of Rwandan life, and employing corvées (umuganda and the attendant animations) as a major part of his economic policies. (But, Quesnay and Habyarimana did share a certain view towards a type of “legal despotism”, advocating a contradictory “authoritarian intervention of the political power to ensure economic

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{55} Steiner, 1998:128, in Charbit and Virmani, ibid: 862-3.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{56} Quesnay, ”Fermiers”, pp. 437-454 and ”Hommes”, p. 568, in INED, 1958.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{57} Charbit and Virmani, ibid: 867-69.}
liberty,"\textsuperscript{58} and they were both “unable to resolve the impossible contradictions between
tightness in economic theory and the pressure of political realities,”\textsuperscript{59} but late eighteenth-
century France is not twentieth-century Rwanda).

It has also been suggested that Habyarimana kept the population in the countryside
as a political policy to control them, purposefully preventing urbanization to this end,\textsuperscript{60} yet
the farming system wasn’t static but continued to evolve; it is “the existing societal
processes that mediate the outcome of agricultural policy”.\textsuperscript{61} One author has even likened
Habyarimana to Pol Pot to fit this notion. To compare Pol Pot with Habyarimana, in any
sense, is dizzyingly far-fetched and as gross a misreading of Pol Pot as of Habyarimana
(not to mention the vast differences in their cultural upbringing and education). The
two main thrusts of Pol Pot’s policies were the destruction of Western influences by the
destruction of the cities, which harbored the intellectuals, and the mass movement of the
population onto concentration camp-like re-education farms to be brain-washed into a
certain primitive mind frame in which schools were held not important and working the
land in a communal socio-economic virtuous simplicity was the goal, and Pol Pot’s
extermination of all educated people, the entire Buddhist community of priests, and the
emptying of all towns was of one piece connected to a pathological fantasy he imagined of
a ‘golden era’ in Cambodia’s past. There is nothing in Habyarimana’s administration that

\textsuperscript{58} Quesnay, “Fermiers”, in INED, 1958: 975.
\textsuperscript{59} Charbit and Virmani, ibid: 883.
\textsuperscript{60} Verwimp 2.3. Ruralization and Restrictions on Movement, Habyarimana followed a consistent policy to make the
peasants stay in the rural areas. They had to remain in an agricultural setting. Of course, this anti-urban policy
benefited people already living in the cities, the so-called ‘elite.’ It also explains why in 1973, 95% of the population
lived in the rural areas and in 1993, 95% still lived in the rural areas. Cf. Percival and Homer-Dixon (1995):
“Environmental scarcity caused people to move to ecologically fragile upland and arid areas. Urban areas had few
opportunities for employment and rural-urban migration was restricted after the onset of the civil war.”
\textsuperscript{61} Olson, 1994: 18.
resembles such backward and primitive notions. To suggest that both leaders were similar because they wanted to control the population is a conflation so meaningless that it could just as easily be applied to every contemporary leader in sub-Saharan Africa, as well as to practically every leader in world history.

Figure 5. Population Density of Kigali, 1978 to 2012

Serving the same misguided notion is the suggestion that—following the same desire for control of the population—Habyarimana purposefully kept everyone on the farms and discouraged urbanization. First of all, the urban population in Rwanda as a percent of the total population steadily increased from 2.4% in 1960 to 7.1% in 1993.62 And, as can be seen in Figure 6, the population density in Kigali increased steeply from 1978 to 1990 (before the RPF invasion influenced the numbers).63 In over half of the sub-

---

63 Rwandan Ministry of Natural Resources.
Saharan countries more than 80 percent of the labor force is employed in agriculture, making Rwanda not exceptionally different in terms of the ratio of rural to urban dwellers. But the correct question to ask in regard to urbanization is whether there was anything different about Rwanda from other one-party agricultural sub-Saharan States.

In Rwanda’s eastern neighbor country, President Julius Nyerere’s Ujaama policy forced the population into experimental rural model ‘village’ groupings more representative of Mao Zedong and Pol Pot than Habyarimana, who, in fact, was not persuaded of Nyerere’s ideas. But the salient point about Rwanda is (and always will be an important consideration) that because of its massively dominant hilly terrain there is a very limited arable land area, which from 1988 to 1992 averaged only about 35%, and cannot support large-scale mechanical cropping. And taking advantage of the hills, Rwandans have cultivated coffee and tea plants as their main exports. The other factor in retarding the country’s development is its being landlocked and not having easy access to external markets, especially since three of its neighbors, at least during Habyarimana’s reign, were almost constantly at war or being externally threatened, or were involved in internal upheaval. The country (territory) also has a long history of severe draughts and infestations of cattle diseases, one of which, in the late ‘80s caused the internal migration of hundreds of thousands of starving peasant-farmers.

Regarding the problem of large-scale farming techniques and its relationship to the move to urban centers, Zeilig and Ceruti refer to Davis’ argument that

the movement to urban centres was meant to reflect the growth of manufacturing and the concomitant increase of wage labour—Marx’s industrial proletariat. This

64 Hinderink and Sterkenburg, 1983: 1.
development was also meant to see a growth in agricultural productivity to feed swelling cities through the application of large-scale modern farming techniques. But the opposite has occurred. Urbanisation without industrialisation is an expression of an inexorable trend.65 [my italics]

In response, in Rwanda the informal economy has, as mentioned earlier, grown, as in the rest of the developing world, informal workers making up approximately two thirds of the working population.66 Still, in 1988 researchers found that Rwanda was in an urbanization process, contrary to the suggestion that Habyarimana was keeping the population rural. As Bourdon and Ngango estimated in 1988,

the progressive reduction of the average area of farms (26% among them are smaller than 0.5 ha), along with demographic growth, result in a migratory movement towards cities, and in particular towards Kigali. According to the projected scenarios, we consider that by 2000 the urban population will be 1.6 or 2.4 million people (instead of the 400,000 in 1985), which will represent a rate of urbanization of 17% to 25%.67

In addition, Kigali is an inappropriate target for urbanization statistics because it had only been the capital for twelve years when Habyarimana took over—before, all colonial organization and administration was concerted in Bujumbura, now the capital of Burundi, and almost nothing was in Kigali—and the master plan for its development didn’t occur until 1982, ten years into the president’s tenure, containing safeguards that were hoped would prevent it from becoming slum-ridden by an influx of homeless and jobless people leaving the countryside, which safeguards also stemmed from the practical realization that there were insufficient funds to provide water, electricity, and sewage treatment on a rapidly increasing needs base—Kigali had already grown from less than

66 Davis, ibid; 176.
67 Bourdon and Ngango, 1988: 6.
10,000 inhabitants in 1962 to 160,000 in 1982.68

The simplest thing to be said about Habyarimana’s approach to urbanization is that he saw it as desirable but was pragmatically severely limited in terms of scale and pace.69 Painfully aware of the population increase, his advisors had projected that at the then current rate of 8% per annum, the number of residents in Kigali would soar to well over half a million by the year 2000, and that insurmountable problems would arise from this increase. The need for security in the face of demographic and economic pressures at the end of the ‘80s is represented by the practice of purchasing farmland by the urban elite, because land was one of the only ‘sure’ investments.70 That is, the urban economic situation was not as sound or attractive as the rural one for some investors, but this is not to say that investors weren’t trying to develop urban properties nor construct dwellings and commercial buildings, but that the economy wasn’t very favorable in this regard: the poverty of the countryside, the limited revenues that coffee and tea provided, a growing informal economy, and very small industrial or manufacturing sector, together formed an economic stagnancy that prevented the development of towns and cities. The atomization of the population due to the topographically-forced hill families, made it extremely

68 In Godding, 1984: 365.
69 “Many national governments view urbanization as a problem to be stopped rather than an inevitable trend that necessitates policy changes. This perspective was bolstered by a 1999/2000 development report from the World Bank, which concluded that African cities “are part of the cause and a major symptom of the economic and social crisis that have enveloped the continent” (Hanson, 2007).
70 “Unlike all other regions of the world, urbanization in Africa has not contributed, through economies of scale and value added production chains, to overall growth in GDP. As shown in Table 3, while East Asia and Africa have had similar rates of urbanization (4-5% per annum) for the period 1970-95, GDP growth in East Asia accelerated by about 3.7% p.a. while GDP declined by .66% p.a. in sub-Saharan Africa. . . . in most African countries the [central government] controls access to land. While wealthy citizens and investors have been able to secure urban land for investment, in most African countries the poor majority populations have been unable to secure clear, marketable tenure over land. . . . Most African (and other developing) cities have never achieved sustainable operations due largely to a) capacity constraints, b) central/political interference and control, particularly with regard to tariffs, and c) inappropriate intergovernmental fiscal relations” (World Bank Regional Reports - Africa Region, Spring 2001).
impossible to construct a viable network of roads linking such disparately situated growers into market centers that could flourish and grow: Rwanda has never had villages. If we think about the necessary progression in European history from village to town to city, and the accumulated wealth and technology that accompanied that growth—made possible only by large-scale agriculture—then consider Rwanda’s situation, it is clear that no similar progression could have taken or would be able to take place. And since industrialization is not the answer to urbanization in sub-Saharan Africa today, as Davis, Zeilig and Ceruti, have mentioned above, then Rwanda has to find another path, but Habyarimana, as were many other African leaders, was overwhelmed by the demographic pressures and inability to carry out large-scale agricultural production, and hadn’t the revenues (much of which was his administration’s fault) to industrialize. He ended up being a prisoner of the power-holding urban elite and disparaged by the increasingly impoverished peasant-farmers, and from 1990 he was caught in the demands of SAPs by international donors, which the difficulty of urbanization, as Lugalla points out in his study of neighboring Tanzania,

Emphasis on reducing government expenditure on unproductive sectors like social development in urban areas is one way SAPs have negatively impacted urban development in Tanzania. Lack of sufficient budget has made it difficult to finance a variety of urban development projects.71

And if opinion still considers Habyarimana as a rural dictator, one has only to consider the enormous and extant number of informal economy workers and, as can be seen in Table 8, non-farm employment in 1985 was almost 10% of the economically active population. In addition, Table 7 shows that the administration (and its banks) distributed more overall

---

credit to sectors other than agriculture (although it was the largest single sector).

Table 7: Distribution of Credit by Economic Sector, 1985 (million RwF)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Sector</th>
<th>Amount (million RwF)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and livestock</td>
<td>6,243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>3,644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>2,676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buildings; Public works</td>
<td>521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>2,575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16,278</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Furthermore, taking into account only one country’s (China’s) investments in Rwanda during Habyarimana’s reign, some of the realized projects included: rice and sugar plantations, road construction, a cement factory, a sports stadium, a veterinary school, a school of nursing, and extended construction of a hospital, and a railway line—supplemented and supported by Chinese offices in Kigali overseeing engineering, water and electric supplies, and the availability of building materials. Though the economy was relatively stagnant, there was an attempt by Habyarimana to reach out for international investment and support, and he made a large number of trips abroad for this purpose.
The image of a rural dictator simply doesn’t hold; nor was Habyarimana a ruinous kleptocrat like Mobutu, a backward-looking social engineer like Nyerere, a supernationalist like Kenyatta, nor a megalomaniac like Idi Amin. Trying to put labels on leaders is somewhat self defeating from the start. ‘Dictator’ is one of those labels that ranges over such a wide character landscape as to be misleading. To call Habyarimana and Hitler dictators in the same breath, as some have done, serves little purpose and is deceiving; someone who holds considerable personal power comes in an extraordinary array of colors and can be represented by a figure in politics, the military, the private sector, or religion.

There is the anecdote of David Rockefeller being asked why he didn’t run for
president of the country, and his reply of “Why should I? I have more power than the president.” Clearly just having considerable power does not make one a dictator. It is, rather, the type of power. For example, the pope holds extraordinary power over millions of faithful Catholics, as do imams hold so many Muslims under their sway, and they can demonstrably be dictatorial. The abuse of power being referred to as ‘dictatorial’ is usually of two types, that of religious or political leaders, and the two sometimes overlap in one leader, or may be shared between two figures. The leader of a one-party State is normally labeled a dictator, and such a person’s abuse of power is marked by their impingement in varying degrees on human rights: suspension of elections and repression of political opponents, extra-judicial measures, the ability to make laws independent of legislative restraint, and illegitimate control of State power in the form of the police and the military. Some of these powers apply to Habyarimana, but not all of the time, and in varying degrees, so we have to ask, then, what kind of dictator he was during his reign by looking at his powers and how he used them.

Habyarimana exhibits a range of powers in his speeches. As we have seen, he is not serious about birth control even though the over-population of the country is at an emergency level and growing. His continued muddied pronouncements about such serious matters is a continuing sign of an inability to decisively take charge. For example, he speaks about the need for his National Population Office (ONAPO) to find “methods of birth control that are in keeping with our outlook and our culture, methods that are not destructive”. And his administration’s policy toward education is to send the majority of

---

72 May (1990: 21-29), “Similar to other countries in the region, a strong demand for family planning services has not yet emerged in Rwanda. . . . The GOR . . . recently [1990] restructured [ONAPO] as the Ministry of Health. . . . The
primary school graduates back to the farms because they have no future job possibilities outside farming, an admission that the economy is motionless.

Continuing through the ‘80s, Habyarimana’s regime is propped up by aid agencies and country donors, especially the EEC, the European Development Fund (EDF), Belgium and Germany, but the refugee problem persists. In a 1982 speech the president flatly states that Rwanda is 100% occupied and that he hopes the neighboring countries continue to absorb and take care of the Rwandan refugees and expatriates. However, there is a fundamental falseness or contradiction to Habyarimana’s claims at this point that there is no room for refugees, because when the several hundred thousand Tutsis fled, from 1959 onward, the population obviously decreased by a considerable amount, so that the expatriates’/refugees’ return would not unduly tax what had been just twenty years earlier a relatively unburdened demographic, even taking into account a population increase over those years. What he was protecting and worried about was having to possibly restore to repatriated Tutsis their assets left behind when they fled. Their land holdings, largely used for cattle grazing, were redistributed among landless Hutu families, who then turned them to crops, which helped raise agricultural production to a high in the early ‘80s. Still, as the United Nation’s Human Development Index shows in Figure 6, Rwanda ranked below Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole from 1980 to 1995, even while its GNP per capita outperformed its neighbors, as seen in Table 9.

---

low level of modern contraceptive use can be at least partly explained by a series of constraints, which include: 1) Social, cultural, and religious reticence, 2) Illiteracy, 3) Economic constraints, 4) Fear of side effects, and 5) Misconceptions—the population tends to believe that contraception is being imposed on them “from abroad” and is not relevant to Rwanda. . . . fertility rate is estimated at 8.6 children per woman and has recently increased.”

Table 9: GNP per Capita in Rwanda and Neighboring Countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rwanda</th>
<th>Burundi</th>
<th>Zaire</th>
<th>Uganda</th>
<th>Tanzania</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>-20</td>
<td>-23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

345
In July 1982, on the 20th anniversary of independence, Habyarimana declared that refugees (Banyarwanda) were welcome to return to Rwanda as long as they went through an application process and were approved. It is not clear how many actually went through the process and returned, but it was an inconsequential number since the situation facing any Tutsi returning from relative freedom in the neighboring countries and from abroad would not have been welcomed, jobs would have been scarce, and the returnees’ safety not particularly insured. No doubt Habyarimana’s administration counted on this to discourage any significant influx.

In Habyarimana’s anniversary speech he repeated the often repeated fact that “the policies, injustices, selfish decisions, and bloody disorders” [of Kayibanda’s government], had

“urged the armed forces to take in hand the fate of the country”; a revolution, “especially moral, which allowed the restoration of peace and unity75 and the setting up of a healthy, solid, competent administration, and aiming at a gathering of all the working classes of the population” [my italics].76

Then he makes a double-speak pronouncement that his MRND condemns “all tendencies of a separatist and racial character, all attitudes of superiority of one race, of one ethnicity, of one family, of one region . . . over others”.77 He then makes an odd statement about his

75 This constant appeal to ‘unity’ requires a deeper consideration than possible in this paper, but I was struck by the use of the word in a recent note in the Economist (January 10, 2015) when referring to the terrorist attack on the offices of the publication Charlie Hebdo: “President François Hollande condemned the attack as an act of ‘extreme barbarity’ and called for national unity in France”. The similarity with Habyarimana’s entreaty seems to be in the aim to calm down the populace after an inflammatory event, and prevent any retaliatory violence. But Habyarimana’s consistent use of the word has multiple implications, among which is a nationalistic call for solidarity behind his policies, and above all (at the beginning of his tenure) support for the one-party state. ‘Unity’ is a plastic word, and is used in the period of the Arusha Accords to rally people around the racist Hutu Power agenda.

76 Habyarimana (1982a: 177-78). The inclusion of the word ‘moral’ regarding the coup is uncommon, as is the mention of ‘the working classes’, and the two together jar slightly, with a religious tone against a socialist one.

77 Habyarimana (ibid), cited in Barahinyura, 1988: 289.
‘responsible democracy’ bringing together “in its center, the living power of the country,\textsuperscript{78} without exception” \textit{[my italics].}

Three months after the announcement concerning the return of refugees, military special forces and youth-wingers (pre-dating the youth wings, like the \textit{Interahamwe}, in Rwanda) of President Obote’s People’s Congress Party (UPC), in Uganda, attacked and drove out some 40,000 Banyarwandans in retaliation for the large number of refugees who had joined Museveni’s rebel army in his war against Obote. The brunt of the retaliation was felt by those Banyarwandans living in the country’s southwest region, whom the local Ugandans had increasingly come to feel were taking their jobs and land. (This intolerance toward Rwandan refugees will also become a serious pressure on President Museveni to eject the Rwandan refugees from the army, resulting in the push of the RPF across the border and into its invasion of Rwanda). Habyarimana’s response to the UPC’s attacks and the influx of fleeing Banyarwandans into Rwanda was to close the border after about 50,000 had entered, and to put the repatriates in heavily guarded camps, eventually agreeing to resettle them (as part of his government’s five-year development plan), reportedly in marshy areas and in unoccupied areas in the eastern part of the country.\textsuperscript{79} The refugee problem will intensify the next year and beyond and, along with the food problem will represent the two largest policy failures in Habyarimana’s tenure.

Up to this period, that is from 1978 to 1982, the mineral export, cassiterite, loses most of its value as a stabilizing element in currency receipts because SOMIRWA, the

\textsuperscript{78} Again, an unusual phrase. It is difficult to be sure what he means by this phrase, perhaps that it is linked to his earlier reference to ‘organic’ economic programs, and that the power of the people has to be harnessed for development purposes.

mining company, falls into a crisis. Even though there are a fair number of health centers in the country, medical treatment is scant, there being only one doctor for every 38,000 people. Primary school enrollment was around 60%, and the population’s literacy rate barely 40%. Per capita income was only $200 a year, one of the lowest in the world.

Concerning foreign aid and the national budget, Godding gives the following analysis:

Eighty-five percent of development investment [is] being financed from foreign capital, which is a sum higher than the country’s ordinary budget. Being somewhat overwhelmed by this massive investment, the government seems increasingly to leave control of aid funds to foreign organisations, which plan their own projects through a considerable number of experts and advisors (56 percent of the total aid is foreign staff). . . . the government’s target is to cover each commune with a ‘great project’, which represents an investment of $10mn for each commune of about 30,000 inhabitants, that is to say, $33 per inhabitant for a period of four years. So local investment is apparently massive, but there are many questions to be asked about the use to which the money is put. It should also be noted that the role of international organisations in rural development (± 25 percent of aid programmes) allows the government to devote its attention to other problems; neither the ordinary budget nor the development budget provides more than 5 percent of its expenditure for the agricultural sector. The country must follow this priority: the 1977-1981 Five Year Plan gave priority to food-producing agriculture. But if we look at the proposed annual growth percentages, the picture is; 3 percent for food-producing cultivation and 12 percent for export. . . . [Concerning the ‘three thirds’ in foreign financing]: 1/3 for the experts, 1/3 for the different services offered to the national executive and 1/3 for the farmers.

The above description of foreign control of foreign aid projects sheds light on the relative degree of President Habyarimana’s power. Perhaps it is worth considering what effect there was on Habyarimana growing up in a system of ‘redistribution’ economics, where production was not for a market but was part of a ‘reallocation’ achieved mainly through the chieftaincy, which acted as a collection and distribution center; in a similar manner, the collection of foreign aid and its distribution through projects, as well as its

---

misappropriation to courtiers seems to have been a major part of his administration (although the strategies for obtaining foreign aid must have surely been a common referent between the president and his friend, Mobutu, the master of acquiring and abusing foreign aid monies). With the EC alone there were the two big aid programs: Yaoundé II (1971-75); Lomé I (1976-80), and Lomé II (1981-85) itself worth ECU 72-80 million. Projects included in these agreements: Rural development, road infrastructure (22%), Education (14%), Energy infrastructure (10%), Microprojects (2.5%), Line of credit for SME (2%), and Tech cooperation (5%). Of course, adequate food supplies and production were the main focus with 15 projects put in place from 1973 to 1981.82

These years of seeking and acquiring development aid and foreign investment were what Habyarimana called ‘planned liberalism’, a central part of his economic reforms, and some wealth accrued, but only, and mainly, to an urban elite and to certain northerners. The result was a growing urban-rural disparity as rural "commercial outlets, agricultural supplies, consumer goods, credit, [and] transport" came to be owned by well-connected individuals such as "traders, absentee landlords, civil servants, and military personnel,"83 and Habyarimana did little to correct or end this economic inequality.84

Gasana describes the competition for land resources and ethnic stratification resulting from a shift and misdirection in the Second Republic from the envisioned “umuhinzi-mworozi farmer” (agriculteur-éleveur) in the First Republic’s attempt to despecialise land and ethnic production by integrating agriculture and livestock,

---

82 Courtier, 1982: 36.
83 Newbury and Newbury, 2000; 873-74.
84 Bratton (1989: 409-410), “As the main employer, African governments devote a higher percentage of total expenditures to public-sector wages and salaries than in any other world region. Needless to say, the recurrent expense of sustaining swollen bureaucracies has preempted investments in new productive capacity.”
there was no institutional instrument to regulate partitioning of landholdings. . . . Before long, population growth increased land hunger and. . . . A land market developed with a fast accumulation of land resources in the hands of those non-peasants who were close to power. This led to a scarcity of land resources for the new generations of rural families and to a gradual reconstruction of a complex social stratification. The country returned to inequality of access to land resources, . . . By the ‘80s, the peasantry that constituted more than 92% of the population was in acute competition for land resources with the tiny bourgeoisie comprising the administrative, military, technocratic, political and business élites. This new stratification highlighting intra-ethnic differentiation as far as land and other resources are concerned, came in competition with and overtook the ethnic stratification that the revolution had tried to destroy.85

Gasana calls this growing impoverishment of the peasant-farmers, due to the constant dividing of family land into smaller and smaller plots as children inherit their parents holdings, pembenization.86 It was this pembenization, along with the elite’ increasing land grab that resulted in the numerous problems related to a decrease in food production: no fallow periods, soil erosion, deforestation, and forced moves to unarable land. The unavoidable and only long-term solution to pembenization is having fewer children, but for the reasons mentioned earlier, there are too many cultural attitudes to overcome in the short run, and Habyarimana’s government after the next year’s RPF invasion is preoccupied with its own survival.

The close connection between Habyarimana and France, through his friendship with President Mitterrand and Mitterand’s son, is evidenced in a report by Thérèse Pujolle [head of the civil cooperation mission to Kigali from 1981 till 1984]:

"Each time that Jean-Christophe Mitterrand disembarked [at Kigali airport], fifteen Mercedes were waiting for him. . . . We noticed an incredible complicity, a companionship which we did not understand, between Jean-Christophe Mitterrand

86 "From the Swahili word pembeni ("aside"), as used in the Rwandan expression gushyira i pembeni ("to push aside"). See Gasana, 2002b: 28-32.. Also Clay et al, 1989: 16-17, for income inequalities.
and Jean-Pierre Habyarimana, son of the Rwandan President.87

They were also reputed to hang out together “in discos on the Left Bank and in Rwanda at the Kigali Nightclub”.88 The import-export business was one of the reasons for the companionship, as the testimony of Gaëtan Sedubandi shows:

I remembered then what they had added to the marketing of the products of this property: it was reserved for a storekeeper who had the monopoly of the import-export of foodstuffs for the whole Rwanda, and he was the father-in-law of Habyarimana’s son: Félicien Kabuga. I received this information from villagers. I was also at the house of a religious order of the nearby parish of Cyeru and Cyanika, where I had known one of the French White Fathers when I was a student: all confirmed to me that, actually, it was an operation of the presidential family, in which combined interests of Jean-Christophe Mitterrand and Habyarimana’s son were invested.89

Jean-Christophe, his father’s special assistant on African affairs (in Rwanda, he had the nickname 'Papa told me', for following President Mitterrand’s instructions) and a close friend to President Habyarimana (the Dasault Mystere Falcon 50 executive jet, in which Habyarimana was flying home from Tanzania when he was shot down, was a personal gift from him), was also involved in the arms trade,90 and reportedly owned a plantation in Rwanda.91 He had connections with a number of African heads of state. Rusesabagina recalls that

“Habyarimana had managed to stay in power through the depression with the help of the government of France, and particularly because of the French president, François Mitterrand. These two presidents got along famously and shared many dinners”.92

---

87 Cited in Coret and Verschave. 2005: 479
89 Ibid: 482.
90 “... by the time Mitterrand won the 1981 election France was the leading arms exporter per capita in the world” (Wallis, 2014: 19).
91 Stanton, 2002.
It seems that Mitterrand was taken with Habyarimana’s charm, good education, open show of Christian faith, and his command of French and French values, and in 1986 gave him “an embossed two-volume Dictionnaire de Littérature de Langue Française . . . to symbolize the close ties between the two French speakers”. In France, besides Mitterrand and his son, Habyarimana had steadfast friends among “important diplomats, politicians, officers and senior civil servants” and in Rwanda, the French Ambassador, Georges Martres, remained a close ally during his tour from 1990 to 1993, visiting Habyarimana’s home regularly. His loyalty went beyond diplomacy; he is said to have never reported on “the rise of extremists, Hutu power, and the continuous violence” that racked Rwanda. In an interview a year after Habyarimana’s death, Martres recalled Mitterrand’s impression of Habyarimana,

I knew President Habyarimana personally. He was a man who expressed himself very well in French, who had an interesting political vision, who gave the impression of a great morality. President Habyarimana prayed regularly, assisted regularly at mass. I’m not saying these were the elements that brought about the support of President Mitterrand but I believe that in general the face that President Habyarimana and his family presented to President Mitterrand was received in a favourable manner. I do not think I am mistaken in arriving at this Judgement.

Habyarimana considered Martres’ backing so important that in January 1993 he petitioned Mitterrand not to pension off Martres, following French regulations concerning his age; he wanted Martres to stay on in Kigali.

---

93 Wallis, op. cit.: 15. Also De Heusch, 1995: 5; and Braeckman, 1994: 96.
94 OAU, op. cit.
97 “The French Foreign Ministry officials were less enthusiastic about the Rwandan president; but they could do little to change policy so long as he enjoyed the firm support of Mitterrand and the military” (HRW, op. cit.).
The refugee situation with Uganda continued to simmer into 1983, with President Obote announcing that his country would take back any Ugandan citizens and called on Habyarimana to do the same with Rwandan refugees who were in Uganda. Habyarimana agreed to resettle more than 30,000 refugees, but in December thousands of refugees crossed into Tanzania due to intimidation and persecution. Finally, two years later, in November 1985, Rwandan repatriated 30,000 Banyarwandan refugees from Uganda over a three-month period.

The difficult international economic situation was causing a drop in interest by Rwanda’s international donors such as the Arabs, Europeans, Chinese and Koreans, and Habyarimana intensified his call on all citizens to redouble their efforts for the sake of the country’s economy, particularly in agriculture and animal husbandry, and industrialization. He stressed in his addresses that there were no jobs in the cities and that job seekers should remain in the countryside and help cultivate or learn crafts. His mentioning the issue of morality is new, and he appeals to NGO\(^98\) workers to instill a sense of morals in the youth as part of their missions. He also, for the first time in one of his addresses, alerts the expatriates of their responsibility to pay taxes rather than sending their money out of the country. Theses kinds of speeches offer little in the way of informing the public of important matters.

Legislative and presidential elections were held in 1983, with Habyarimana reëlected president for another five-year term after receiving 99% of the vote. Nine women candidates and one Tutsi obtained seats. Habyarimana announced an austerity

\(^{98}\) “. . . the highly-organized and centralized Rwandese state formation over the years constrained the scope for the emergence of non-governmental organizations and independent interest groups. . . . on the whole the development of an independent, NGO-based civil society has been largely dwarfed by the state. . . .” (Eriksson, 1996: n.p.).
program, despite the highest coffee prices in the last six years, and restricted the number of
public administration workers. More than half the peasant-farmers had no income from
farming, and food shortages result in an emergency appeal to the international community
for help. An urban-rural divide resulted, by 1984, in only 15% of the land-owners—
absentee owners from the government or the urban private sector, as well as employees of
aid agencies—possessing half the land. The situation in Rwanda was not unique to
Rwanda. Researchers have found that

a large number of African countries, perhaps the majority, have been ruled by
individuals who had sufficient power to implement reforms had they been so
motivated. However, their motivation led them in different directions. As a result,
policy reforms have been implemented haltingly, with frequent reversals. In a
sense, this outcome represents the triumph of groups that are interested only in
aggrandizement and the appeasement of their hangers-on, family members, friends,
and associates whose political support is bought by sharing the loot.

Kets de Vries describes the destructive repetitiveness of such leaders:

For leaders who are caught up in a web of irrationality at the head of a neurotic
organization, escape is not easy. In most cases, they cannot break out of their self-
constructed prison alone. They are the captives of their character and they will need
some kind of professional help to break the chains that restrict their behavior and
lead to dysfunctional organizations. Leaders must recognize the potential
destructiveness of their actions, and understand the extent to which past
experiences can influence their present and future behavior. . . . These people make
the same mistakes over and over again because they are unable to recognize certain
repetitive patterns in their behavior which have become dysfunctional.

100 “Friends of mine who visited Rwanda in 1984 sensed an ecological disaster in the making. The whole country
looked like a garden and banana plantation. Steep hills were being farmed right up to their crests. Even the most
elementary measures that could have minimized soil erosion, such as terracing, plowing along contours rather than
straight up and down hills, and providing some fallow cover of vegetation rather than leaving fields bare between
crops, were not being practiced. As a result, there was much soil erosion, and the rivers carried heavy loads of mud.
One Rwandan wrote me, ‘Farmers can wake up in the morning and find that their entire field (or at least its topsoil
and crops) has been washed away overnight, or that their neighbor’s field and rocks have now been washed down to
cover their own field.’ Forest clearance led to drying-up of streams, and more irregular rainfall. By the late 1980s
famines began to reappear” (Diamond, 2005: n.p.).
101 Gray and McPherson, op. cit.: 728.
Yet most observers in the early ’80s saw Rwanda as an oasis in the midst of Idi Amin’s tumultuous rule, Mobutu’s outrageous appropriation of State and international assistance funds, Burundi’s continued ethnic disenfranchisement of the Hutu, and Nyerere’s socialist Ujaama campaign. But under the surface of Rwanda’s ‘comparatively’ normally functioning state apparatus were the corrupt machinations that Gray and McPherson describe. Jean Birara, who worked as director, then governor, at the National Bank from 1964 to 1985, explains how, at the behest of Habyarimana, he hired the president’s son-in-law, Rwabukumba, who became head of the foreign department. After Birara left the bank, Rwabukumba began extorting from retailers, “threatening them directly in the name of the President”. He essentially strong-armed his way into control (though technically in a position under a governor and two deputy governors) over not only the National Bank but the Continental African Bank (BACA) as well. The cronyism thickens here, as BACA’s director was the brother of Habyarimana’s close associate, Bagosora. Weapons were bought through BACA, and Habyarimana received commissions, paid through the Banque Bruxelles Lambert (BBL), out of an account in the name of Rwabukumba’s daughter (who also had accounts at the Continental Bank of Luxembourg and in Canada). According to Birara, cocaine smuggling from Guatemala, to Abidjan, through Kigali, and then to France (via Habyarimana’s personal aircraft), was an extremely lucrative business for the presidential entourage, with Rwabukumba in charge of transporting drugs to Belgium. Rwabukumba’s close connection with the Élysée is evident in the fact that days after the 1994 genocide, he was flown out of Rwanda, by the French, with Habyarimana’s family.103

Other examples of corruption and criminal actions include that of Vincent Ruhamanya, former Minister of Finance [who would become, January 1994, the MDR deputy to the National Assembly of Transition], who was sentenced to six years in prison for embezzlement ($380,000) in the fraudulent sale of a gas station while head of Rwanda’s State oil corporation, PETRORWANDA, Representative Nyiramatarambirwa’s assassination by agents of the Internal Security Bureau, after he stood opposed to the quota system, and the murders, by the same Bureau, of several journalists, one of whom was Kinyamateka’s director.

104 Longman, 2009: 129, “The controversy surrounding his case forced the government to bring legal action . . . . This case and others like it publicized by the paper [Kinyamateka] highlighted the corruption of officeholders, their tendency to hold more than one position, and the networks of support they used to benefit their family and friends. These reports confirmed the rumors spread by radio bouche-bouche [street talk] and indicated to people that problems of official corruption were nationwide, not limited to their own community or region.”
Challenges to Habyarimana and the One-Party State

A year after repatriating 30,000 Ugandan refugees, and in the wake of Museveni taking over the government, Habyarimana fluctuated and ruled that Rwanda would no longer allow large numbers of refugees to immigrate. This set off serious concern among the Rwandan refugees and expatriates residing in numerous countries, who then gathered together for the first time, in a conference in Washington D.C. This solidification of the many voices protesting the inability to return to their ‘home’ was, in Sellström and Wohlgemuth’s view, a crisis with roots in “the events of 1959-62, reinforced by subsequent political developments within Rwanda and in the neighbouring States, particularly Uganda”,¹ that led to the 1990 invasion: By 1986, the expatriate Tutsis in Uganda had joined Museveni’s rebellion to depose Obote’s presidency, and were putting together their own invasion force, the RPF, aimed at toppling Habyarimana’s government.

The true test of Habyarimana’s leadership was now fully under way, as he faced the three predicaments that would ultimately define his presidency: the refugee coalition

¹ Sellström and Wohlgemuth, 1996: 31. “Tutsis, left in three main waves: From 1959-1960, after the civil war; from 1963-1966, following the reprisals against the Tutsi population after the armed raids of exiled refugees in neighbouring countries; and from 1973, during the repression, and before and after the seizure of power by Habyarimana.” C.f. Helmut Strizek, Hirondelle News Agency, May 5, 2003, “Expert witness says the West welcomed Habyarimana coup.” Dr. Strizek lived in Rwanda during those years and gave a detailed account of the political developments that helped shape Rwanda. He told the ICTR tribunal that Habyarimana sincerely wanted to solve the problems of refugees but was impaired by the overpopulation. "Poverty was glaring everywhere and that there was a shortage of land." The witness said. "Sometimes we would wonder how people survived". 
planning for concerted action to return; the permanent food emergency; and the combined pressure for political change to a multi-party democracy demanded by discontent citizens, international donors, and the political opposition forces. And although for a decade the president brought stability to a country in a region where he was surrounded by States in turmoil, the accruing serious problems were not being solved, and a one-party state was proving unworkable. Reyntjens, while admitting the difficulty of politics in 1986, in the midst of this quagmire, considers that “Habyarimana’s merit is to have been able, from stage to stage, to combine the exercise of power, which remains nevertheless strong, with a certain respect for these balances and of the liberties of the citizens,” but emphasizes that “The second republic and its constitution is Juvénal Habyarimana, the relative stability of which it is not necessary to question any higher than him, and not the institutions organized by the 1978 constitution,” and that the preservation of his power “resides in the support of the army”. This delicate relationship with the military becomes unraveled as a result of the Arusha Accords giving way to a new army composed of a combined RPF (read Tutsi) and FAR (the national Rwandan army, read Hutu) armed force, and Habyarimana giving up his position as commander-in-chief. But the military isn’t the only element that preserved Habyarimana’s power—international aid propped up his

---

2 Regarding this problem of leadership and state capacity, Jackson and Rosberg, writing in 1986, are chary of the conferring of statehood on many sub-Saharan entities, pointing out that “many states in Tropical Africa are as yet far from credible realities. The independence and survival of African states is not in jeopardy, however, because their sovereignty is not contingent on their credibility as authoritative and capable political structures. Instead, it is guaranteed by the world community of states, especially as embodied in the United Nations, whose egalitarian international norms are universally accepted. This world-wide community has not only hastened the independence of many of these states, but has also collaborated with them to maintain their independence in spite of their disorganisation and fragility. . . . Their sovereignty derives far more from right than from fact. . . . Decolonisation therefore marked a revolutionary change in the basis of statehood (Reyntjens, 1986: 2-9). For more on this point, see their “Why Africa's Weak States Persist: the empirical and the juridical in statehood”, in World Politics (Princeton), 35, I, October 1982, pp. 1-24.

administration and made it possible for the army to be maintained.

Jackson and Rosberg address the manifestation of non-democratic governments in sub-Saharan Africa, such as Habyarimana’s, highlighting the fact that

Most new African rulers were preoccupied with controlling power, and accordingly they revised, revoked, or simply disregarded the democratic independence constitutions that gave birth to their parties. Rarely did competitive democracy last as long as a decade after independence, and in only three countries has it been retained (Botswana, The Gambia, and Zimbabwe).4

The ruling parties do not represent public opinion, and it seems axiomatic that when the private sector is under-represented the public sector becomes the target for the best jobs, and these job holders stiffly resist political opposition and the government changing hands.5 As far as Habyarimana’s pronouncements about developing international and inter-African trade,

There is usually little complementarity between ex-colonial African economies and thus no substantial basis for intra-African trade. Though many governments subscribe to the view that economic development will begin once intra-continental commercial trade is stimulated, they remain preoccupied with building their own overseas export markets. They need foreign currency to purchase the goods necessary for modernisation - neither of which can be provided by other African States.6

In addition

. . . almost everywhere in Africa, export crops are marketed via monopsonistic7 government or parastatal corporations. In addition to normal brokerage charges, claimed also by independent private traders, these corporations consume a large portion of the earnings in operating costs, and a good deal of the remainder may be

---

4 Jackson and Rosberg, *ibid*: 16.
5 Jean Kambanda, Rwandan Prime Minister in the short period after Habyarimana’s assassination, testified to the ICTR in September, 1997, that, “The most powerful ministry at the time (1988) was that of Public Works. That post was occupied by Joseph Nzirodera. Another much-feared person was the president’s brother-in-law, the prefect of Ruhengeri, Protas Zigiranyirazo, the junior brother of the president’s wife. . . . the loans granted the country were managed by people close to the resident’s family.”
6 Jackson and Rosberg, *ibid*: 22.
7 A market situation in which there is only one buyer.
directed to paying for other state activities. Stallholders end up with only a fraction of what they would have received in a free market. There is much less effective state involvement in the marketing of domestic foodstuffs, especially highly perishable foodstuffs. . . . Alienation of good lands from food to export crop production, and encroachment of export crops onto staple crop areas due to state policy, have increased the vulnerability of Africa to drought and contributed substantially to famine. Rwanda farmers produce food crops and livestock for local consumption and coffee, tea, pyrethrum, an other cultigens for overseas consumption. The former are typically referred to as ‘consumption or subsistence crops’ and the latter as ‘cash crops’, but this characterization ignores the fact that farmers trade in both, and that while production generally does not yield high surpluses of food, there is a substantial domestic market in beans, sorghum, peas, potatoes, groundnuts, sweet potatoes, and manioc, crops that are also consumed on the farm. A tension has developed between the government, which seeks to expand production of export crops (which are at the heart of the national tax base), and smallholders, who find greater financial gain—as well as household security—in domestic crops.  

From 1976-79, the price of coffee on the international market was high, and Habyarimana’s administration founded its agricultural policies on this export sector, because they could pocket the large profits resulting from the difference of the high market price and the standard, fixed price they forced onto the growers. But the high international prices didn’t hold, actually falling below the fixed price to growers, and the regime was stuck with subsidizing (Figure 7) the coffee sector. On top of this, the regime strongly discouraged the growing of bananas—even though bananas were extremely important to

---

8 Little and Horowitz, 1987: 254-55. Egan, 2010: 368, “By 1988, land scarcity was provoking increasing social conflict, as well as land disputes that were increasingly difficult to resolve.”
9 Berlage et al, 2004: 15; Ballet et al, 2007: 42. Shoumatoff (1986) gives a journalist’s, and mixed, picture of Rwanda and aspects of its economy in 1986. “In 1986, gorilla tourism was the fourth most important source of foreign exchange for the country; about six thousand tourists a year, at sixty dollars a head, plus hotels, rent cars, eat and buy things. . . The main roads, recently paved by the Chinese, are in great shape. Radio communications are excellent; if you want to get hold of someone, you just send a message for him on the radio. The civil servants are at their desks, and they are paid on time. . . In 1969, about 40 percent of the forest in the Pac des Volcans, where most of the gorillas live, was cleared and planted with pyrethrum for export to the West, but even before the first crop was harvested, cheaper, synthetic insecticides had been developed, and the bottom fell out of the pyrethrum market. . . In 1979 thirty gorillas skulls were seized, and a prominent European trafficker in gorilla parts was expelled from the country.”
the peasant-farmer economy and way of life—because it cut into the coffee production, and thus the regime’s profit source. The administration’s response was a greater budget austerity, trimming unprofitable parastatals, and offering for sale its $9 million tin foundry, inoperative for two years.¹⁰

Yet, despite Rwanda’s growing food insufficiencies, stagnancy in industrial development, and informal economy growth, it still outperformed its neighbors, save for Tanzania, which it overtook in 1990 after Nyerere’s *Ujaama* program had failed miserably. Rwanda, landlocked, geographically unfit for large-scale farming, and almost bereft of

---

natural resources, had in 1987, fourteen years after Habyarimana took office, a per capita income of $300, comparable to the Peoples’ Republic of China.¹¹ “Habyarimana hoped his participation in the Economic Community of Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL) would allow him to find new transport routes to Dar es Salaam, while participation in the Organization for the Management and Development of the Kagera River (KBO) offered hydroelectric development opportunities.”¹² But the dependence on foreign aid had taken on massive proportions by this time, jumping from 5% of GDP in 1973, Habyarimana’s first year in power, to 11%.

Even though poverty during Habyarimana’s reign embraced roughly half of the population, this proportion was actually lower than the Great Lakes Region average,¹³ and in the countryside calories per man-day for the peasant-farmers, on a national average, were within FAO standards, and the distribution of land was very egalitarian until this time, with a Gini coefficient of 0.419, one of the lowest in African, and the world.¹⁴ But despite Habyarimana’s official rhetoric championing the peasant-farmer, as in his public address on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the birth of the country, where he applauds Rwanda’s success in its struggle for progress,

> it is above all our farmers who made this happen . . . it is their total devotion to the work, every day . . . their amazing ability to adapt, their pragmatism, their genius, their profound knowledge of our eco-systems that allowed them to obtain a remarkable degree of resources from their parcels of land.¹⁵

---

¹² Ibid.
¹³ Ansoms and Marysse, 2004: 3.
¹⁴ Maton, 1994: 4-6. The Gini coefficient measures differences among values of distribution, for example levels of income, education, gender in professions, and so on. The coefficient varies between 0, which reflects complete equality and 1, which indicates complete inequality (one group has all the land or education, or one gender has all the jobs, and all others have none). See MINAGRI, 1986.
¹⁵ Habyarimana, op. cit.
Nonetheless, there was little trickle-down effect to the peasant-farmers from Habyarimana’s ‘planned liberalism’. In fact there is what has been called an anti-rural bias. Marysse ascribes this to three mechanisms:

- First, the disintegration of the lineage structure in an increasingly cash-based economy lead to the breakdown of traditional solidarity ties that had previously enhanced a relative redistribution of national wealth.
- Changes in the normative system caused by the country’s dependency on development aid intensified this process.
- Lastly, he adds that the political élites’ uses of financial surpluses (e.g. taxes, foreign aid and private investment) were determined more by their personal needs (e.g. security) than proclaimed pro-peasant rhetoric.

Verwimp points to two other factors:

- Habyarimana’s regime failed to respond to early warnings, after crop failures in 1989 resulted in severe famine in southern Rwanda.
- In addition, the price crisis in the coffee market during the second half of the eighties had a profoundly negative impact upon rural living conditions.

Other negative factors are: the administration’s inability or unwillingness to find off-farm productive employment possibilities for the peasant-farmers as well as for those leaving the miniscule farm plots (being increasingly divided into even smaller parcels for the increasing family members) that can’t support them, and for those seeking non-farm

---

16 Rumiya, 1985, cited in Newbury and Newbury, 2000. “Bebbington points to the interrelatedness of various societal dynamics in shaping rural living conditions, ‘Neither patterns of asset distribution nor institutional conditions in rural areas are accidental. Indeed, they each derive from the broader relationships between politics, economy, and society that drive and undergird the overall patterns of rural development’” (Bebbington et al., 2006, 1963, cited in Ansoms, 2008:9).

17 Loveridge (1988: 254) offers one of the few bright spots in this period, indicating that the country’s “permeable borders . . . contribute to the food security of the country by generating income and increasing the amount of food available through trade and specialization”. He mentions, for example, the value of livestock and alcoholic beverage exports. Belgian Senate 1997-1998. The Economist Intelligence Unit (1995, cited in the Belgian Senate (1997-98): “Few rural households survive solely on agriculture. In 1990, the government estimated that 81% of them had a lucrative extra such as brick making, carpentry and sewing activity. In addition, almost everyone had one foot in the underground economy or "black market" if only occasionally, and are covered by trade and cross-border smuggling or barter with neighboring countries.”

18 Marysse, 1982.

19 Verwimp, 2002.
employment; and the neglect by agricultural authorities of useful traditional knowledge and techniques in favour of dogmatic and standardised textbook techniques that did not suit the local micro-environment.20

Incidentally, for those who wish to see Rwanda’s history in a wider time frame, Paul Kagame, the de facto head of the government since the RPF’s take-over in 1994, spoke the following words at his inaugural address, in 2000, six years after being in charge:

If we can utilize the resources that God has given us to good effect, we can eradicate poverty. . . . We would like to urgently appeal to the Rwandese people to work. As the Bible says, ‘he who does not work should not eat’. I would like to request every Rwandese in whatever trade they are involved in, to work with dedication and diligence. If we adopt this culture of working diligently, we will be able to create more jobs for our people.21

This exhortation to solve deep and complex economic problems by simply applying oneself to diligent ‘work’ echoes the message in many of Habyarimana’s speeches and addresses, including the reference to God.22 Plus ça change.

With the bleak picture of country’s economic prospects, Habyarimana continues the austerity program and announces a freeze on civil service employment. Finding the administrations’ handling of the economy unsatisfactory, the media is beginning to question the regime; the newspaper Kanguka (Wake Up) begins publishing an analysis of the regime’s inadequate handling of the country economy and draws the ire of the administration; there is an explosion of dissent and the administration carries out a

---

22 Habyarimana’s religious convictions were particular, at the end of 1986, members of religious movements outside the established churches, who had “refused to wear the medal of the president or participate in his personality cult. . . . were arrested, tortured and imprisoned” (Gatwa, 2005: 123).
widespread repression of journalists and intellectuals. To this is added increasing political opposition from the base of the former PARMEHUTU, who had long been disenfranchised. There is also international and local pressure on the government for a move toward democracy, especially after Habyarimana won the recent (1988) elections with 99.8% of the votes. These elections were to be the last during Habyarimana’s reign. Kambanda recalls that “People in some regions did not even bother to go and vote, claiming that the results had already been fixed in advance by people close to the family-in-law of the president which had a lot of influence over him”. The president was forced to issue an aggiornamento at the beginning of 1989. Along with the voices of dissent was an extremely prescient one, that of Dr. Gregory Stanton, who met with Habyarimana and advised him to get rid of the ethnic designation on the ID cards. “Someday they will be used for genocide,” Dr. Stanton said. And abolition of the ID cards would be one of the demands in the Arusha Accords, August 1993; new cards without the ethnic designation were actually printed, yet never distributed.

Habyarimana called for a high-level commission to grapple with the economic emergency and the Minister of Health took a hard stand against Habyarimana’s ‘voluntary’ birth control program, insisting on families being limited to four children. Habyarimana also initiated a privatization program in which the State sold equity in several companies in its service and industrial sector. It would seem in response to this gesture, SOBILIRWA (the Société de Boissons et Limonades au Rwanda), in conjunction with a British

---

23 Kambanda, op. cit.
24 A spirit of open-mindedness and change, usually modernization. It is revealing that this word comes from a religious context, referring to the Second Vatican Council.
company, built a soft drink plant producing Pepsi.

In the worsening economic situation, internal power struggles intensified among the elites in their competition for rents, and Habyarimana was faced with a disintegrating coalition, which had been held together by the relative prosperity of the administration’s first decade in power. The external problems never ceased, President Bagaza of Burundi was overthrown in a coup by Pierre Buyoya, who installed a tyrannical military regime made up largely of Tutsis, which resulted in an uprising, a year later, in the fall of 1988. The continued minority rule of Tutsis in Rwanda’s southern neighbor created a constant strain on the two country’s relations because of the ethnic upheavals in Burundi and the subsequent repressive reactions by its government that resulted in large numbers of Hutus fleeing across the border into Rwanda and adding not only to the country’s economic problems but to a certain paranoia that if Tutsis were to get in government the Hutus would be disenfranchised, as they were before independence.

At the same time, the refugee problem on the northern border of Rwanda was being approached through a meeting between Habyarimana and President Museveni in a joint ministerial commission. Museveni appeared cordial in the talks as trade agreements were signed, with Uganda exporting to Rwanda natural goods like “beans, fish, timber, cattle and sorghum”,\(^\text{26}\) while Rwanda would reciprocate with manufactured goods, like iron sheets. Telecommunications were to be strengthened, as well as road and railway transport, which would help both countries in their attempts to increase trade with other African countries. This positive cooperative look to the future was, of course, a

\(^{26}\) *Kampala Home Service*, February 8, 1988.
subterfuge, as Museveni supported and supplied the RPF (founded a month later in Washington D.C.) in its preparations for invading Rwanda within the next eighteen months. Museveni was aware that Habyarimana would not repatriate any more refugees from Uganda (Habyarimana would announce such a decision five months later), and was playing a waiting game to see if the RPF could succeed in deposing Habyarimana, in which case the Rwandan refugees, who were an increasing irritant and political liability to Museveni’s government, would leave with the RPF, thereby solving that particular problem. Habyarimana knew that Museveni’s army has a large number of Tutsi soldiers and subsequently proposed a series of rather transparent reforms, for democratization and the return of refugees (on which he continued to waffle back and forth).

Whether Habyarimana trusted Museveni or not, he had no choice but to play the good neighbor rather than antagonize Museveni and face the consequences of having the trade route to Kenya cut off. Habyarimana had, as a certain backup, a Rwanda-Zaire Security Agreement which stipulated that if Rwanda were threatened militarily the Zairian army would do their part. For the present, he told the Ugandan president that the problem could only be solved if the neighboring (and other) countries would continue to keep the large number of immigrants they’ve received, with the issue to be discussed in regional organizations, where it could be resolved. In hindsight, perhaps Rwanda being a signatory to the African Charter of Human and Peoples’ Rights appeared a little disingenuous.

As part of the unending and pressing need for foreign aid, Habyarimana and his wife visited Japan to request Japanese efforts to stabilise prices of primary products and to
build a Japanese embassy in Kigali to help encourage investment in Rwanda.\textsuperscript{27} Meanwhile, a primary international lender, the World Bank, strongly encouraged Rwanda to “undergo a series of macroeconomic reforms such as trade liberalization, the abolition of agricultural subsidies, and the privatization of State enterprises”\textsuperscript{28} The scenario strongly advised by the World Bank assured Habyarimana that levels of consumption would increase markedly over 1989-93 alongside a recovery of investment and an improved balance of trade. . . . added export performance and substantially lower levels of external indebtedness. . . . but that these positive results would only occur depending on the speedy implementation of the usual recipe of trade liberalisation and currency devaluation alongside lifting all subsidies to agriculture, phasing out the \textit{Fonds d'égalisation}, the privatisation of State enterprises and the dismissal of civil servants.\textsuperscript{29}

Habyarimana had no choice but to comply, since the World Bank and the IMF were the only institutions he could realistically turn to for paying down the $1 billion debt brought about by the self-defeating policy his administration had followed of paying farmers coffee prices a fixed price that had become well above the international rates. The 'postcolonial historic bloc', skillfully established by the president\textsuperscript{30} was fast unraveling.\textsuperscript{31} He was still working to manage change in his and his coterie’s best interests but his governance was

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{27} \textit{Japanese News Agency}, 21 March 1988.
\item \textsuperscript{28} Kamola, 2008: 67.
\item \textsuperscript{29} Chossudovsky, 1995: n.p.
\item \textsuperscript{30} Van Hoyweghen (1996: 383), “In support of national stability, leaders of African post-colonial states foster alliances with the elites of the Centre, in order to establish, what Bayart calls, a post-colonial historic bloc. This is not typically African but African leaders of the state are more heavily dependent on these relationships to guarantee their position of extraversion. . . . According to Bayart, access to wealth, means control over international (cash flow) relationships. Habyarimana was very good at fostering financially beneficial relationships, especially in Christian democratic circles. . . . it was only after the death of the very Catholic Belgian King Baudouin in 1993 that a re-orientation of Belgian policy towards Rwanda could be discussed. President Habyarimana was a personal friend of the King and could count on his unconditional support.” (See Bayart, 2009: 105, 180).  
\item \textsuperscript{31} Habyarimana’s regime at this juncture relates to Percival and Homer-Dixon’s (1995) four principal social effects from environmental scarcity: “decreased agricultural potential, regional economic decline, population displacement, and the disruption of legitimized and authoritative institutions and social relations.”
\end{itemize}
more “a matter of seamanship and less one of navigation—that is, staying afloat rather than
going somewhere”.

The government set up OPROVIA (*Office pour la Promotion, la
Vente et l’Importation des Produits Agricoles*) in response to the realization that the food
problem was being caused more by problems in distribution and exchange than actual
availability, then not long after confessed it had failed to make the office work.

In mid-1989 coffee prices dropped by 50%, and a severe drought hit the south; food
shortages caused by administration policies added to the famine conditions, and the
populace voiced its indignation and loss of confidence in the government. The population
was increasing at such a rapid rate that, with little potential for increasing employment in
the agricultural sector, the demand for jobs outside this sector far outstripped any possible
remedy, and frustrated reactions occurred,

in places where the land-hungry cultivators had been obliged by the state to cede
fields to development projects that brought no visible improvement to their lives,
they took back the land by force and began to refuse to go for one day a week of
labour.

And people began refusing to participate in *umuganda*,

one of the cornerstones of
Habyarimana’s development philosophy, or to pay taxes.

Exacerbating the problem was
the Church, because it’s missions’ activities—workshops, cooperatives, small stores—
were rife, being tax-exempt non-profit organizations, and this advantage, often financed
from abroad, allowed them to be more competitive than the local private enterprises.

---

32 Jackson & Rosberg, 1992: 19, n 5.
34 Des Forges, 1999: 57.
35 As the administration was trying to make up for the worsening economic situation, Prunier (1995: 87) notes that
*umuganda* duties had been increased.
36 Uwimbabazi, 2012: 42.
Around this time, the journalist Colette Braeckman recalls that in what was her last meeting with the president: “his hair greying, his face gaunt, [he] sighed:

   It is fashionable today to criticize what we have done. Nevertheless, I can say to you that all of us, together, really tried to tear away from poverty and for a long time we have not done so badly.38

It is the image of tired leader, but not resigned to failure in the face of the intractable problems he has grappled with for over a decade:

   Where is it then, this social justice which, at the world level, would allow us one day to envisage a less harmful, less inequitable, less degrading economic system? Because the international economic system seems to us so inequitable, so hostile to us, it will be necessary, even more than in the past, to count at first not only on our own strengths, not to live above our means, and to rely on the solutions which come from us, that we developed ourselves.39

Braeckman raises a question that parallels the position of those who consider Habyarimana an anti-ruraliste. Isn’t it, she asks, just Habyarimana’s way of maintaining the status quo when he regards the “few cities, traditionally scattered housing, essentially agricultural activities, departmental sectors of service and trade, and artisanal products too little developed” as “what the people want”?40

The media at this time was continually under fire. As the leading news organ, Kinyamateka, began taking a harder stance against Habyarimana’s administration, the editor-in-chief was forced to resign (he later died mysteriously) under pressure from Habyarimana’s fellow officer training student (who was part of the coup against Kayibanda) Nsekaliye, now Minister of Education.41 Numbers of new publications began

38 Braeckman, ibid: 87.
39 Cited in Hanssen,1989: 34.
40 Braeckman, ibid: 89
appearing, and they increasingly called for a multiparty government, and even the end of
the MRND party. A foreign journalist in Kigali during this period described the
atmosphere as “the end of a regime”.\textsuperscript{42} After an influential group of intellectuals published
an open letter\textsuperscript{43} demanding reform, Habyarimana appointed a commission in July 1990 to
deal with the petitions, and they came up with constitutional changes that were submitted
for public discussion, but it would take until June 1991 for a new constitution to be
adopted.

At this juncture, considering Habyarimana’s autocratic rule: in comparison with
governments in the rest of sub-Saharan Africa, in 1990 for instance, there were 39 other
national leaders who “allowed no opposition voice to be expressed, who had no popular
legitimacy and who were above the law”.\textsuperscript{44} But it could be argued that this is a common
evolution from the ‘Big man’ nature of chieftainship, to an enlargement of that office of
power in a kingship, then to the head of a national entity, the prerogatives of power
enlarging in dimension but not essentially changing in autocratic form. What makes a
leader dictatorial depends on the character of the person, the culture, and the system in
which he is embedded. So, if the majority of sub-Saharan leaders after independence fit
the description of dictator, then there must be some shared, relatively similar socio-
political realities. This ‘commonality’ frames Habyarimana in a useful set of references.

By 1990, in spite of the human rights situation improving, and no major ethnic
violence taking place, Habyarimana’s hold on power had come under serious challenge,

\textsuperscript{42} Cited in Longman, 2009: 131. Also see Human Rights Watch, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{43} This denunciation is one of many parallels between Habyarimana’s and Mobutu’s reigns: for example, we find in
Meredith (2005: 305) this information, “In 1980 a group of fifteen parliamentarians published a fifty-one-page
indictment of Mobutu’s rule, arguing that he was the root cause of Zaire’s difficulties and demanding open elections”.
\textsuperscript{44} Baker, 1998: 115.
and he was being forced to respond to demanded changes. The northern prefectures of Ruhengeri and Gisenyi had, over the fifteen years of Habyarimana’s presidency, been too obviously and egregiously favored; almost all of the army leadership, as well as that of the security service, came from Gisenyi, along with thirty percent of the eighty-five most powerful administrative positions. And, increasingly, competitions and conflicts were happening among and between power seekers in Gisenyi and Ruhengeri themselves, such that the situation began to rival in political and economic terms the long-standing North-South rivalry. Along with this infighting in the late 1980s, the country was hit by a series of high-level murders\textsuperscript{45} that pointed to a certain fracturing within Habyarimana’s administration involving the moderate and radical elements. The possibility of a leadership change happening in an orderly manner has little chance in a one-party system; Habyarimana’s government, as was true with Kayibanda’s before him, was accepted as long as it was in control, but when severe problems arise without being adequately addressed the shift to another political power can quickly threaten.\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{45} “In August 1989, the member Félecila Nyiramutarambirwa was deliberately run over by a truck after filing corruption charges against the government’s road construction contracts. She was from Butare and was suspected of encouraging the political opposition there. In November of the same year, Fr. Silvio Sindambiwe, a journalist who was outspoken and had written articles too libertarian on some questionable practices of government, was also killed in a simulated ‘car accident’. Other journalists who attempted to relate these facts were arrested” (Sénat de Belgique. Session de 1997-1998).

\textsuperscript{46} For a theory of one-party government see Tunteg, 1973: 657.
The organograms above are rudimentary and not intended to describe relative power relationships within each system. Their purpose here, as displayed side by side, is only to give an approximate idea of how formal government structure changed from precolonial turn-of-the-century Rwanda’s mwami-ship*, through the period of Belgian’s colonial mandate (and UN trusteeship), and into the country’s independence and first constitutional republics (1st Republic: 1962-1973; 2nd Republic: 1974-1994). The government structure in the 2nd Republic, under President Habyarimana, faced serious challenges from opposition groups and international funders from 1985, and its functions were permanently upset by the RPF invasion in October 1990).

* Precolonial Rwanda existed somewhat astride a chiefdom and a kingdom. It has been compared in several aspects with ‘feudal’ Europe by several writers (i.e., Best & de Blij, 1977: 467; Gravel, 1965: 323; Linden, 1977: 59-61; Mwami Muteza, 1952: 105-09; and Kayibanda, 1953: 155-56), but it is incorrect to label the precolonial system as feudalism (see Vidal, 1973: 32-47; Carney, 2011: 22). (An interesting aside: Bloch’s assertion that the word feudal is related to the Frankish ‘fehu-ôd’, where fehu means ‘cattle’ and -ôd means ‘goods’, fits coincidentally the Rwandan notion of cattle as goods (that is, having value).
The Catholic Church, long a champion and partner of Habyarimana’s regime—particularly visible in the person of Archbishop Nsengiyumva in his role as a member of the MRND’s Central Committee (also the personal confessor of Habyarimana’s wife, and known for wearing Habyarimana's portrait pin on his cassock)—and having enjoyed a fruitful relationship, were at first hesitant to criticize the administration (the senior clergy had gained too much from the relationship with the regime):

It was access to the state that could guarantee wealth. In this sense [from early on] the mission-dominated school system was a major channel to power. . . . On every level, clergy were members of all sorts of development commissions. . . . The Church and state elites had a mutual interest in maintaining good relationships. The Catholic Church controlled most of the provision of education and heath care, which was financial beneficial for the state, as education and health care are major expenses on the national budget. The state on the other hand could set the rules under which the Church had to operate . . . . Habyarimana understood that in ‘search for autonomy of the state’ a coalition with both the Church and the international community was valuable. Hence the completion of the Church-state symbiosis.

Yet, the Christian journals Kinyamateka and Dialogue had always been able to maintain a relatively free voice, and now, at the beginning of the ‘90s, were a constant thorn in Habyarimana’s side. In addition,

“organizational life in Rwanda flourished and a variety of organizations formally and informally linked with the Church now acted on their own account. The laity, who had no voice within the Church, started looking for a voice outside Church

---

48 Bishop Joseph Ruzindana, of Byumba, was a relative of the late President, and born in the same year.
49 Concerning Habyarimana’s portrait pins, Paul Rusesabagina (2006: 55) gives a very critical and unflattering account of the president: “Habyarimana, who I considered a criminal and a blowhard. He was a bit on the fat side, and walked with a slight limp that was said to be an old Army injury. He sparkled in his suits, which were all tailored in Paris. I was especially irritated by his habit of clearing out the national parks of tourists so he and his cronies could go on big game hunting rips. . . . Like many African ‘big men’, Habyarimana had a penchant for plastering his face on billboards and public spaces everywhere throughout the nation. . . . He designed medallions with his own photograph in the middle. These were sold to various people—commune administrators, priests, wealthy businessmen—with instructions to wear them while acting in their official capacities.
Habyarimana still had no robust policy for implementing birth control and reducing the detrimental birth rate of eight children per family—this in the face of 30% unemployment among the rural population—while his Ministry of the Interior looked on with approval as “Catholic anti-abortion radicals commandos raided pharmacies to destroy stocks of condoms”. But, the Church hierarchy slowly came around, with the Catholic bishops, in advance of the October 1990 papal visit, issued a letter denouncing the regime’s “corruption and regional and ethnic discrimination and called for free speech”. Added to this growing attack on the administration was a “grassroots rise of non-Christian NGOs and a secularization of development in general”.

The Akazu

One aspect of Habyarimana’s presidency that has been mentioned by the most writers concerned in one way or another with the period of the Second Republic up to and/or including the 1994 genocide, is the involvement of his wife, Agathe Kanziga, and her relatives, in what is commonly described as a behind-the-scenes ‘puppet’ government, which is called the akazu. Yet, the nearly ubiquitous mention of the akazu appears with little or no evidence to support the declaration of its existence, save a kind of mimesis following other writers’ mention of its existence. And whatever importance is placed upon

51 Ibid: 386.
52 Sénat de Belgique, op. cit. “The churches provided additional symbolic legitimacy to the state, which, in turn, facilitated church activities. Both emphasised the principle of obedience and increased dependency on the structures of authority. . . . birth control, for example, was anathema both as public policy and private practice” (OAU 2000a: paras 4.14-4.15). Also see De Heusch, 1995.
54 Hoyweghen, op. cit.: 389.
it in the Habyarimana administration’s workings, there are few specific examples, and no incriminating documents, in the vast literature on Rwanda. The akazu is the most unexplained and shadowy ‘fact’ that is most often repeated, and taken for granted.

Who were the akazu? They were first called Clan de Madame, after Habyarimana’s wife, Agathe Kanziga, and consisted of her family—not his—and their close associates. The “clan” did not include Habyarimana’s family, it has been suggested, because they were unimportant farmers and without influential connections, whereas Agathe was “part of a well-established northern Hutu clan, . . . had relatives in key positions and built up her own network of associates and informers”.\(^{55}\) The main members of this group were allegedly Agathe’s three brothers, Col. Pierre-Célestin Rwagafilita,\(^{56}\) Protais Zigiranyirazo and Séraphin Rwabukumba,\(^{57}\) his cousin Elijah Sagatwa, and close associates Colonel Laurent Serubuga and Noël Mbonabaryi (uncle and godfather of Habyarimana). Very close and instrumental to this group was Col. Bagosora, whose influence grew considerably over the years. All were northerners from the area of Karago and Giciye communes, Bushiru, in Gisenyi prefecture.

The presence and importance of the Clan de Madame in the shaping of Habyarimana’s presidency, according to the Belgian Senate, arose from three factors: 1) the MRND became heir to Kayibanda’s Hutu regime, which had kept the Tutsi tradition of having a circle of devotees committed to the figure in power, and of relying on regional...
loyalties; 2) Habyarimana gave preference to his home prefecture of Gisenyi, in the north; 3) Because Habyarimana had no influential connections through his family lines, he was a self-made man. But his wife came from a well-known and important land-owning lineage, the abakonde, in the Bushiru area of Gisenyi, and therefore was able to easily put together a powerful group of personalities around Habyarimana. This was, as it were, the beginning of his ‘sharing’ of power, which continued, with the Clan de Madame growing and gaining influence until it morphed into the akazu (little house), in reference to the coterie around the mwami, in precolonial times and, by the early ‘90s, had succeeded in usurping much of the president’s control. Additional members at this time were, supposedly, Alphonse Ntirivamuna, son-in-law of the President, Dr. Séraphin Bararengana, brother of the President; Dr. Charles Nzabagerageza, cousin of the President, and Joseph Nzirorera, the former Secretary, deputy of Ruhengeri and national secretary of the MRND, close to the family of the President.

The first time Rwandans used the appellation ‘akazu’ to refer to the circle of people around the president was in 1991, according to Ephrem Nkezabera, Jean-Marie

---

58 Sénat de Belgique, Session de 1997-98; and Fujii, 2009: 73. Also see Melvern, 2004: 12, 2000: 41. Melvern states that Habyarimana ousted Grégoire Kayibanda with the support of Agathe’s family, but this goes against the way the coup unfolded—if we believe the Habyarimana family’s story (and we have no other)—and the seminal fact that Habyarimana rose to the head of the army on his own accord, and that it was his close connection with the officers who had graduated with him in the first class from Officers Training School, and their loyalty and assistance, that made the coup possible, and encouraged their faith in him to become president.

59 Dr. Bararengana was, after the genocide, found guilty (in absentia) by a gacaca court of participating in the genocide: of purposefully neglecting Tutsi patients, and organizing meetings among the faculty of medicine of the National University of Rwanda, during which they invited people to hunt and kill Tutsis (Hirondelle News Agency, September 10, 2007).

Vianney, and Anastase Munyandekwe, and was created by the MDR party to “weaken” the former president and his supporters,” Nkezabera said. “All those who could help him were considered caged people in a little hut, . . . We used the significant term *maisonette* [small house] pejoratively.” According to Nkezabera, in the spirit of the MDR party, *akazu* referred to a “little hut which confined lepers.”

Nkezabera indicated that when the MDR was formed in July 1991, the population, principally the rural population, had difficulty understanding that Habyarimana was an ordinary person who could be replaced as head of state. It was him, the leader that we wanted to isolate. We presented him as the center of the *akazu*. We wanted to take away his people. We wanted people to leave his party and join ours. From September 1991, all parties started to use the term *akazu*. It entered political discourse to criticize those who continued to support the MRND.

Thus, the term primarily used during the ‘90s, in Rwanda, appears to have been a ploy (if nothing else) invented by the opposition to denigrate the president and those around him in hopes of weakening his party.

Considering the power of the *akazu*, Fujii says that they had the ability to control the political and social landscape of the country . . . throughout the 1980s, until the twin pressures of structural adjustment and political reform threatened to unseat the group in the early 1990s.

---

61 Former official at the National Bank of Rwanda, as well as president of the commission on economic and financial affairs within the national committee of the Interahamwe. His testimony at the ICTR was not considered to be credible.
62 Munyandekwe said that “even in 1991 when he decided to join the opposition, he always appreciated the management of the country by Habyarimana and his party, the MRND. ‘We only wished that he left; just because a president is good doesn’t mean there won’t be opposition’” (*Hirondelle News Agency*, 2007, 20 March).
63 *Hirondelle News Agency*, ibid.
64 This corresponds with one of Musabyimana’s (2008: 15) examples of a definition for ‘akazu’ having a ‘bad’ meaning. In fact, he says there is no socio-political definition for ‘akazu’, as is currently used, listed in the French-Rwandese dictionary.
65 *Hirondelle News Agency* (ibid.) “Editor: If corroborated, this could put a crimp into the widely advanced theory that the Rwandan genocide was planned ahead of time by a cadre surrounding President Habyarimana. Some ICTR defense lawyers, including Chris Black, maintain no such plan ever existed. Other individuals, like General Romeo Dallaire (in *Le Point*, September 94), choose to present it as a *politicide*, where the killings were based on political alliances rather than ethnicity”.
66 Fujii, op. cit.: 73.
Reyntjens sees the *akazu* as

“a floating term”\(^{67}\) which refers to the people revolving around power, around the president and around his in-laws. . . . people sharing the same ‘ethnisantes ideas’, the same regional origins and attracted by corrupt and commercial interests. . . . [and] in seeing that the governing power does not change”.\(^{68}\)

Paul Rusesabagina, of Hotel Rwanda fame, says of the *akazu*, from his experience:

The main channel of access to the riches of government was actually not through the president but his strong-willed wife, Madame Agathe. If you weren’t from the northwest, or weren’t close with Madame, you stood little chance of advancing.... Having friends in the *akazu* became even more important after the world price of coffee plunged in 1989 and the Rwandan economy collapsed with it.\(^{69}\)

The investigative journalist Colette Braeckman gives the following examples of the business and illicit activities\(^{70}\) of the organization: Seraph Rwabukumba and his older brother, Protais Zigiranyirazo (Mr. Z), both brothers of Agathe, allegedly pulled all the strings within the main financial and political links in the country, Mr. Z operating from his position as a longtime prefect of Ruhengeri.\(^{71}\) Seraph, was set up with a foodstuffs import company, La Centrale, where he operated under a near monopoly; Michel Bagaragaza, who would be later associated with the ‘death squads’ operating after 1992, was the director of OCIR-Tea, which became the biggest and most lucrative business operation in the country (using OCIR, he supposedly facilitates drug trafficking—the

---

\(^{67}\) Reyntjens (*Hirondelle*, 2004a) points out that the *akazu* didn’t have a formal structure, and that “members joined in due to economic interest and fell out when they realized it was getting dangerous or there was no interest to benefit them”.

\(^{68}\) *La Libre Belgique*, 20 avril 2001.

\(^{69}\) Rusesabagina, 2006: 58.

\(^{70}\) The *Akazu* “had only one ambition, getting rich. Its members traded in drugs and arms, and controlled prostitution. The Akazu supervised the whole territory closely, the prison regime was abominable and ‘the calm which reigned on the hills was that of fear’” (Braeckman 1994: 101).

\(^{71}\) “His influence was predominant, even in Gisenyi, where Colonel Nsengiyumva was the *commandant de place*. Zigiranyirazo wielded considerable financial and political power. It was generally acknowledged that he had a say in the appointment of members of government and senior military officers. It was common knowledge that Mr. Z financed the *Interahamwe* at the national level” (Testimony of Omar Serushago, ICTR, case ICTR-98-41-T, 25 June 2003).
akazu also supposedly cultivated marijuana in the Nyungwe forest, near Butare—as well as controls the flow of foodstuffs into the country through Seraph’s La Centrale). On top of all this activity he was in charge of the National Office of Tourism.72 The akazu were also at the National Bank of Rwanda, the African Continental Bank, the Commercial Bank of Rwanda, the Bank of Kigali, Agrotec, NAHV and other national organizations in the import-export sector.73 Among the business people working as part of, or in league with the akazu, multimillionaire Félicien Kabuga stood out for the amount he subsidized their political courses of action. The OAU’s report, in 2000, also cited the akazu’s illicit and corrupt activities, including “currency transactions and generous commissions on government contracts”.74

The akazu is also accused of being involved in arms dealings, from the middle of the 1980s, carried out under Elie Sagatwa, Habyarimana’s secretary. The bitter irony of the akazu’s arms dealing would be that they were shipping weapons to Museveni before he got into power, then continued afterwards, even though Museveni didn’t need more arms, and that (as has been speculated) he was secretly forwarding them to the RPF to be used later in their invasion of Rwanda.75

Braeckman also makes serious charges of criminal behavior on the part of Habyarimana’s wife, who she says “often speaks during the family meetings—Bagaragaza, a distant relative of the family, said ‘All decisions were taken around the family table’76—

72 Braeckman, op. cit.: 104.
74 OAU, 2000a: para 5.18. “Reyntjens has argued that ‘being a member of the Akazu was not a crime because they were merely friends of the president’.”
75 Braeckman, op cit: 110.
and who imposes radical solutions: torture and kill”, and of Captain Pascal Simbikangwa, the head of the State Intelligence Service, and another brother of Habyarimana’s wife, “who moves in a wheelchair, [and] it takes only his name to make people shiver.”77 Col. Théoneste Bagosora is thought to have been a key player in the akazu, but little direct evidence links him to it. General Dallaire, head of the UN peacekeeping force in Rwanda (1993-94), told the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) that he had received information which mentioned

```
that Bagosora was at the heart of the death squad, operation zero, and a group which I do not remember the name of, which involved the president’s wife and the president’s brother-in-law.78
```

Bagosora’s testimony in his own case at the ICTR hearings, regarding the akazu, shows as much about Bagosora’s devious ability to obfuscate the truth as it reveals about the akazu:

```
Bagosora: You have been able to learn of my relationship with the president in the course of my career. His family acted as godparent to my daughter. We continued to entertain relations—friendly relations, even though there were these obstacles that were linked to our different divergent interests and politics. So because of politics, my relationship with the president . . . with the president's family, remained good. So, if this meant that one had to be a member of the Akazu, then I would be a member of the Akazu. But if this means that all those who hail from the president's region, Bushiru, are members of Akazu, well, I was president of ADECOGIKA79. I was a member who hailed from that region. If that is what you are referring to, well, then, I am a member of the Akazu. If you are referring to the officers who worked with the president, he was my boss. For the entire duration of my career, I worked under his orders. . . . So if all the officers who worked with Habyarimana are members of the Akazu, well, then I am a member. So if all the civil servants who worked under the orders of Habyarimana are members of the Akazu, then I am a member. But if you are referring to his immediate entourage, then I have proven to you that I have no blood relationship with the family of Habyarimana, and my contact with him from 1973 untill he died in 1994, I have detailed to you. So if you are thinking of these advisers, well, then, I am not a member of Akazu. If you are
```

77 Ibid.
79 Business organization promoting the interests of Habyarimana’s Bushiru area over other regions.
thinking of his personal advisers, then I am not a member of Akazu. But if you are
talking about people who are . . . friends with Habyarimana, . . . relations such as can
be established with people . . . then I would be a member of Akazu. I think that is
clear.

Prosecutor: Do you think that the Akazu exists as it is presented in the indictment
and that you are not part of it?

Bagosora: No, it does not exist.80

Essentially, Bagosora implied that Habyarimana’s entourage consisted of many circles,
and, in his opinion, it was not possible to determine in which level one resided. He went on
to testify that the term ‘akazu’, politically speaking, came into use with the advent of
multipartyism in 1992, reinforcing the MDR politicians’ statements above concerning its
origin.

Another ICTR witness, Sagahutu Murashi, a former Ambassador to Uganda, said
that the akazu actually wielded more power than the president, and wanted to remove him
because he had agreed to negotiations with the ‘enemy’—the RPF and the opposition
political parties in Rwanda.81 The eminent Great Lakes scholar, René Lemarchand, agrees
with the assessment that Habyarimana had less power than the akazu:

Rwanda's President was extraordinarily indecisive, lacking in vision, and very
much the captive in his extremist, northern-based entourage—the so-called Akazu.
Where Mandela insisted on speaking for 'all South Africans', the late Habyarimana
spoke only for the Hutu, or, more precisely for the northern Hutu; where Mandela
agreed to implement the hard bargains that had been struck, Habyarimana had to be
driven kicking and screaming to the negotiating table; where Mandela was able to
reassure his opponents, Habyarimana did just the opposite. Unlike what happened
in South Africa, the reformers in Rwanda's regime never had a chance, while the
extremists in the opposition never ceased to gain influence.82

81 Hirondelle News Agency, 2004c.
82 Lemarchand, 1994: 595.
Mr. Z is implicated after 1992 as head of the notorious Réseau Zéro (Zero Network), which coordinated the death squads and was controlled by the akazu, and whose main purpose was to derail the democratization process.\(^8\) The Réseau Zéro must have come about in response to the akazu’s increasing loss of power, due to the changed political landscape of the country caused by the war and multipartyism; the akazu no longer had the upper hand with all the officials, so a more threatening posture was decided upon.

At least seven important members of the akazu were found guilty and sentenced by the ICTR, not because they were akazu members, but because they were génocidaires. ICTR prosecutors wanting to delve more deeply into the workings of the akazu in a search of its possible relations to genocidal events found themselves with little information on the organization, it being an undisclosed group and not open to observation. As prosecutor Bernard Muna complained,

> We need insiders, and until we get their evidence we cannot proceed. If the Akazu members were not in the government or military or were recognized Interahamwe as well, we cannot arrest them at present. We find it difficult to attract insider information. In the Kambanda case the Prime Minister received a life sentence although he cooperated with us. We must also remember that there is a rift between Southerners and Northerners in Rwanda. With this kind of antagonism it would be the Southerners who should speak and accuse the Northerners since the Akazu were one hundred percent northerners. How am I to obtain court worthy evidence? Should I capture Agathe Habyarimana and torture her? Before I arrest her I need a First Chamber Warrant. It is at present only hearsay that she was involved with the Akazu. The Rwandan government does not give me evidence, although it tells us that the ‘Akazu’ was formed of Agathe and her brothers, without supplying evidence either from the Ministry of Justice, the Military, or the Prosecutor General’s office.\(^4\)

---

\(^8\) Scherrer, op cit: 131, n18. Much of the information writers rely on concerning Réseau Zéro is derived from Mfizi, 2006. But, “Mfizi obtained political asylum in France in September 1996, having resigned as the RPF’s first ambassador to Paris. Ten years later he submitted an exhaustive report on the Zero Network – nearly 50,000 words – at the request of the ICTR’s Office of the Prosecution. He repudiated the term akazu, which, he wrote, could not take the measure of “the political reality, and even less so the criminal reality … of the period between 1980 and 1994” (Smith, 2011: 3-5).

\(^4\) Bernard Muna, quoted in Scherrer, 2001: 106.
From this brief look at the phenomenon labeled the *akazu*, there are reasons to believe and not believe in various possible aspects, but there are too many testimonies to its existence to ignore, and too many instances of nepotism concerning the most important or powerful business dealings and job allocations to perceive the ‘organization’ as not influential. The *akazu* will have to be considered as having a serious impact on Habyarimana’s presidency, until the many génocidaires in prison come forward with insider evidence that will help clear up the workings of the fluid group that surrounded the president. For now, the most that can be done is to register alleged reports of the *akazu’s* activities and try to mesh them within an overall perspective of the Second Republic.

Among the underlying mechanisms leading to the failure of the regime—the demographic pressure on the land, the growing inability to inadequately feed the population, the downturn in coffee prices, and the increase in dissident voices (from international donors and human rights organizations, from local groups, politicians both outside and inside the administration, and church, as well as lay, associations, and the media)—the *akazu* was an tangle saddling Habyarimana and the MRND.

The continued negative influence of the *akazu* on the administration closes the decade of the ‘80s with their alleged murders of Col. Stanislas Mayuya in 1988, followed by Félécula Nyiramutarambirwa and Fr. Silvio Sindambiwe in 1989. The Mayuya affaire was especially heinous because he was Habyarimana’s friend and slated to be vice-president as a step to the presidency. Supposedly the *akazu* felt threatened because the

---

85 Politico-cultural threads running from the mwamiship and into Habyarimana’s reign are not to be completely discounted, as we find parallels with the past in the passage from Linden (op. cit.: 20), “... Rwabugiri inherited a
dwindling government revenues had set off a free-for-all among politically aligned groups in and around the administration (and in the northern enclave), and Mayuya was seen as a potential spoiler to their ambitions and continued fortunes. The men suspected of his murder are Col. Serubuga and Col. Bagosora; Bagosora not only wanted to succeed Mayuya as commandant of the Kanombe para-commando camp, to which succession Habyarimana was opposed, but was seen as a rival to the president himself,\(^86\) so Habyarimana had subsequently wanted him marginalized, appointing Aloys Ntabakuze as commandant of the Kanombe camp and Bagosora as Director of Cabinet at the Ministry of Defense.\(^87\) Nyiramutambirwa had made the blunder of holding government corruption up to the light concerning something as relatively innocuous as bribed contracts for building roads. Sindambiwe’s outspokenness, as well, had become too embarrassing, and thus disruptive, so he could no longer be tolerated.\(^88\) Even some men who had been with Habyarimana from the beginning, like Nsekalije, who had helped engineer the ’73 coup, held constant cabinet posts, and was even from the same region as the president, is said to have been ousted because he was not part of the Clan de Madame. But the importance of the Mayuya affair was that it marked in the minds of people the ruthless dismissal of the democratic process by the power holders at the very time when the clamor for political change had an undeniable weight and momentum because it was an authentic petition by the populace. The arrogance of the murders signaled the end of the people’s trust in the

---

86 Joseph Twahirwa testimony at the Office of the King’s Prosecutor, Brussels, Annex: Hearing 1, No. 49500, April 1995.

87 Sénat de Belgique, *op. cit.* Ntabakuze, as well as Bagosora, were both found guilty of genocidal activities by the ICTR and sentenced to prison. It is probable that Habyarimana kept Bagosora ‘within reach’ in the administration following Mobutu’s advice to “Keep your friends close, but your enemies closer still”.

administration, and created a gap that was never again closed. Secondly, it unequivocally demonstrated Habyarimana’s weakness vis-à-vis the akazu, something that would be remarked on by different observers throughout the Arusha Accords process, and which has led many to the conclusion that the akazu could have been behind Habyarimana’s assassination after he ‘caved in’ to the Accords on April 6. It is also the point at which the president and Bagosora become distanced, which was a dangerous development, because Bagosora was so easily capable of eliminating his enemies. It is possible to regard the end of 1988, and the events surrounding the Mayuya murder as the beginning of the end of Habyarimana’s effective leadership and one-party rule.

**Mobutu’s Influence**

Of ongoing value and importance to Habyarimana and the akazu is the relationship with Mobutu. For national security, the mutual assistance pact in case of armed aggression against either country is vital for Habyarimana, as will be seen when Zairian troops are sent to help stop the RPF forces in their advance toward Kigali at the beginning of the invasion in 1990. Mobutu’s work as arbiter in the following cease-fires and peace talks is also invaluable in its injection of a certain managed neutrality but, even so, Mobutu has no leverage concerning the substance of the Arusha Accords, which completely favors the RPF’s demands, to the detriment of Habyarimana’s regime. In economic terms, the Mobutu-Habyarimana connection, as has been insinuated, reaped the benefits of smuggling valuable resources (diamonds, gold, copper, zinc, and tin) out of the then named Zaire (see
When the Hutu génocidaires fled Rwanda in the April-July period of 1994, they managed to carry with them what was left of the country’s hard currency, transported 20,000 tones of coffee (US $50 million) to Mobutu’s family storage facilities, and put 17 billion RFr in Mobutu’s hands for safe keeping.

Erwin Blumenthal, a senior representative of the IMF, was assigned to the Bank of Zaire from 1978-79 to make certain Mobutu’s government observed the terms of the loans made by western donors. He recorded how Mobutu “used the central bank as a private

---

89 Burundi, Rwanda’s southern neighbor, according to Bayart (1999: 26), was for a long time the smuggling capital of East and Central Africa.
account for himself, his family and associates”, and “personally profited from the sale of Zaire’s mineral riches”. And, in despair, at the end of his one-year posting, wrote

the corruptive system in Zaire . . . [and] its mismanagement and fraud will destroy all endeavors of international institutions, of friendly governments, and of the commercial banks towards recovery and rehabilitation of Zaire's economy. Sure, there will be new promises by Mobutu, by members of his government . . . but no (repeat: no) prospect for Zaire's creditors to get their money back in any foreseeable future.92

Mobutu, the man who ransacked and destroyed his country, is Habyarimana’s mentor; surely there is no greater single negative impact on Habyarimana’s political philosophy.

Rwanda’s economy dramatically declined in every major respect from the middle of the ‘80s, almost alone in comparison to other countries at this time. So, when the RPF (Rwandan Patriotic Front) invaded the country in October 1990, commonly referred to by Rwandans as the October War, they were taking advantage of the popular unrest and of the country’s and the government’s financial straits. However, they were propelled out of Uganda as much by the Ugandan people’s intolerance toward Rwandan refugees as by Rwanda’s difficulties. Much has been written about the RPF invasion, so there is no need to revisit in detail the buildup and attack. What concerns us is its affect on Habyarimana’s administration, the akazu, and the country: the most important thing to understand is that without the RPF invasion there is no genocide. For the study of Habyarimana, it signals the death knell of his presidency. Braeckman raises a troublesome question when she posits that Habyarimana knew about the RPF’s plans to invade and did nothing to prevent it. She points to Jean-Pierre Mugabe’s statement that “Habyarimana knew the war plans. He had

91 Meredith, 2005: 304.
92 Ibid: 305.
been well informed about it in time and was quietly abroad. He came back only four days from the start of the hostilities," and Silas Majambere, who was close to the president, left the country for Belgium before the RPF invasion and put his properties up for sale, as well as two houses “which he had bought secretly for Habyarimana”.

Bringing together our former observations, at the time of the October invasion there was a decided rift between the urban and rural population and the distribution of wealth. The peasant-farmers increasingly refused to plant (and even cut down many) coffee trees because the fluctuation in prices was too risky and they could, instead, make more profit selling food crops, and which were at least something they could eat, as opposed to a failed or poor coffee harvest (one bag of coffee only allowed peasant-farmers to buy half of what they could buy three years before). There was also a dramatic drop in yields of all major crops over the last seven years, as the result of bad economic practices. The Habyarimana government’s exhortations to grow more coffee, therefore, had no purchase, and caused resentment among the people. Additionally, a severe famine hit southern Rwanda in 1989, about which the journalist, Sibomana, reported

There was a natural explanation for this phenomenon, but the authorities did nothing to improve the situation. Worse still, I had evidence that part of the government’s assistance which was intended for the population at risk had been diverted. It was a scandal. I decided to publish this information. We were threatened and we were called liars, until I published photographs which were

---

93 Braeckman, 1994: 111. Also see Waugh, 2004: 43.
94 1989 saw more severe food shortages caused by drought, brought on by a combination of climate change together with local effects from deforestation.
95 Akresh et al, 2007: 9-10) suggest that because the southern part of the country was held in such disregard, the government refused to aid them during their crop failure. Nonetheless, Habyarimana did create a National Commission on Agriculture under the auspices of providing long-term solutions to famine in the south. Helbig (1991: 99), observes that even though it was easy to “imagine popular democratic movements coming from the peasant-farmers, . . . it is difficult for them to organize by virtue of their geographic, cultural, economic and political isolation. The peasant-farmers did not revolt when famines hit the south in the first months of 1990; they preferred to immigrate to Tanzania.”
overwhelming. This had an immediate effect. Readers wrote in to express their satisfaction: at last the truth was being told.96

The regime’s power and authority was under fire from many sides: from the people omitted from the spheres of power because they lived in those regions outside the president’s northern district (incorporating Ruhengeri, Gisenyi) and Kigali, which received,97 in the middle of the ‘80s, 90% of all investments, while Gitarama, the most populous province after Kigali, received 0.16%, and Kibuye only 0.84% percent.98 As part of an effort to combat the increasing voices against the administration, the MRND started publishing Kangura, a bi-monthly based in Gisenyi (in the northwest, near the president’s political stronghold). It was first issued in May 1990 and edited by founder Hassan Ngeze. Typically, one or two articles would be French, but most in Kinyarwanda, running anywhere from 12 to 20 pages, and was printed on government printing presses. Kangura (“wake others up”) was given a similar name and identical format to the opposition’s publication, Kanguka99 (“wake up”), in order to create confusion.100 Even though the bi-monthly was connected to the MRND, at least one of the early editions (No. 2, June) surveyed had an article questioning the administration’s actions regarding the deaths of prominent personalities. The sixth issue (December 1990), premiered the anti-Tutsi decrees

96 Sibomana, 1999: 22. “knew that I was taking a risk by publishing these articles. It was at that time that Father Sylvio Sindambiwe was killed and it was difficult not to make a link between these two events. I also knew that I was exposing the whole editorial team to possible retaliation. We accepted these risks” (Sibomana, (ibid: 25).
97 Along with the western border district of Cyangugu.
99 Two months after the first edition of Kangura, Rwabukwisi, ed-in-chief of Kanguka, was arrested after writing that 70% of Rwanda’s wealth was in the hands of a Tutsi minority. He was murdered April 10-12 in Kigali, shortly after the genocide began.
100 Northern Hutu considered it an affront to Habyarimana to run private newspapers against him and his administration. The president’s brother-in-law, Séraphin Rwabukumba, and the director of the Banque Continentale Africaine, Pasteur Musabe started Intera to counter the adverse papers like Kinyamateka. The interesting thing about Kinyamateka is that it was published by the Catholic Church, yet it was editorially independent and plainspoken about corruption and failed policies in the Habyarimana regime, despite the Church’s close alliance with Habyarimana, especially through the Archbishop being on the MRND board (Kabanda, 2007: 74)
titled the "Hutu Ten Commandments". And a strong-armed push for instilling solidarity between the populace and the regime was employed in shifting the philosophy of umuganda from development to patriotism and political mobilization. Even though the punishment for not participating was severe, many rural people showed little enthusiasm. In light of this kind of “Big Brother” coercion, Habyarimana’s reply to the French press during an official visit with Mitterrand that

> democracy is not, for him, a synonym for the existence of several parties. Democracy is a "mode of behavior, specifically a consensus between rulers and the ruled with the obligation for the leaders to work in the direction wanted by the people." rings a little false, and could not have impressed the French president. During the visit, Habyarimana also met with Jean-Pierre Prouteau, president of the Council of the French investors in Black Africa, and appealed for a cancellation of 30% of the African private debt, which had gone in 3 years from a surplus of 300 million francs to a deficit of 4.7 billion francs. Between April-June, in conjunction with the Paris meeting, the president attended the summit of the Communauté Économique des Pays des Grands Lacs held by Mobutu in his Gbadolite sanctuary, for talks on free trade and movement of workers, and convened a meeting of Rwanda prefectural governors to talk about opening up the marshlands for the export crops of coffee, tea, and pyrethrum, as well as the question of how to diversify agricultural development. Perhaps this was all in preparation for the approaching, and more important, Franco-African summit, because there was the prospect

---

101 In Kabanda (ibid: 67): “Kangura ignored current affairs and problems. It was mainly preoccupied with convincing Rwandans that they were still living under the circumstances prevailing in 1957. . . . [and] strove to revive the feelings and emotions that inspired revolutionary action.”

102 Uwimbabazi, 2012: 47.

103 Le Monde, 5 April 1990.
that Mitterrand’s address was going to contain some new conditions to be applied to French financial relations with Francophone Africa (see Map 6).
Map 6: Francophone Africa 1990

Countries and territories where French is the mother
tongue of the population or the official language.

Regions inhabited by Francophones

Countries where French is largely used as vehicle for
teaching.

Countries where French is an obligatory foreign
language.
La Baule

1990 was the year for the large turning points in Habyarimana’s career, and life. First was the 16th Franco-African Summit, June 19-21, at La Baule, France. “Debt and Political Evolution in Africa” was the agenda for the conference, and was initiated by a growing dissatisfaction among the international donor countries, and organizations,¹⁰⁴ with the lack of progress toward democratization by the recipient African countries, as well as the accumulation of personal fortunes by some leaders. Mitterrand, in his opening address, stressed the necessity of a dialogue on democracy, at the same time recognizing the difficulties many countries faced in instituting democratic reforms, but with a carrot- and-stick approach said

France will link its entire contribution effort to efforts made to move in the direction of greater freedom . . . . Aid will be more lukewarm toward regimes which conduct themselves in an authoritarian manner without accepting evolution toward democracy; it will be enthusiastic for those which take the step with courage.¹⁰⁵

He was not suggesting that leaders had to follow any particular model, but that his dream¹⁰⁶ was for a democratic Africa, in which a state of equilibrium could be reached, providing free elections in a multiparty system, independent judiciaries, and no censorship. Nevertheless, French policy toward Africa allowed economic support to non-democratic regimes, and even military assistance to countries in jeopardy (in the short period of 1986-1994, France carried out ten interventions). As Kroslak observed, it is better “to help

¹⁰⁴ The Vatican, for example, had ordered Archbishop Vincent Nsengiyumva to resign from Habyarimana’s MRND central committee because of the one-party state’s undemocratic practices, corruption, poor record on human rights, and media censorship.
¹⁰⁶ The French government, on the other hand, “maintained a paternalistic attitude towards the governments of the continent. Jacques Chirac, for example, considered democracy to be a ‘luxury’ for Africans and in February 1990 declared himself in favour of the one-party system in Africa” (Kroslak, 2008: 63).
crony governments to adopt pseudo-democratic measures and to remain influential rather than having to deal with new governments who would often be rather hostile toward the former colonial power”. And Mitterrand does reaffirm in his address that France will continue to assist against external hostile actions, with those countries having defense agreements. The majority of countries attending the summit seemed to support Mitterrand’s assessment that democratization would provide for a sound nationhood.

Important in this regard—Habyarimana was the sole leader to disagree with Mitterrand. He took umbrage at the notion that western leaders could assume the right to tell other countries how to govern. Turning the table on the French president, he posited that trying to force democracy on a continent (let alone a nation) was itself “undemocratic”. Despite his objection, a certain political compliance was a de facto requirement, from this point forward, in receiving aid, not only from France, but from other donors. This requirement, in fact, was accepted in principle at the 26th OAU Summit in Addis Ababa a month later, but with the stipulation that “countries had the right to "determine, in all sovereignty, their system of democracy on the basis of their sociocultural values, taking into account the realities of each country," . . . [and] “Le Monde (June 22) quoted one unidentified "African minister" present at La Baule as saying: ‘If it is necessary to move toward greater liberty in order to get aid, promising to do so commits one to nothing.’”

That “African minister” could easily have been Habyarimana. The distance from democracy had increased; regionalism and corruption were flagrantly and firmly in

---

107 Kroslak, op. cit. France’s Minister of Cooperation, Bernard Debré, put it this way: “Democratisation in Africa leads to instability and institutional weakness. We must therefore encourage, assist, an help stabilise those regimes and leaders who are progressing on the path to democratisation at their own pace” (cited in Martin, 1995: 17-18).
place, the populace was increasingly alienated from the government, as well as split into the urban elite and the massive rural poor—more than one fourth of the people had no land (in some areas as high as 50%): Rwanda had become one of the least-developed countries in the world, “ranked below average of all of sub-Saharan Africa in life expectancy, child survival, adult literacy, average years of schooling, average caloric intake, and per capita GNP,” and close to one-third of the residents of Kigali, between the ages of 18-45, had contracted the AIDS virus.

Habyarimana was described as being proud of his presidency, and this was probably somewhat bolstered by the international aid donors having demurred up to this point on calling him out on his increasing failures in economic and political reforms; for example, the discrimination against Tutsis, especially the odious ID cards noting ethnic membership, as well as intimidation of the media and suppression of other political parties, had been overlooked. Still, Habyarimana was highly protective of challenges to his supremacy. “The president didn't want anyone to rival him,” Des Forges has remarked.

Taylor (1999: 36) on Rwanda’s military-merchant class: “Before the genocide, many of the owners of these larger farms were military officers and/or MRND party notables with commercial interests, prompting many to speak of Rwanda’s élite as a ‘military-merchant’ class. Although some Rwandan entrepreneurs have earned their position in this élite by providing needed products and services to the Rwandan economy, most gained their status due to their proximity to the organs of state power: ‘More than competence, connections to the regime have given rise to a new form of pseudo-technocratic bourgeoisie and conferred prosperity upon it. Following the ups and downs of political favour, we see a rapid turnover in these bourgeois gentlemen. In three years one such high personality exercised four different functions: administrator of the pyrethrum factory in Ruhengeri, general director of the Social Fund of Rwanda, Prefect of Kibungo, and finally, Minister of Education. . . . Without over-generalizing, the claim is justified that a portion of the Rwandan bourgeoisie is simply parasitic and prebendal. One must also admit that a fraction of it does re-invest some of its earnings. Many industrial ventures started out as commercial operations’” (Bézy, 1990: 51).

Kressel, 196: 92-93.

As witnessed by his obstreperousness at the La Baule summit, which is all the more interesting as he had just been given a private Mystère 50 private jet by Mitterrand two weeks before.

Habyarimana’s administration certainly ‘promised’ to do many things for the benefit of the country. Facing what is termed a state of ‘agricultural involution’, a treadmill effect in which an increasingly higher input of labor per unit/area of land is required without increasing per capita income or production, accompanied by serious environmental collapse, the government proposed possibilities for tackling the massive problem in their study, *Stratégie alimentaire au Rwanda*.- *objectifs chiffres et programmes d’actions*, which are outlined by Ford below:

i) an increase in mixed farming emphasizing "zero-based grazing" schemes combined with agroforestry approaches to land use.

ii) concerted efforts to control population growth over the next twenty years.

iii) increased intensification of agriculture, including a greater use of Green Revolution technologies adapted to the peasant environment. (This presupposes development and implementation of a fully functioning and effective agricultural research and extension service.)

iv) stimulation of the urban, commercial, and industrial sector which may serve as the catalyst and source of essential technical, informational, economic, and political inputs to the development process.

v) increased regional economic and political cooperation and integration that could possibly open some of the empty lands of Zaire as a safety valve for population expansion from the more crowded areas.

vi) accelerated diffusion of new crops, and specifically a greater emphasis on higher-calorie and higher-yielding crops, e.g., more maize, manioc, rice, wheat, and soybeans, and less bananas, meat (from free-grazing cattle), and low-yielding traditional beans and peas.

vii) promotion of changes in socio-cultural norms regarding marriage (dowries), land inheritance, and family size.

viii) increased efforts to protect, preserve, and scientifically manage the remaining exotic natural areas in wet-lands and high altitude areas within the parks, preserves, and estates. (Their significance as tourist assets, if nothing more, is now widely appreciated.)

That is to say, Habyarimana, the akazu, and the power holders in and around the administration (including the military) constituted a dynamic milieu within which the tug

---

115 See Geertz, op. cit.
116 Ford, op. cit.: 59.
and pull of individual and various interests made Mitterrand’s democratic ‘state of equilibrium’ dream impossible. Whatever positive or constructive measures Habyarimana, himself, may have hoped to institute must be filtered through the morass of opposition and multiple self-interests. It is impossible for an historian to extricate the president’s real wishes from the mix in light of the paucity of direct evidence. Looking at the *Stratégie* above, for example, protecting the parks and preserves (viii) seems to have been a pet product of his, while (i) and (iii) are carry-overs from the Belgian colonization, while population control (ii) was never seriously addressed because of the president’s relationship with the Church and his being a Catholic (having 8 children of his own was hardly an exemplary model for the country), and changing socio-cultural norms (vii) could only come about through strong educational initiatives and economic advancement for the masses over time, but which certainly weren’t favored by the rent-seekers surrounding him because such change would have meant the end of their privileged life.

**Aggiornamento**

At this time, the summer of 1990, the policy that does clearly belong to Habyarimana was his unforeseen decision to support a move toward multipartyism. This rather sudden shift (5 July), what he referred to as an *aggiornamento*,\(^{117}\) would have been against the wishes of the *akazu*, and shows an independent character trait, a stubborn pride attached to certain principles, which underlay his calling Mitterrand to the carpet for daring to tell African States how to run their own countries. Later, and most important, this

\(^{117}\) *Aggiornamento* was one of the key words used during the Second Vatican Council (1962-68) to indicate a spirit of open-mindedness and change, and also referred to Pope John’s 1959 pontifical program. Habyarimana’s connection to the Church is evident here.
quality will be exhibited in his prolonged balking at accepting the egregious demands of the Arusha Accords (the final acceptance of which would be his undoing). Politically, the aggiornamento was an important step in trying to capture the momentum for the administration in its fight with the critics—the president would be seen as the spearhead of reform. This acquiescence to opening up the one-party system was a significant adjustment from his belief since the beginning of his presidency in the efficacy of a one-party system; it would be too facile and cynical to see the aggiornamento as purely a move to gain favor.\footnote{African Rights (1994b: 8) called this a ‘political renaissance’.} Habyarimana was not completely deaf to the many voices for change, and had had ample opportunity to discuss with OAU members (as well as with Mitterrand) the import of La Baule. It would be foolish to ignore the inevitable, and it would not be unreasonable to assume that the president acknowledged, or conceded, somewhere in his mind that the one-party state was no longer workable (hadn’t it been, in the final analysis, the downfall of Kayibanda’s efforts?). In addition, Habyarimana and his negotiators had made a breakthrough on the repatriation of Rwandan refugees in Uganda; on September 28, Habyarimana announced that he would offer citizenship and travel documents to those Rwandan refugees who wanted to return.

Time was certainly no friend; only weeks after the aggiornamento a group of 33 influential intellectuals\footnote{Included in the group: Emmanuel Gapyisi (son-in-law of Kayibanda), Faustin Twagiramungu (helped form the MDR party, son-in-law of Kayibanda, post-genocide prime minister), Jean Kambanda (head of Rwanda Union of Popular Banks, would become vice-president of opposition party MDR, and sentenced to life by ICTR), André Kameya (started the newspaper New Rwanda, which was critical of Habyarimana), Seth Sendashonga (President, Association of Rwandan Students), André Sibomana (director of Kinyamateka), Marc Rugenera (Social Democrat, became Finance Minister), Antoine Mugesera (director at Iwacu, a center that supported cooperatives).} called for immediate democratization, their organized opposition a palliative for the students at the National University (and for the south) who had rioted in
June and been shot at by gendarmes. Habyarimana responded by forming, on 24 September, a Commission Nationale de Synthèse\(^\text{120}\) (CNS), whose mandate was to determine what ‘democracy’ meant in the eyes of the populace at large and then to prepare an outline for a new constitution. Two months later, on 22 December, Habyarimana announced that he had reviewed a draft proposal on multiparty democracy that included the following items for discussion: the organization of the State, Rwanda’s republican form of government, human rights issues, and the problems of security in a multiparty government. He ended by saying that opposition parties would be allowed to form—the formation of opposition parties had, in fact, already begun—as it mirrored the “winds of change blowing in eastern Europe and in Africa, which indicated that the march of history was towards multiparty democracy”\(^\text{121}\). And by June, 1991, almost a year after the aggiornamento, parliament finally passed the newly constructed constitution, allowing the right for multipartyism. Even though the CNS was made up mostly by Habyarimana’s appointees, it continued to support continued reforms.

Habyarimana’s attempt to preëmpt discourse away from the worsening economic situation and calls for democratic reform was also aimed at keeping international donor aid coming into the administration’s coffers. Habyarimana had built a solid reputation with aid donors: Rwanda had received the sobriquet of a ‘development dictatorship’, hosting

\(^{120}\) Of the 30 members, 6 will be sentenced to prison for genocide: Edouard Karemera, (Chairman), Charles N zabagerageza, Jean Baptiste Gatete, Tharcisse Renzaho, Théoneste Bagosora, Mathieu N girumpatse.  
“more development workers per hectare than anywhere else in the world,”¹²² and was the largest single recipient of aid from Belgium and Switzerland, and Canada.¹²³

Although a longtime recipient of aid, Rwanda enrolled much later than other African countries in a structural adjustment program (SAP) because it had managed to perform moderately well economically, especially in relation to other countries in the region.

Table 10. Trends in Aid to Rwanda
1988/90 to 1991/93 (US$ million)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>1988/90 average</th>
<th>1991/93 average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td><strong>150</strong></td>
<td><strong>206</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Barió et al. (1999): 48

The Structural Adjustment Program (SAP)

But the severe economic downturn from the late '80s was now driving Habyarimana to adopt an SAP agreement¹²⁴ with the World Bank and the IMF.¹²⁵ Their adjustment ‘package’, in September 1990, included:¹²⁶

• Devaluation of the RwF; by 40% (November 1990) and a further 15% (June 1992);
• Controls on recruitment and salaries in the state sector;
• An increase in user fees for health, education and other services;
• Reduced subsidies to coffee producers;
• The phased removal of protectionist trade restrictions;
• Privatization of some state enterprises;
• Increased taxes in some sectors to help reduce the budget deficit;
• And a social 'safety net' programme to cushion the impact of adjustment on the poorest.

The extent of the SAP’s actual implementation and efficacy were never measurable, but appears to have been largely unrealized. Uvin figures that the clearest impact of the program was a “massive increase in development aid—from the Bank itself and from other donors—to help the Rwandan government implement the reform measures”. The first disbursement of structural adjustment credit (SAC) from the World Bank was $55 million, from June 1991-September 1993, but as Habyarimana’s administration would become ever more embroiled in the war with the RPF and the political opposition inside the country, the SAP would flounder, leaving the remaining $35 million of SAC earmarked for disbursement to be cancelled.

124 “A major milestone in the provision of aid to Rwanda was the agreement in September 1990 of a structural adjustment programme with the World Bank and the IMF, which, along with joint and co-financing from seven bilateral donors plus the African Development Bank and the European Union, amounted to US$216 million. After having resisted structural adjustment for several years, the government of Rwanda decided to initiate discussions after pressures had mounted on both the trade account and the fiscal budget, caused in part by the collapse of coffee prices” (Marysse 1994: IBRD 1993; World Bank, 1991, cited in Sellström, op. cit.).

125 Habyarimana flew to Washington DC in October 1990 to give his personal assurance the SAP would be carried out.


129 “Standard macro-economic prescriptions found in SAPs and aimed at reducing the scope of state activities miss the point entirely. Such donor-sponsored belt-tightening efforts require states that can (a) negotiate the terms of aid conditionalities and (b) implement them even in the face of widespread resistance. The entropy in failed states is usually of such a magnitude that they are unable to do either; moreover, however necessary standard reforms might be, tasks of a more basic nature (i.e. strengthening the control span of centralized authority, reducing the level of violence, rebuilding a justice system, collecting the garbage, etc) might be even more necessary” (Gros (1996: 460). Also see Ballet et al, 2007: 47.
Because of how strongly ordered the administration’s structure was, it allowed for relatively easy operations vis-à-vis aid personnel. This ‘ease’ lulled the donors into adopting an uncritical stance toward the administration’s practices, which on the surface appeared benign, but were hiding corrupt and undemocratic dealings. Additionally, the World Bank viewed the Rwandan State “as an essentially neutral, if overextended, actor in Rwandan society. . . . and forces within the State itself were not identified as actively creating and maintaining . . . problems highlighted in the report”.\textsuperscript{130} It never understood that the MRND single-party monolith was not neutral, but an unfair competitor with the private sector that reached into every corner of the country’s socio-political economy and hampered it, on top of which military spending had increased exponentially because of the war (the unpreparedness of the army: the need to massively increase the number of

\textsuperscript{130} Storey, 2001: 372. In addition, the World Bank “believed that most of the country’s economic woes were externally induced and not the result of domestic mismanagement. Yet the conditions it was imposing were identical to those it demanded of countries that had been blatantly corrupt and incompetent” (OAU, op cit.).
combatants, training, materiel, salaries, and weaponry), diverting SAP money from its programs.\textsuperscript{131}

The economy was in a profound crisis before the SAP, and it is debatable whether ascribing to an SAP could have affected it one way or another.\textsuperscript{132} Most important, for trying to understand the impact of the SAP on the country (from its inception near the beginning of 1991 through 1993), perhaps its most negative influence was to give, in the eyes of aid donors, a kind of legitimacy to Rwanda’s administration, thereby inadvertently signaling a green light to continuing or increased donations. Habyarimana’s administration’s reaction was, feeling unrestrained, to carry on with bad practices. Still, the SAP involved a pay freeze in the public sector (forcing many schools to close, and many civil servants to lose their jobs), a devaluation of the currency (40\% and another 15\%, as noted above), resulting in massive inflation, and several austerity measures which, combined with plummeting coffee prices, taxed the country's resources, stalled development, and weakened government support even further. Eventually, there was an effort by the World Bank, along with other concerned donors, to put pressure on Habyarimana to endorse the Arusha Accords, but they didn’t cut off all funds in this effort, presumably not wanting to jeopardize Rwanda’s cooperation and, thus, the success of the talks.\textsuperscript{133}

After the La Baule Summit, Habyarimana’s \textit{aggiornamento}, and the introduction of


\textsuperscript{132} \textit{Ibid}: 376. Woodward (1996: 25) considers that a case can be made for economic factors helping create an environment for a genocidal event, but that the SAP was not primarily responsible for such circumstances.

\textsuperscript{133} Barré \textit{et al}, 1999:10-11. Also see World Bank (1995:12-13), “Concern about the outcome of the state-RPF struggle led to the Bank requesting that RPF representatives be associated with the negotiations on the structural adjustment programme” (cited in Storey, op. cit.: 379-380, note 11).
the Structural Adjustment Program, the biggest event in 1990—in fact, in contemporary Rwandan history—and the one that would lead to the downfall of Habyarimana’s presidency, was the Rwandan Patriotic Front’s (RPF) invasion of the country on 1 October. As has been pointed out, the RPF was aware of the consequences of their invasion, including: the Hutu extremist factions would be invigorated and bolstered; the Rwandan army (FAR) would greatly increase; the economic crisis in the country would worsen; there would be reprisals against Tutsi citizens, just as there had been in 1963, along with the eruption of buried ethnic hatred. There is no more momentous counterfactual that can be advanced regarding the mechanisms underlying the 1994 genocide than to postulate what would have happened if there had been no RPF invasion. There cannot, by now (regarding the mountain of research that has accumulated over the past twenty years on the 1994 genocide), be any doubt that without the invasion there would have been no foundation for attacking Tutsis inside the country—“before October 1990, systematic harassment of Tutsi was not characteristic of the Habyarimana regime at that time, Tutsi did not face exclusion from private sector employment or local-level positions in the teaching, agriculture, or medical fields.” The pressure for multipartyism, for economic responsibility, and the opening up of the media, was leveraging the administration toward

---

134 “It is our view that the invasion of October 1, 1990 ranks, along with the Belgian policy of institutionalizing ethnicity and the triumph of the ethnic extremists in the early 1960s, as one of the key defining moments in Rwandan history” (OAU, op. cit.: para 6.1).
135 OAU, op cit: 621.
136 “... the attack triggered a series of pivotal consequences that ultimately led, step by step, to the genocide. In the words of one human rights group, ... it is beyond dispute that the invasion ... was the single most important factor in escalating the political polarization of Rwanda” (African Rights, 1995: 1062, cited in OAU, op. cit: para 6.1). C.f. Gasana (1995b: 219) believes that the RPF invasion was not “the cause nor the start of the crisis of the Second Republic (cited in Van Hoyweghen, Op cit: 385).
137 Newbury, C. 1998: 14
non-violent socio-political change. We often have a tendency to forget today that President Habyarimana was popular enough among the Tutsi inside the country and that he had even been accused by certain Hutu of privileging the Tutsi.

The *Stratégie alimentaire*, the *aggiornamento* and formation of the CNS, shows the administration’s awareness, at least, of necessary adjustments. In that regard, Pottier cautions that “it is more accurate, if not more appropriate, to acknowledge discontinuities, and refrain from vilifying the Habyarimana of the 1970s and 1980s.” And this is a sound approach, because Habyarimana, without formal grounding, had had to create a governing platform for a one-party political system inherited from Kayibanda, in which he fit awkwardly for fifteen years, but he was pragmatic enough to finally acknowledge, in the face of harsh international and local criticism and pressure, that it was no longer a feasible model—even as the *akazu*, and the military, having much to lose, surely menaced him for his ‘capitulation’ on multipartyism. This pattern of charting a path emanating from certain inner convictions, unswayed by threats (perhaps even in defiance of them), created powerful enemies within his surrounding coterie and the military, but explains his

---

138 Melvern (2000: 41), points out that the preferred status of northern Hutus, to the detriment of other prefectures, raises the question of whether there might have been civil war between the north and the south if the RPF hadn’t invaded. The problem underlying this counterfactual is that the creation of the CNS and the creation of a new constitution in 1991 allowing for multipartyism was already a groundbreaking concession by Habyarimana to future power sharing. Granted we don’t know how that would have developed, and it would probably have been very messy, but a civil war would have been almost impossible, due to the overwhelming difficulty of mobilizing and coordinating large enough numbers of peasant-farmers across prefectures, the fact that the Butare region was heavily Tutsi, and that there was considerable ideological disagreement among and even within the various Hutu (and Hutu/Tutsi) political parties. Also to be considered in this regard is Gasana’s (1997: 4-5) observation that “By the end of the 80s, rural masses of all ethnic groups were convinced that their hardships, famine threats and diseases were caused by the political system. A dialectical tension was fast developing between the régime and leaders of the peasantry, but its course was disrupted by a bloody war launched from Uganda by the RPF in October 1990.”


140 Pottier, 2002: 34.
reluctance to quickly give in to the RPF’s demands at the peace talks.\textsuperscript{141} Many writers giving their opinions on the Arusha Accords (almost always in relation to the genocide), hold the notion that Habyarimana was stalling in order to derail the talks and the transition to multipartyism and democratic reforms, but they fail to recognize Habyarimana’s salient, signature characteristic: his need to grapple with a problem in relation to a set of contingencies. He is not a one-dimensional man the way Mobutu is, with his narrow focus on attaining wealth and funnelling everything into that endeavour, regardless of the criminality, the immorality. It is superficial, then, to glibly label him a dictator—whether a ‘development’ dictator, or any other kind—when he actually operates within a significantly wider framework. One cannot always escape what one is born into, and in which one finds oneself a certain kind of ‘prisoner’ of circumstance (culture, geography, the accident of having chosen a particular profession, political systems, and responsibilities to those around one, including an entire country), and of unforeseen events (the coup d’état of 1973, economic failures, the RPF invasion). A system defines a person as much as a person represents a system. From this point of view it is important to consider what Longman says regarding the centralized State in Africa:

\textsuperscript{141} I think this is a separate issue from that pointed out by Sellström and Wohlgemuth (1996, Chap. 1: Sec 5): “To this day, the northerners form a distinctive Hutu sub-culture in which the awareness of a pre-Tutsi past is more pronounced than in other parts of Rwanda. President Habyarimana’s informal council—or akazu, constituted around his wife and brothers-in-law—represented this independent Hutu tradition, deeply suspicious of any reconciliatory gestures towards the exiled Tutsi community and, therefore, also essentially hostile to the Hutu political groups favouring a dialogue with the Tutsi-led RPF”. Habyarimana is not the same thing as the akazu (even though there were associations), as is being pointed out in this paper, and the fight with opposition groups from the late 1989 through the war and the Arusha process with the push for a transitional government, was first and foremost a fight over power, not ethnicity. And there should be no misunderstanding about the fact that the RPF agenda was to secure by force of arms a large part (or all) of the Rwandan government and military, because as Tutsi, and a minority in the country, they were well aware that, as part of a future democratic system, they were politically vulnerable and able to be voted out of office by a Hutu majority. The ethnic card played increasingly from 1992 was the work of Hutu Power leaders who eventually broke with Habyarimana. The extremists within the MRND appear not to have been manageable by the president, acting independently in many cases. The disintegration of Habyarimana’s control is an important and major factor in the slide to political disarray by April 1994.
I see no basis for believing that large, centralized states can be reformed to serve the interests of the masses. Neither do I believe that economic and social development in Africa must be driven by a strong state. Rather, I would agree with Goran Hyden’s contention . . . that Africa needs to develop from the bottom up, through the development of local capacity, rather than through the initiative of a strong and centralized state. Bayart has written that, “Africa’s potential for democracy is more convincingly revealed by the creation of small collectives established and controlled by rural or urban groups (such as local associations) than by parliaments and parties, instruments of the state, of accumulation and of alienation” (1986, 125). It is time . . . to look for what James Wunsch (1990) has called “alternative institutional paradigms” that allow for self–governance. Without the infusion of arms and other support from the international community, President Habyarimana might have been successfully driven from power and an opening for meaningful reforms created.142

It is questionable how feasible this hypothesis may be; the possibility for this kind of approach has not been a part of any of the African States south of the Sahel before or since their massive moves to independence in the ‘60s. The reason is simple: in their long histories there was never a traditional socio-political and economic system from which such a framework could develop. On the contrary, they largely entered statehood from recent chiefdom systems (some of which were overlaid with centralized colonial administrations). Furthermore, the historical realization of democratic States in the West came about through the unifying structure of a central authority: supporting commercial activities, a system of laws, economic regulation inside and outside the State, public services, and the collection of State funds provided by taxation—a central authority was unavoidable and indispensable for the workings of a nation-state. It is not that having a centralized State automatically strangles economic and social development, but that the type of government and the people in it describe what kind of role the State has, and that can vary across a wide band, from little interference to a repressive dictatorship. What is

142 Longman, 1998a: 89.
never often clear about Habyarimana’s centralized State are his intentions separate from those of the several forces surrounding him. In his speeches, from the beginning of his takeover from Kayibanda, he consistently and constantly preaches three points—development, unification and peace—and it is possible to recognize many of his administration’s efforts in grappling with those goals, but without really knowing how much Habyarimana influenced the efforts and policies. However, the watershed moment, when those three points start to crumble under the weight of the failure of economic policy and the stagnancy of a one-party state, Habyarimana clearly initiates the decision to allow multipartyism, to attempt to abide by the SAPs, and to at least engage in talks with Museveni about the repatriation of Rwandans from Uganda. Granted, those decisions were initiated under pressures he could not ignore, but the nature of governance, of being in power, is sometimes being forced to take directions, formulate policy, that at times must conciliate others’ demands in a quid pro quo.

In Habyarimana’s case, the shift to ‘meaningful reforms’ mentioned by Longman above was already underway, albeit slowly, but it will always be a guessing game regarding how fast reforms in various areas of the government and the economy would have occurred, because of the disruption and disconnection caused by the 1990 RPF invasion. In examination, to flatly deny change in Habyarimana’s government in the light of the significant moves toward reforms from 1989 denies the reality. The other thing to bear in mind is the time element involved in change regarding socio-economic and cultural

143 “Hoben (1989) presents a benevolent government trying its best to reform schooling to meet goals of both equity and development. Yet Rwanda is largely unsuccessful because of lack of resources and vision” (Merryfield, 1990: 129). And “Rwanda was praised for expanding primary school enrolments (an increase from 46% to 65% from 1973 to 1990) and achieving gender parity in primary schools by 1990 (Obura, 2003: 40).
systems; it took less than 15 years into Habyarimana’s presidency for forces, inside and outside the country, to have meaningful effect on his newly-formed governmental system, that had little precedent in the country’s (and former territory’s) entire history, a nascent government that was taking its cue from the many new African States around it and in the rest of the continent; the one-party state was not an oddity, but the standard, and one of the most enlightening questions we can ask (and have touched on earlier) is why democracy wasn’t chosen by the forty-odd new African governments.

All of the mechanisms, contingencies, and dynamics underlying that ubiquitous phenomenon are constantly at play in and around Habyarimana, in every aspect of society. Taken in this light, Habyarimana was making progress at a rate not inconsequential, nor can it be definitively said it could have occurred sooner or proceeded faster, given all the components. Therefore, to say that “without the infusion of arms and other support from the international community, President Habyarimana might have been successfully driven from power and an opening for meaningful reforms created,” ignores all the elements that are not ‘Habyarimana’, but are Rwanda. It also ignores the fact that the president didn’t have international support after the late ‘80s (certainly not at Arusha) so much as a powerful set of critical donor demands that were tied to continued support; the infusion of arms didn’t occur until after the 1990 invasion and was a natural response any country having only a skeletal army would have made when threatened by an invading force.

With the assistance of arms purchased from France, Belgium, Egypt and South Africa, the Rwandan armed Forces were able to drive the RPF out of Rwanda by mid-November. . . . Emergency arms purchases have emptied the GOR’s coffers.\footnote{Cable from Ambassador Flaten to U.S. State Dept., December 1990.}
According to Laurent Serubuga, the army’s ex-chief of staff, the large part of the army's budget before the RPF invasion was put into development projects rather than into the military (Habyarimana steadily and significantly decreased military expenditures between 1979-1990 (from 15.1 to 8.9—almost cut by half), and that the war caused an extremely adverse effect on the government budget, increasing military spending 300%.

An example of the ‘support’ given by international advisors regarding the economy and the military is given in the following:

Given the poverty of the country, the Belgian and French advisers, first of all the economists among them, always told the Rwandans to restrict military expenditures to a bare minimum, which the Rwandans did. In case of a Tutsi invasion from Burundi, Belgium and France would come to their help. Rwandans believed it Until 1989, the percentage of the Rwandan governments’ military expenditures was one of the lowest in Africa. Consequently, at the time of the invasion of the FPR in October, 1990, Rwanda had only four to five thousand troops, which could be rather more qualified as a "widened" national Gendarmerie than as an army.

Habyarimana followed this advice, as he had followed the advice of the Belgian officers under whose command he had served (some Belgians in administration had stayed on, into Kayibanda’s presidency, as advisors), and accorded Western experts a certain automatic respect (because of the West’s achievements), as did many. Rwanda had been secure in its territorial integrity through a long historical period, and the only conflict Habyarimana had experienced was in fighting the small bands of inyenzi sporadically attacking the borders. His undersized army at the time of the RPF invasion was barely twenty-eight years old.

---

145 An elite unit of the armed forces, the Presidential Guard (GP), was formed during the rapid expansion of the army after the outbreak of war. It was composed of men from Habyarimana’s home region. Habyarimana's adopted this unit as a parallel security force to the army, answerable solely to him, as a safeguard from a coup d’état. It seems he borrowed the idea from Mobutu (African Rights, 1994b: 35). “The close connection between the PG and the akazu clique are excellently described by Colette Braeckman and A. Guillaume, 'La Poudrière rwandaise', in Le Soir (Brussels), 1 June 1994, p. 8” (Lemarchand, 1994: 600). FAR numbered 30,000 in 1994 and the PG about 6,000.

The RPF invasion interrupted a socio-economic and political dynamic of development and change that had started with the arrival of the Church and the Belgians. That novel elaboration and change was now being forced to face the repercussions of Kayibanda’s government’s ethnicist/racist policy that had persisted for thirty years since the ’59 ‘revolution’, and had made the Tutsi diaspora *persona non grata* in their mother country—refugees without the right to return in significant numbers—and had made those still in the country, who were disenfranchised, second-class citizens at best.\(^{147}\) However, under Habyarimana Tutsi citizens had a somewhat muddled existence. Former Prime Minister Faustin Twagiramungu recounted that

> president Habyarimana had never been accused by the democratic opposition . . . to be the enemy of the Tutsi. We said, even on the contrary, that the 1973 coup d'état had favored them, and that in any case, he had opened the private sector to them, where they had become prosperous.\(^{148}\)

And Reyntjens observed that “between the seizure of power by general Habyarimana and the beginning of the war in October, 1990, no violence with ethnic character was committed. . . . [and that] even if it was far from being completed, the situation of human rights contrasted favorably with that prevailing somewhere elsewhere in Africa”.\(^{149}\) Then, everything was suddenly affected by the overpowering externally-driven attack on Habyarimana and his MRND one-party rule: it was no secret the RPF were facing pressure from Ugandans to leave the country, but it was also no coincidence that they chose to

---

\(^{147}\) “Ultimately, the regime's controversial policy of ethnic quotas for government jobs and educational opportunities undermined the effort. . . . to dampen ethnic tensions over the period from 1973 to the mid-1980s. . . . ‘managing’ ethnic tensions requires transcending them and addressing other forms of social inequality as well” (Newbury, C., 1988: 18).


\(^{149}\) Reyntjens, 1994a: 35 (cited in Mungwarakarama, *ibid*).
attack at a time when Habyarimana was moving toward multipartyism and democratic reforms,\textsuperscript{150} and at the very moment when the president and Museveni were, ironically, negotiating refugee repatriation.\textsuperscript{151}

\textsuperscript{150} C.f. Prunier (1998: 128, n 32) has written that it was highly doubtful whether Habyarimana “really intended to fully democratize the Rwandan political system, . . . but was among those francophone African heads of state who seemed to believe that their control over the political life of their country was strong enough to allow them a wide margin of apparent democracy.”

\textsuperscript{151} C.f. Waugh (2004: 43) says Habyarimana, Mobutu, and Museveni met in mid-September 1990 in Kampala but couldn’t find common ground for a solution.
CHAPTER 15


Brief Look at the RPF and Why They Invaded

The RPF was made up mostly of Tutsis, who had fled Rwanda in two big waves—in 1959 as a result of the revolution, and in 1963-66 due to the inyenzi attacks—and many others had left as a result of a Rwandan Hutu backlash against the Burundian slaughter of Hutus in 1972, while many others had left after the 1973 coup, fearing the new regime would persecute them, and then, later, others left when the economic downturn caused shrinking opportunities under the administration’s quota system. The refugees went to the four countries bordering Rwanda, with the largest contingency settling in Uganda, where they were treated rather well at first, but over the years were intermittently either tolerated or subjected to hard times. After Idi Amin was deposed, the refugees in Uganda formed the Rwanda Refugee Welfare Foundation, later renamed Rwanda Alliance for National Unity (RANU). They were forced to operate under the radar because of the continuing hostility they faced in the country, and most members fled to Kenya in 1982. When Yoweri formed his guerrilla Popular Resistance Army (NRA), in a bid to overthrow

---

1 Much of the information in this section on the RPF comes from Kuperman, 2003. Also see Otunnu, 2000; Prunier, 1998; Reed, 1996; Reintsma, 1995; Rusagara, 2009; Waugh, 2004; OAU, op. cit.; HRW, 1999a; Olson, 1995.

2 “Contrary to what most analysts assume, the constraints faced by the Tutsi refugee population in Uganda were a key factor behind the RPF decision to fight its way into Rwanda. Mamdani shows how the Tutsi refugees, while denied citizenship rights, became a focal point of resentment among Ugandan citizens” (Lemarchand, 2002a: 310). And, as the OAU (op. cit.: para 6.6) describes the refugee situation, “Life steadily became more difficult for Rwandans in Uganda. Promises of massive naturalizations were not kept. Army promotions were blocked. The most senior military officer of Rwandan nationality, who had actually become Uganda’s deputy commander-in-chief and deputy minister of defence, was removed from his posts in 1989. Finally, Rwandans were explicitly forbidden by the Uganda Investment Code from owning land in Uganda”.
Obote’s government, he recruited Tutsis from RANU and from the refugee camps in Uganda, and his army eventually contained more Tutsi refugees than did RANU.\(^3\)

At RANU’s annual conference in Kenya, members voiced their frustration at making little progress in being recognized as refugees or getting international support for repatriation. This frustration was augmented by Habyarimana’s refusal (a formal ban in 1986) to allow large numbers of refugees back into the country\(^4\) (and he continued to refer to the Tutsi diaspora as emigrants and not refugees\(^5\)); RANU members decided to create a military faction in order to force the situation. After Museveni’s victory,\(^6\) it was possible for the large number of Tutsis in his army (around 3,000—almost a quarter of Museveni’s troops) to unite and collaborate with the Kenyan RANU, who joined them in Uganda. Again, they had to organize under cover so Museveni would not come under attack, and in 1987 formalized their politico-military goal to push into Rwanda, renaming themselves the

---

\(^3\) Kuperman, 2003: 5.

\(^4\) “Whenever reminded that his exiled subjects wanted to return home, Habyarimana would pour water into a glass until it overflowed, before grandly stating, "We are full up!" (Owana, 2007: n.p.). And he actively sought to keep refugees in their host countries, requesting that they “confiscate any passports issued prior to Rwanda’s independence; that neighbouring countries extradite certain Rwandese people; that the naturalization of the Rwandan refugees in their host country be delayed or denied; that the marriage between politicians of the host countries with Rwandese women be hampered” (Mukimbiri, 2005: n.p.).

\(^5\) Habyarimana repeatedly drove home the message (and his belief) that overpopulation was at a dangerous level, “in July 1974, after talks with Uganda; in 1982, in a magazine with international coverage n45; in 1986, at the Sixth Congress of his party MRND; in Uganda, in Semuto on 5 February 1988; and in France on 3 April 1990” (Mukimbiri, \textit{ibid}: n.p.). And in 1985 warned that “More than two million persons will have to leave farming to relieve the congestion in the rural environment” (Munyembaraga: 1985: 10).

\(^6\) One of the great ironies of this period is that, according to Bagosora, Habyarimana had given diplomatic and material support to Museveni in his fight against Obote’s regime, and because of Habyarimana he was even able to enlist support from Mobutu and Gadhafi (\textit{Africa News Service}, Oct 28, 2005).Museveni received more significant support “from Buganda traditional leaders in his military campaign to power. In return, on 13 July 1993, Museveni amended the Ugandan constitution to provide for the reinstatement of traditional monarchies, and on 31 July Prince Ronald Mutebi was crowned Kabaka of Buganda replacing his father Kabaka Mutesa II who died in exile (Englebert 2002a). In the years following his coronation, Mutebi has worked conscientiously to restore the prestige of his throne and the Buganda kingdom. He has re instituted the traditional parliament and appointed influential Baganda as members of his ministerial cabinet: (Nuesiri, 2014: 30).
Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). This was followed by broadening their reach to Tutsi worldwide in order to attract sympathy to their ‘cause’ and to raise funds. Despite Museveni’s attempt to keep their plans for invading Rwanda as covert as possible, it was no longer a secret by 1988, a full two years before the incursion.

During negotiations with Habyarimana on the refugee problem, Museveni actually used the threat of an invasion in the hope of persuading the president to budge on his recalcitrance. The two presidents established a joint commission on the refugee problem, and a group of refugees was set to visit Rwanda in October 1990. But the RPF didn’t want the refugee question solved, because they were after a bigger target—dethroning Habyarimana and instituting a new system of government open to their strong participation (if not control). Museveni “urged his two senior Tutsi military officers, Rwigyema and Kagame” (the future president of Rwanda, as it turns out), “to meet with Habyarimana in secret” in the hope of coming to some understanding, “but they refused to do so”.

Habyarimana did take some measures that he thought would thwart an RPF attack:

First he ordered his intelligence service to infiltrate both the NRA and RPF in order to sabotage, or at least acquire intelligence to defend against, a Tutsi invasion. Second, he agreed jointly with Uganda to seek UN assistance on two initiatives to facilitate repatriation of Tutsi refugees – a survey of their wishes in the Ugandan camps, scheduled for October 1990, and a visit to Rwanda by refugee leaders to draw up lists of proposed returnees, scheduled for November 1990. Third, he legalized opposition political activities in Rwanda. With these steps, Habyarimana attempted

---

7 “After the ouster of Obote – RANU broadened its base by changing its political stance and name to RPF. One RPF leader: ‘If the NRM cold liberate Uganda, the RPF began to ask why it could not do the same in Rwanda’” (Reed, 1995: p. 49). . . ., the RPF articulated a broader platform in its "Eight Point Program. "The Program called for national unity, democracy, an end to corruption and nepotism, a self-sustaining economy, improved social services, a national military, a progressive foreign policy, and an end to the system which generates refugees.”

8 “On the day the NRA issued formal ranks, President Museveni audaciously invited President Habyarimana to personally witness as Fred Gisa Rwigyema came to hold his same rank of Major General. Here was one great warning on how far the empowerment of refugees had gone, but it is not clear whether Habyarimana picked up on the message” (Owana, op. cit.: n.p.)

both to undermine Tutsi refugee support for an invasion and to assuage international pressure for domestic political liberalization.\textsuperscript{10}

But, RPF leaders were adamant about invading the country and forcing the Rwandan government to accept any Tutsi in the diaspora that wanted to return, not just the Ugandan contingent, and in coopting political power. It has also been suggested that the RPF murdered some of its own conservative members who were willing to entertain compromises with Habyarimana’s government.\textsuperscript{11} In addition, as a political ploy, Kagame, the RPF leader, gave Alexis Kanyarengwe (a Hutu, and a collaborator of Habyarimana’s in the 1973 coup, and a former head of the Rwandan Secret Service, who had fallen out with the president and left the country in 1980) leadership of the RPF two months after the incursion in order to give the RPF the image of not just being a Tutsi force.\textsuperscript{12}

The stuttering but eventual success of the RPF—they had expected a prolonged campaign—in bringing Habyarina to the negotiation table poses some questions about the president’s pre-invasion considerations. Was he depending on an easy military success, as he had had with the Tutsi incursions in the early ‘60s? (and in this regard, was he harboring the idea of destroying the RPF refugees as a way to relieve the pressure of refugee repatriation that their organization was creating?) Was he counting on Museveni to stay neutral and not give any support to the invaders? (but how could he not be aware of the pressure being put on Museveni to expel the Rwandan refugees, who had become a political liability?). Did he think that the combination of France’s and Mobutu’s\textsuperscript{13} military

\textsuperscript{10} Kuperman, op. cit.: 7.
\textsuperscript{11} Kakwenzire & Kamukama, 2000, p. 89.
\textsuperscript{12} Smith, 2011: 3-8.
\textsuperscript{13} Zaire was approached by the RPF and asked not to intervene.
support, Tanzania’s neutrality (negating any support to the RPF), and the Rwandan army
(FAR being larger than the RPF force—5 to 1 in superior numbers), would be an adequate
deterrent to an invasion? At it turns out, as an experienced military leader his calculations
appear to have been very poorly informed, aided, it must be considered, by a degree of
hubris. In spite of this,

he was demonstrating, however reluctantly, a new openness towards both
multiparty democracy and the exiles. This bolstered his sagging popularity and
undermined the RPF’s credibility as a more attractive alternative. The outsiders
were claiming to stand for a new democracy and the right of exiles to return, and
yet they launched their invasion just when both were high on Rwanda’s public
agenda.\textsuperscript{14}

Habyarimana’s distrust of Museveni could be considered to have been a grievous error that
actually ruined his chances of stopping the insurgency in its first stage. While in New
York at a UN meeting, Museveni had alerted Habyarimana to the surprise\textsuperscript{15} invasion
(sooner than Museveni had expected, and catching him off guard, as well), and had
suggested that if Habyarimana met with the RPF leaders that he (Museveni) would stop the
RPF troops. When Habyarimana agreed, Museveni actually kept his word and blocked the
Tutsi movement. At this juncture, Habyarimana could have worked closely with Museveni
in curtailing RPF activities by meeting with their leaders and hammering out some terms
for a peaceful resolution before a full-scale war broke out. Instead, he formed the opinion,
on his way back to Rwanda (through Belgium to seek their support) that Museveni was
actually subsidizing the RPF actions, and not to be trusted, and Habyarimana made a
public statement to that effect in Brussels. Museveni, of course, took umbrage to this

\textsuperscript{14} OAU, op cit., para 6.9.
\textsuperscript{15} Wallis (2014: 19) suggests that Habyarimana was not surprised, and had, in fact, “been trying for two years to
infiltrate the RPF in Kampala and assassinate its leading players”.

418
reversal, and it was conceivably the turning point in the Museveni-Habyarimana relationship.

Prior to the October invasion, Habyarimana had liberalized freedom of the press to some extent. But by the middle of 1990 he had begun to curb the protests of those who, in his opinion, had gone too far, broadcasting over Radio Rwanda the request that journalists should not abuse their freedom, and that specific issues were prohibited, such as “the president and his family, regionalism, or relations between southerners (abanyenduga) and northerners (abakiga), religion, and government officials”.16 Some unflinching editors were even targeted for assassination.

When the RPF invaded, in the first week in October,17 it had about 2,000 men, the majority of whom were soldiers who had just walked out of the NRA. Their hope was by making a concentrated and rapid push toward Kigali, only about 50 miles away, they would surprise and break through the Rwandan army (FAR), which they believed was riven with internal dissent and so would not offer a unified resistance. But FAR was reasonably well trained, even though they were not battle hardened, and the RPF advance was stopped,18 their leader killed, and the fighters spread in disarray. Their new leader, Paul Kagame, retuned from military training in the U.S. to gather them together in the inhospitable mountainous area of the volcanoes, from where he led them in hit-and-run guerrilla tactics rather than risk suffering the defeat of a head-on conventional war. They

16 Kabanda, 2007: 82.
17 “Prosecution witness Prof. Reyntjens testified that had the October invasion been delayed by even a few months, the moral justification for the invasion would have been lost because the Habyarimana government had already undertaken to solve the ‘Uganda refugees issue’ and establishment of a multi-party system” (Testimony of Reyntjens, ICTR: T. 22/09/04, p. 34-35).
18 It has been observed that outside interests completely decided the first actions of the October war, that without Ugandan backing the RPF would not have been able to launch the war, let alone sustain it, and without French backing, Rwanda would not have been able to stop the RPF advance.
were successful in cutting the commercial transport route that Rwanda depended upon through Uganda and on to Kenya, and in securing by mid-October a large area in the northeast. Recruits were badly needed, but everyone had fled the area of conflict, causing massive movements of internally displaced persons (IDPs)—as much as 15% of the Rwandan population—so new fighters were recruited from Uganda, Burundi, Zaire, Tanzania and the far-flung Tutsi diaspora. “From all over . . . young Tutsi exiles came to fight in the country they had never seen.” Though the RPF could never keep pace with FAR’s build-up,

it also grew quite fast, reaching 5,000 men by early 1991 and about 12,000 by late 1992. Then came a big change: around that time the Front started to recruit heavily from the Tutsi population inside Rwanda, something which caused strong fears in government circle. . . . For the Habyarimana regime, and especially for the extremist elements in its ranks, this meant that the Front was now a direct agent in internal Rwandan politics, and that the whole Tutsi population inside the country could be viewed as potential ‘fifth columnists’. It was around this time, in March 1992, that the notorious Coalition pour la Défense de la République (CDR) extremist party was born.

Prunier considers this shift to the RPF was perceived as a “direct agent in Rwandan politics”, and was the turning point (late 1992) in the way the extremists in the government saw the war; they began to think of and target civilians as complicit in the invasion. In this way, it was the beginning of a genocidal frame of mind that became increasingly virulent.

Three days into the invasion, Habyarimana’s regime staged a fake attack on Kigali, saying it was the RPF, in an attempt to bring France (and possibly Belgium) into the conflict if they were to think the government was threatened with defeat, and to

---

21 Ibid.
frighten the populace into supporting the MRND in the war effort, and possibly as an excuse to round up Tutsis and Hutus they suspected of being sympathetic to the RPF. Subsequently, France intervened with Opération Noroît, sending in two companies of paratroopers and legionnaires, Mitterrand keeping his promise at La Baule to help francophone countries against external attack; how much Mitterrand’s military aid was due to his particular regard for Habyarimana is unclear, but it must have played some part (he did, after all give Habyarimana a private jet). France was also antagonistic to the RPF because they considered it a foil for Museveni, who was doing the bidding of the U.S. and the larger ‘Anglo-Saxon world’.23 (The parallel with Habyarimana’s mentor, Mobutu, is striking:

France had also ‘tried in 1990 to rebuild the declining Mobutu regime in order to counter Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, seen as an American ally in the Great Lakes region’.24 For Mobutu, the year 1990, which set Zaire on the road to democracy, had been a year of serious decline25 yet he had mobilized several hundred troops to shore up FAR’s defences). At the same time that Mobutu pulled his troops out of Rwanda, barely two weeks after the RPF attack, Habyarimana travelled to France to meet with Mitterrand concerning the possibility of asking the UN Security Council for help. Yet, for all the aid money and military assistance, *France à la Mitterrand* did nothing during the Arusha peace process to prevent Rwanda from getting railroaded into a decidedly unfair agreement, so that, in the end, the ill-afforded amounts of money funneled into the regime over the years in order to keep a French presence in Africa was wasted. France’s political disappearance from 1992 until

---

25 Pottier, *ibid.*
Habyarimana’s assassination is a sign of some internal friction (or ambivalence) in the French government between the Africa desk’s policies and parliament. In any case, the bad deal struck at Arusha reveals Habyarimana’s wider lack of support from the international community.

Belgium, as well, sent two companies of paratroopers in support of FAR, but who didn’t stay long, pulling out soon after the RPF was routed, and Belgium would relatively quickly wash its hands of the conflict, withdrawing most of its aid from Rwanda. Soon after the RPF advance was routed, some 8,000 Tutsi, and even several hundred Hutu, were arrested, and in the following weeks a state of emergency ensued carrying with it the violation of normal procedures for *habeas corpus*; instead of the MRND building a national consensus of patriotism, uniting all Rwandans against an invading force, they instead cast the conflict in historical ethnic terms; it became a war of Tutsi hegemony with the aim of restoring the mwamiship. This was a ‘fear’ card played by the administration that tagged all Tutsis inside and outside the country as the enemy, not in a war with a clear front pushing from the north out of Uganda, but an insidious infiltration of society that utilized Rwandan Tutsi citizens as a fifth column to undermine everything that both Kayibanda and Habyarimana had accomplished in freeing the Hutu from Tutsi domination. In other words, everything achieved by the Hutus was in imminent danger of being lost, with the country returning to a pre-1959, pre-independence kingship. If Habyarimana had

26 Alphonse-Marie Nkubito, a human rights advocate (who had served as State Prosecutor under Habyarimana), refused to prosecute several thousand people (mostly Tutsi) arrested in 1990 following the October attack. Those jailed were eventually freed. Nkubito later blamed a corrupt judiciary and impunity for extra-judicial actions as being central elements in the political crises and violence that led to the genocide (Newbury, Catherine and David, 1999: 294).

27 A country rounding up an ethnically identifiable group (Tutsis) related ethnically to the invaders of the country is not a unique reaction; the U.S. rounded up tens of thousands of Japanese following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Neither act was admirable.
framed the RPF invasion simply and straightforwardly as an attack by an external force on a sovereign State, he could have taken the moral high road and appealed to international sympathies and the public for support. The problem, though, was that the opposition parties that were formally fashioned soon after the invasion, were more than willing to open a dialogue with the RPF regarding power-sharing in a future government once Habyarimana’s one-party MRND was deposed; they saw the conflict as their opportunity for a quick victory by aligning themselves with the RPF. Otherwise, if they remained neutral and let things as they were play out and government forces were victorious, Habyarimana and the MRND would be even stronger than before; the opposition parties would have squandered their chance, and for the foreseeable future. In a further attempt to unite Rwandans against the RPF, Habyarimana named Ferdinand Nahimana, an emerging Hutu Power ideologue and scholar of Rwandan history, to head the Office of Information (ORINFOR), and to assist in writing speeches for the him.

At the time that Habyarimana went to France to meet with Mitterrand, he, along with the presidents of Uganda and Tanzania, called for a cease-fire, and a negotiated solution to the conflict. Museveni, still playing a political cat-and-mouse game of appearing not to be supporting the RPF in order to stave off criticism at home, warned the RPF leaders to accept a cease-fire or they would be ejected from Uganda. He referenced the refugee problem, stating "Rwanda is ready to welcome all the refugees who want to return". Habyarimana, after a diplomatic meeting in Mwanza, Tanzania, on the 24th, announced on Rwandan radio his demand for an unconditional cease-fire:

---

28 Nahimana will later be found guilty of genocide and sent to prison by the ICTR.
29 Reuters, 18 October 1990.
We asked President Mwinyi and President Museveni to obtain this cease-fire. If there are negotiations, it is with these conditions that they went to ask for the cease-fire. I do not see how the cease-fire could be negotiated with the Rwandan government, which is being attacked and is defending itself. It is then we had asked the Mwanza summit to negotiate this cease-fire. If there are negotiations, it is they who must negotiate. If there are conditions, it is on them that they should be imposed, not on the Rwandan government. . . . You understand that this is a way of asking us to renounce our sovereignty. . . . In any case, they are not Rwandans who are returning home—in contrast to what is being stated.  

Habyarimana then flew to Gbadolite to confer with heads of state in the region, but before leaving met with US Ambassador Spearman, to whom he stressed his belief that a buffer force was essential as a prerequisite to peace talks, and that a regional conference was necessary for finding a solution to the refugee problem. Habyarimana was trying desperately to bring as many important and neutral players as possible into his fold to weigh against the RPF invasion, because the RPF had a powerful international media presence and had been painting the invasion as a civil conflict. As Habyarimana complained to Spearman,

“Despite others’ protestations that the current conflict is a mere civil disturbance, it is not so. The composition of the aggressing force, their appearance and the source of their armaments make it clear that Rwanda is the object of external aggression, pure and simple.”

But the external aggression by the RPF was resulting in an unexpected phenomenon: the peasant-farmers they thought would be happy to be free from Habyarimana’s ‘repressive’ regime were in fact fleeing from them, and the invading soldiers were naively ignorant of the world they found inside Rwanda. Not being able to return to Uganda, “liberation for the RPF meant the liberation not of people but of territory”.  

---

31 Spearman, Kigali to State Dept. Communiqué, 26 Oct 90.
start and undercut one of the rationales of their invasion.

By December emergency arms purchases had emptied the GOR’s coffers (economic hardship was so severe that peasant-farmers had to spend 80% of their income on food). The president made a request for US help in the form of material aid, for assistance to speed up the installation of a buffer force, and for support in a dialog with Belgium to keep their troops in Rwanda until the buffer force was in place. From the Gbadolite summit, on 27 October, the presidents of Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Zaire announced their agreement to form a military peace-monitoring force in an attempt to end the war. A series of negotiations and cease-fire agreements followed, but the president vacillated back and forth under two different pressures—those from the negotiating table and those from the extremists in and around the MRND. Habyarimana is also caught in the middle between the hardline faction and a courageous conciliatory faction, who are willing to negotiate the end of hostilities. But the hardliners were increasing their ethnic-laden propaganda through the media as exemplified by a particularly virulent issue (No. 6, December) of the racist paper Kangura, which featured the definitive Hutu Power proclamation “The Hutu Ten Commandments”. It established a type of racist measuring stick for Hutu behavior and set the tone for an ethnic framework to the war. The Ten Commandments are reproduced below, in Figure 9:

---

34 Baker (1998: 120) sees Habyarimana utilizing several (at least seven) tactics in order to garner support, as well as reduce support for the RPF (and opposition parties): 1. buying off the opposition; 2. containing the opposition; 3. dividing the opposition; 4. intimidating the opposition; 5. building up the MRND support base; 6. mobilisation of the Hutu ethnic group; 7. writing favourable rules for the new multiparty constitutions and electoral procedure.
35 The formidably implacable aspect of ‘Hutu identity’, as harbored and nursed by only the relatively small governing elite, out of the millions of citizens, is that it is so irrationally threatened by its own Tutsi ‘ghosts’ that it has to poison all of society with a racist tract in order to keep its fears alive, ignorant and uncaring of all that has happened and is happening in the world around: after a ‘revolution’ and fight for a democratic State, at a time thirty
The Hutu Ten Commandments

These exhortations give a forthright look into a foundational mindset for a potential genocidal event. And not long after the publication of the “Ten Commandments”, a precursor to the genocide can be postulated from an event like the massacre of the Bagogwe Tutsis between January and March 1991. The killings were a revenge response by the local authorities to an RPF offensive that had resulted in capturing a town and opening the local prison (where Théoneste Lizinde, who had engineered an unsuccessful coup against Habyarimana, was being held). Rare testimonies directly linking Habyarimana to a “death squad” and to a murderous event, were given concerning the Bagogwe massacre:

"The meeting which prepared the massacre of Bagogwe was chaired by Juvénal Habyarimana himself, his wife also being present, and Col. Sagatwa and his wife, and led by the sorcerer Sagatwa. It is the Minister Nzirorera who was instructed to provide the money needed for prefect Nzabagerageza [in the Ruhengeri area in the northwest],"36

and "The president would chair a meeting of the "death squad", in which the massacre of Bagogwe was decided."37 According to the same witness,

---

Figure 9. Hutu Ten Commandments, December 1990

Appeal to the Bahutu Conscience (With the Hutu Ten Commandments)

The Batutsi are bloodthirsty and power-hungry and want to impose their hegemony on the people of Rwanda using armed force.

The Ten Commandments [of the Bahutu]

1. Every Hutu male should know that Tutsi women, wherever they may be, are working in the pay of their Tutsi ethnic group. Consequently, shall be deemed a traitor:
   - Any Hutu male who marries a Tutsi woman;
   - Any Hutu male who keeps a Tutsi concubine;
   - Any Hutu male who makes a Tutsi woman his secretary or protégée.

2. Every Hutu male must know that our Hutu daughters are more dignified and conscientious in their role of woman, wife or mother. Are they not pretty, good secretaries and more honest!

3. Hutu women, be vigilant and bring your husbands, brothers and sons back to their senses.

4. Every Hutu male must know that all Tutsi are dishonest in their business dealings. They are only seeking their ethnic supremacy. “Time will tell.” Shall be considered a traitor, any Hutu male:
   - who enters into a business partnership with Tutsis;
   - who invests his money or State money in a Tutsi company;
   - who lends to, or borrows from, a Tutsi;
   - who grants business favors to Tutsis (granting of important licenses, bank loans, building plots, public tenders…) is a traitor.

5. Strategic positions in the political, administrative, economic, military and security domain should, to a large extent, be entrusted to Hutus.

6. In the education sector (pupils, students, teachers) must be in the majority Hutu.

7. The Rwandan Armed Forces should be exclusively Hutu. That is the lesson we learned from the October 1990 war. No soldier must marry a Tutsi woman.

8. Hutus must cease having pity for the Tutsi.

9. The Hutu male, wherever he may be, must be united, in solidarity and be concerned about the fate of their Hutu brothers;
   - The Hutu at home and abroad must constantly seek friends and allies for the Hutu Cause, beginning with our Bantu brothers;
   - They must constantly counteract Tutsi propaganda;
   - The Hutu must be firm and vigilant towards their common Tutsi enemy.

10. The 1959 social revolution, the 1961 referendum and the Hutu ideology must be taught to Hutus at all levels. Every Hutu must propagate the present ideology widely. Any Hutu who persecutes his Hutu brother for having read, disseminated and taught this ideology shall be deemed a traitor.
Colonel Elijah Sagatwa proposed the operation and the killings of Bagogwe to President Habyarimana, who nodded. . . . Minister Nzirorera would finance the operation. . . . The massacre of Bagogwe was heavily financed. . . . The money came from state coffers and private accounts. The role of certain banks is undeniable. Almost every manager of banks and the other financial institutions were members of the Akazu.38

Forced by international and national outrage, Habyarimana had to admit the Bagogwe massacre (and others). Promising to bring the killers to justice he added that he would

“take additional measures to prevent other losses of human lives to occur in similar conditions, namely: negotiations to end the interethnic war in the North of the country, and a seminar for the servicemen with the theme of respect for human rights in a war situation.”39

Habyarimana continued to pursue political and diplomatic ways to reach a satisfactory outcome of the regional conference on Rwandan refugees, visiting Zaire on January 7th, Burundi on the 17th, and Kenya on the 18th, where he invited Kenya to take part in the regional conference on refugees to be held in the near future in Zaire and Tanzania. The president said opinion among Rwandans was against relinquishing anything to the RPF. But, in fact, there were many moderates voicing the need to have meaningful dialogue with the RPF and their demands, important among whom was Joseph Kavaruganda, President of the Constitutional Court and Court of Appeals (and a seminarian schoolmate of Habyarimana’s), who argued repeatedly with Habyarimana over

---

38 This is the case of Séraphin Rwabukumba, brother-in-law of the President, and the National Bank, and the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Commercial Bank, Como Bizimungu, who was prefect of Gisenyi during the Bagogwe massacre. The Social Security Fund, Electrogaz, and tea factories were run by relatives of the presidential family (cited in Bideri Diogène, 2003: n.p.).
legal matters and about the necessity of transforming Rwanda into a real democracy; he also felt strongly about the Tutsi refugees having the right to repatriation.\textsuperscript{40}

On Feb 19\textsuperscript{th}, at the regional conference on refugees at Dar es-Salaam, attended by Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, and Zaire, along with the Secretary General of the OAU, and an official from the UN’s High Commissioner for Refugees, Habyarimana offered a general amnesty to the RPF, giving them 15 days to report to amnesty centers set up in Rwempasha (far northeast, near the border), Kinigi and Cyanika (northwest and east of Ruhengeri, respectively), and Kaniga (north central, on the border and off the main route to Uganda), with Mobutu appointed mediator, but nothing came of it. At the end of March Habyarimana announced the signing of a ceasefire agreement with Kagame at N’sele, Zaire; Monitoring forces were to be made up of troops from Burundi, Rwanda, Zairian, Ugandan, and of RFP officers. Talks between the RPF and the Rwandan government were slated for April 12\textsuperscript{th}. To sum up, in the six months after the start of the war: democratic and economic reforms accelerated; multipartyism and a national referendum were scheduled for June 1991; the right for repatriation of all Rwandan refugees living abroad was recognized, and a package of economic measures, which included market liberalization and devaluation of the RFr were put in place, making the country entitled to World Bank and IMF SACs.\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{40} Neuffer, 2001: 94-98. “Kavaruganda became tired of his president’s obstructionism. . . . By 1993 he was annoyed enough to send an angry letter to Habyarimana, detailing all the various times he had violated the country’s laws and broken the agreements he had signed. ‘When you violate the law, do you do it in the interest of the Rwandan people? . . . In the spirit of the Constitution? No.’ Kavaruganda had been intimately involved with putting together the Arusha accords, so much so that he had again become the target of virulent attacks. Opening Kangura one day, he found a caricature of himself in his judicial robes, hanging by a rope from a tree. At his feet were copies of the Arusha accords. ‘You work with the Tutsis,’ it read. ‘If the Hutu and Tutsis take [i.e., share] power, we will hang you’ (Neuffer, ibid: 99-101).

\textsuperscript{41} Flaten’s Kigali to State Dept. Communiquéd, December 1990.
In April-May, the CNS recommended a modification of the 1978 constitution, the abolition of the single-party system, and the creation of a prime minister, which Habyarimana presented to the cabinet, which, after an extraordinary congress, consented to multipartyism: Habyarimana voiced his strong opposition to ethnically-based parties, and the congress compromised, permitting sectarian parties but with open membership. It also decided on a new name for the party, changing it from the National Revolutionary Movement for Development, to the Republican Mouvement for Development and Democracy, but kept the acronym MRND. It appears the change was meant to signal the emphasis on democracy given the decision to adopt multipartyism, and that the word ‘revolution’, as well, did not represent the projected new attitude toward republican (i.e., democratic) values. In short, the party wanted to construct a new image in answer to the pressures for reform. At the extraordinary congress, Habyarimana expressed a Janus-like premise that “The unity of ethnic groups is not possible without the unity of the majority, so that they are able to wade off any attempt to return them into slavery," and so continued the fear mongering. At the same time, a new political party, the Mouvement Démocratique Républicain (MDR) appeared in answer to political reforms scheduled for June.

The 1991 Constitution

June 10th, Habyarimana endorsed the constitution ratified by the National Council for Development on 30 May 1991. The law on political parties was signed a week after 10 June, and Habyarimana scheduled parliamentary elections for the near future. The new

---

42 Carbone, 2007: 1) points out that “party pluralism first emerged in sub-Saharan Africa . . . in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The transplant of this Western arrangement, however, was quickly rejected by virtually all African societies, much like what happened to other political dispensations originating from Europe, such as the modern state, liberal constitutionalism or representative government.”
constitution states that it will “adapt to national realities the constitutional principles established on 24 Nov 1962, and 20 Dec 1978, and to safeguard the national acquisitions for the purpose of reinforcing democracy”. It takes much from the US Constitution, starting with Article 1.2, “Government of the people, by the people, and for the people”. Article 16 {Citizen Equality}, “All citizens shall be equal in the eyes of the law, without any discrimination, especially in respect to race, color, origin, ethnic background, clan, sex, opinion, religion, or social status,” is clearly violated by the quota system against Tutsis, and by the ethnic designation on ID cards. Articles 12 {Personal Freedom} and 22 {Privacy} will be violated by murders of dissidents in government and the media, as well as by imprisonment without habeas corpus, by torture, and illegal searches of homes. Article 37.2 {Economic Incompatibility}, “Their [President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, Ministers, and Secretaries of State] duties shall be incompatible with the exercise of any other compensated professional activity”, is obviously violated through rent seeking and using government funds for commercial transactions and criminal actions (such as profiting from arms purchases). Article 40 {Election, Term} states the president has a five-year mandate and many not serve more than two successive mandates. This was a change from the 1978 constitution, which provided an indefinite term to the presidency. Article 40 does not say anything about the term being retroactive, so the seventeen years Habyarimana has already served as president do not count. Legislative power is to be exercised by the National Assembly, replacing the National Development Council. Elements of Customary Law are recognized and maintained. There is the new office of Prime Minister, which is important because the PM can make appointments to civil and
military posts, as well as the president, and determine the extent of the authority of the Ministers and Secretaries of State, so Habyarimana’s customary ability to appoint persons to influential positions is somewhat curtailed, resulting in a loss in political clout. The advent of a PM, separate executive, judicial, and legislative branches, and the barring of army officers from political parties, becomes almost as important in democratic reform as does the opening to multipartyism. But, the constitution is only as good as it is adhered to and the laws enforced. Cronyism, for example, makes a mockery of the constitution, and continues under Habyarimana’s administration to egregiously dole out the most prized positions in lucrative institutions to favorite sons of the north. Table 12, below, shows all of the top posts going to men from Gisenyi and Ruhengeri; 34 out of 61, with the other 27 institutional directorships being only minimally important. Extra-judicial violations by the government will bypass many of the constitutional articles without being punished, especially as they will be abrogated under the rubric of an ‘emergency state of war’, which is how the remaining three years of Habyarimana’s rule will be considered.

Nonetheless, the constitution of 10 June 1991, as an organic document, upheld the principle of the separation of powers and the rule of law and, as amended in the Arusha Accords, will serve the country for the next 12 years, though the constitution will be substantially modified in the 1993 Arusha Accords.
Table 12. 1991 Institution Directors by Region of Origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTITUTION</th>
<th>DIRECTOR</th>
<th>REGION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crete Zaire Nil</td>
<td>Gallican Hategeka</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCR</td>
<td>Claver Mvuyekure</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BK</td>
<td>Viateur Mvuyekure</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BACAR</td>
<td>Pasteur Musabe</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOPROTEL</td>
<td>Martin Ayirwanda</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRAFIPRO</td>
<td>Ngororabanga</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNAP</td>
<td>Pierre Tegera</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chambre de Commerce</td>
<td>Aloys Bizimana</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISAAR Léopold</td>
<td>Gahamanyi</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caisse Hypothécaire</td>
<td>Antoine Libanje</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musée National</td>
<td>Simon Ntigashira</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCIR-Thé</td>
<td>Michel Bagaragaza</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORTPN</td>
<td>Juvenal Uwilingiyimana</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COOPIMAR</td>
<td>Jean Mburanumwe</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBK</td>
<td>Jean Bagiramenshi</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SORWAL</td>
<td>Mathieu Ngirira</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usine à Thé</td>
<td>Shagasha Callixte</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usine à Thé</td>
<td>Pfunda Munyeshuli</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usine à Thé</td>
<td>Murindi Jaribu</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caisse sociale</td>
<td>Damascène Hategekimana</td>
<td>Ruhengeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrogaz</td>
<td>Donat Munyanganizi</td>
<td>Ruhengeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ocir-Café</td>
<td>Fabien Neretse</td>
<td>Ruhengeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BNR</td>
<td>Denis Ntirugirimbabazi</td>
<td>Ruhengeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rwandex</td>
<td>Baragahoranye</td>
<td>Ruhengeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONAPO</td>
<td>Gaudence Nyirasafari</td>
<td>Ruhengeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORINFOR</td>
<td>Ferdinand Nahimana</td>
<td>Ruhengeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CID</td>
<td>Daniel Rwananiye</td>
<td>Ruhengeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laiterie du Rwanda</td>
<td>Callixte Mirasano</td>
<td>Ruhengeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAR</td>
<td>Lt Colonel Nyirimanzi</td>
<td>Ruhengeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redemi</td>
<td>J.B Bicamumpaka</td>
<td>Ruhengeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodeparal</td>
<td>Michel Bakuzakundi</td>
<td>Ruhengeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cimerwa</td>
<td>Callixte</td>
<td>Ruhengeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ocir Thé de Rubaya</td>
<td>Juvenal Ndabarinze</td>
<td>Ruhengeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ocir-Thé</td>
<td>Niyibizi</td>
<td>Ruhengeri</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Data source: Kinyamateka, May 1991, No133)
Multipartyism

The first political parties formed, from 18 June, were:

• Mouvement Démocratique Républicain (MDR) – Led by Faustin Twagiramungu, Kayibanda’s son-in-law, the largest party in terms of membership and the largest threat to the MRND, it’s plank (and legitimacy) rested on historical links with Kayibanda’s MDR-Parmehutu, so its power-base and geographical center was Kayibanda’s—the south-central area extending from Gitarama. Some members were former MRND who had disagreements with Habyarimana. Since the coup, only eighteen years before, and the ouster of MDR-Parmehutu Hutus from power, they had stewed in their marginalization and exclusion and now hoped to regain some levers of power. To separate themselves from the MRND, as well as to follow their intended political platform, they presented themselves as reformers, at core genuinely seeking to address the problems of state that Habyarimana’s MRND had waffled on for so long. In the beginning, they eschewed the ethnic labelling that the MRND’s hardliners were utilizing. As Dismas Nsengiyaremye, an MDR founder, who would become Prime Minister the next year, put it,

The populist behavior of the MDR-PARMEHUTU had left a very good image with the population: abolition of the ubuhake system, the distribution of land to landless farmers, compulsory and free primary education for all children, local autonomy, etc. This privileged situation made MDR a powerful rival as much to the MRND as the FPR was. Our renovation consisted in deleting the initials PARMEHUTU and in rejecting any reference to the interethnic fights which had marked Rwandan history. For the restorers of the MDR-PARMEHUTU, it was obvious that the political problem was not the oppression of the Hutus by the Tutsi, but the oppression of the Rwandan people by a group, the Akazu, having risen to power by the strength and determination to stay there, and which had driven the country to bankruptcy due to their irresponsible and unreliable actions.43

Still, they were eventually forced to put the fight against Tutsi power somewhere on the agenda in order to prevent an ethnicist movement within the party from forming under the PARMEHUTU name.

• Parti Social Démocrate (PSD) – a center-left party, led by Frédéric Nzamurambaho, and attracting teachers, public service employees, and the liberal professions, led by Vincent Biruta, the former president of the senate, and Marc Rugenera, vice president of the party, drew its support from the area south of the MDR influence, around the university town of Butare, the country’s second largest city and center for intellectuals, because of the National University, and where the largest community of Tutsis lived. A revival of the Association pour la Promotion Sociale de la Masse (APROSO}

which had been founded in 1957 by Hutu businessman Joseph Gitera, it was based
further south of the MDR and sought to attract educated Hutu and Tutsi. Frederick
Nzurambaho represented Gikongoro, while party leader Félicien Gatabazi
represented the Butare region.44

• Parti Libéral (PL) – a center-right, urban-based party, led by Justin Mugenzi and the
Tutsi, Landouald Ndasingwa, which had the support of the private sector and hence the
Tutsi group According to Dismas Nsengiyaremye, the Liberal Party “had been created
under the instigation of President Juvenal Habyarimana by a group of businessmen;
this party had for its mission to collect economic experts who could recommend a
capital-intensive management of the country,”45 and attracted many Tutsi (more than
any other party), especially prominent businessmen, acting outside the business sphere
of the Habyarimana regime. Its ethnic liberalism also attracted Rwandans of
ambiguous ethnic status, as it presented itself as being outside the ethnic question. The
party will split the next year into two factions. Accused by the MRND as being little
more than a front for the RPF, there is some evidence for this; one of its leaders, André
Kameya, was editor-in-chief of Rwanda Rushya, which published many articles
supporting the RPF. Kameya also repeated RPF message at press conferences.

• Parti Démocrate Chrétien (PDC) – created by Jean-Népomuscène Nayinzira, wanted to
create dissent within the Catholic community but, because it was in opposition to
Habyarimana it was not recognized by the Internationale Démocrate Chrétienne, and
had difficulty attracting many followers.

Because all of these parties were largely pluralistic, they had platforms that reflected a
consensus derive from varied outlooks. This also meant that across parties there were
members who knew each other well (through family, regional or economic connections),
but this could result in shared aims as well as discord.46

On July 3, Habyarimana aired a radio message to the people that included the
following ideas and points:

• Political pluralism – a control point of natural development in conformity with
society’s wish. Wants it to be translated into the constitution no later than July 1992.

44 Collins, 2014.
45 Assemblée Nationale de France. 1998
46 Helbig, 1991: 98-101. “A good number of Rwandans did not, for example, expect to see Alexis Kanyarengwe,
with a reputation very anti-Tutsi, join the RPF, and even preside over it.”
• Dialogue and the peaceful confronting of ideas result in inspiration, and in equal opportunities to air one's ideas to compatriots. Therefore, wants to have consultations and debates among all parties in the coming months so the people will become familiar with them and their opinions.

• The first meeting could take place when the parties have had the chance to be constituted, and to register and organise themselves, and will address the preparation of elections, so that coming elections are carried out in the most objective and open way.

• The new separation between government responsibilities and those related to parties is henceforth being applied. Prefects and burgomasters are employees of the state, and must carry out their functions with neutrality towards the various parties.

• The problem of Rwandan refugees -- They are Rwandans and have the inalienable rights of citizens. A concrete proposition was made to make a quick integration as per the plan of action prepared jointly by the UNHCR and the OAU, and a timetable has been finalised. Refugees will be integrated organically [my italics] because they will contribute to the development of the country. After a national consensus on how to solve the refugee problem, Rwanda will have to enact through its parliament a declaration inviting the refugees home.

• The war has abated, but the country must remain vigilant. Perhaps it is an indication that the RPF will prefer reason to passion, and that there may come a solution.

Just weeks after Habyarimana’s speech, a joint statement was issued by the new parties, protesting that the planned parliamentary elections were being held too hastily, giving an unfair advantage to the president’s long-established MRND. They demanded a national referendum to determine political reforms in detail. Habyarimana refused, elections were cancelled, and opposition parties (swelling in numbers to 15) organized demonstrations between November and January. Though the various new parties had bases in different parts of the country, there were few ideological differences among their programs besides their opposition to Habyarimana’s regime; their shared primary goal was to end the MRND’s one-party stranglehold on the State, and for this endeavor they formed together the Comité de Concertation, whose immediate agenda included stopping the war by negotiating with the RPF on the refugee problem. In addition, they pushed

forward the formation of a broad-based transitional government (BBTG) at Gbadolite on 16 September 1991 (amended at Arusha 12 July 1992, and finalized in the Arusha Accords of 1993), which would include various political parties, including the RPF.\textsuperscript{48} By their willingness to negotiate with the RPF the Comité demonstrated its separation from the MRND’s ethnic stance.

But, the suggestion that Habyarimana used the war to halt the democratization process has an obverse side—it could equally be argued that Habyarimana used the opportunity presented by the invasion to vilify the RPF for interrupting the democratic process that his administration and the CNS had put in motion before it occurred. He was more concerned with the threat of the opposition parties joining hands with the RPF to oust the MRND from power than with democratization \textit{per se}. And sharing his fear were the army officers, most of whom came from Habyarimana’s northern bloc, who stood to lose their privileged positions in a BBTG (80\% of command positions in the armed forces were allegedly held by \textit{akazu} members).\textsuperscript{49}

The MDR, for its part, found that it could not get Habyarimana to negotiate without RPF military pressure. Conversely, the RPF, as Tutsis and therefore representing a minority in Rwanda, had little political clout by themselves, either in the country or internationally, so that both they and the MDR saw a necessity in working together as ‘enemies of the (MRND) enemy’.\textsuperscript{50} This was a serious threat to Habyarimana’s party. (If the RPF had genuinely been interested in joining a multiparty government in Rwanda they

\textsuperscript{48} Van Hoyweghen (1996: 389) writes, concerning the Church, that it “definitely wanted to make sure that it had a place in a future Rwanda. But the divisions within the Church were soon to prove too serious for it to become an independent, unified voice on the political scene.”


\textsuperscript{50} Kuperman, 2001 p. 10:
could have taken advantage of the Comité’s willingness for inclusion and ended the
invasion, being guaranteed seats in the government and a place in the military. As it was,
they broke the cease-fire agreement in order to launch a new offensive, and the Comité’s
members retreated, to join the MRND in defense of the country against what was proving
to be an unappeasable adversary).

In November 1991, the MDR party issued a memorandum describing Habyarimana’s
inflexibility toward enacting real democratic reforms. Habyarimana fended them off by
forming a new cabinet on 31 December 1991 that featured only one person from the
opposition, a member of the tiny PCD, and appointing Sylvestre Nsanzimana the new
prime minister. With this insult, the opposition parties organized mass protests throughout
the country, noteworthy because they were the first such demonstrations in the country’s
history.51 Criticism of the regime was now firmly part of the socio-political fabric,
involving not just the opposition parties but the media,52 citizens’ organizations and,
increasingly, church groups.

The war, then, quickly became a contest involving four key players—the RPF,
Habyarimana and elements in the MRND government, the akazu coterie, and the new
opposition parties. The RPF and the opposition parties took the position that they were
ensuing for real democratic change and a solution to the refugee problem, while
Habyarimana and his supporters in the MRND insisted that he was making real progress in
democratic reforms and refugee repatriation, while the akazu cabal tried to isolate all
Tutsis from the main body of the population, the Hutu peasant-farmers, by pushing the

51 Fujii, 2009: 51.
52 It is a measure of the akazu’s paranoia and fear of losing their privileged status that they were connected to 11 of
the 42 new journals in 1991.

438
idea that the RPF were interlopers from northeast Africa\textsuperscript{53} who, along with anyone who supported them, were set on restoring the monarchy. From the beginning of the RPF incursion there were two egregious mistakes—Habyarimana’s failure to trust Museveni’s genuine offer to intervene in the RPF’s initial offensive, and Habyarimana’s intermittent compliance with those regressive forces in and around the akazu/\textit{MRND} that cast the war in ethnic terms in order to garner support from the populace through fear of a return to the past, rather than rallying support locally (through an appeal to nationalism—a war against an invading army), and internationally (through an appeal to the community of countries—a sovereign State was being attacked).

\textbf{ID Cards}

At this same time, July 1991, independent consultants lobbied France and other governments who were providing aid to Rwanda to insist that Habyarimana’s administration remove the national ID cards because they included (prominently) an ethnic designation, but no replacement of the cards was made, even after the requirement was adopted in the Arusha Accords in late 1993.\textsuperscript{54} Stanton, who made a study of judicial administration for the Rwandan Ministry of Justice in 1988, says he talked with the President of the Cour de Cassation (Supreme Court), Joseph Kavaruganda, and they both

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{53} There is the obverse side to this ethnic prejudice and labelling the opponent with derogatory terms. Kabanda (op. cit.: 74) gives the example of a poem from Impuruza, emanating from a Tutsi in the US., Kimenyi, who was the ideologue of the RPF: “You are a bullfighter who launched a war to free the Nobles [Tutsi] / Since you decided to use the entire arsenal / The termites [Hutu] will run out of the country / Just a few days before the first shell has landed / Those wild rats, corrupted crooks [Hutu] are already panic-stricken / They are looters, hooligans, and killers [Hutu] / I see those traitors with bloated cheeks [Hutu] running in panic and disarray/Those thieves [Hutu] are troublemakers. / The ugly creatures [the Tutsi mythology preaches that people of Hamitic origin are generally handsome, whereas people of Bantu origin are ugly] are insane and furious / They are the enemies of Rwanda; they are nothing but a bunch of dishonorable dirt.”
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{54} Fussel, 2001. New cards were, in fact, printed, but never distributed.
\end{flushright}
agreed “that the designation of ethnicity had to be removed from the ID cards,”\textsuperscript{55} and that several weeks later met with Habyarimana, himself, and implored him to issue new IDs. Prophetically, Stanton warned, “Someday they will be used for genocide,” but the president “remained impassive and non-committal”.\textsuperscript{56} They were widely used during the Hutu genocide of the Tutsis after 6 April 1994, but there is no clear data on how many Tutsis were killed as a result of presenting an ID card, because such a large number of victims were identified by names recorded on lists made from records held in local administrative offices, by immediate and common (historical) knowledge of who was and who wasn’t Tutsi among the peasant-farmers, and even by arbitrary decisions on who was a Tutsi according to old ethnic stereotypes such a height, shape of nose and lips, and even skin color.

\textsuperscript{55} Stanton, 2002: n.p.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid.
Youth Militias and the Fomentation of Violence

In the midst of the introduction of a new constitution and of nascent political parties, there were those in and around Habyarimana’s regime, loosely labeled the akazu (as we have mentioned), who were vehemently opposed to the new constitution and multipartyism, and exerted increasing pressure on the president to sabotage the efforts toward a BBTG, while “moderate members of the military, the cabinet, the young educated officers and the intellectuals were powerless”.1 Jean-Pierre Chrétien, in a prescient observation at this time, warned that “if the importation of arms into Rwanda did not stop then the country would become a powder keg”.2 In response to Habyarimana’s continued hold on power,

“splinter groups tried to weaken him by recruiting bands of disaffected youths based in the south, who mounted a sporadic uprising and perpetrated acts of vandalism aimed at destabilizing the regime. The groups were called Inkuba (thunder) and Abakombozi (liberators)”.3 Considering that daily food intake had fallen below 1,500 calories per person, it wasn’t difficult to recruit disaffected youths.3 The MRND countered at the end of 1991 with a youth group of their own, the Interahamwe, in order to “protect the politicians and their lands from the opposition youths and from the large numbers of squatters who had fled their impoverished hillsides. In some cases, the Interahamwe ‘re- liberated’ land that the

---

2 Ibid.
3 Gasana, 2002c: 28-30. Gasana shows the relatedness of low food production and violence, by pointing out that outbreaks of violence occurred only in those communes where food production was under 1,600 calories.
youth groups of the opposition parties based in the south had seized or occupied”.\(^4\) The
Interahamwe have figured largely in the literature on the genocide, and it is worth looking
at the various opinions on the organization in order to gain a viable perspective. Prunier
has said, regarding the Interahamwe,

> There is no doubt that this is a political, not a military militia, simply because the
majority had no military training. This militia was created long before the genocide. I
do not think it had initially intended to execute the genocide, which was not even
conceived at the time. . . . The current Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of
Rwanda, Mr. Anastase Gasana, is a founding member of the Interahamwe and yet he
is a member of the current government! These militias were seen initially as a kind of
loyalist activist group. In this regard, I would parallel the militias of the Ulster
Defence Force, the Orange men, of Northern Ireland, that is to say, a political militia
in the service of an ideology, with a plan to use it in an urban civil war, but not in
serious military operations against an armed adversary.\(^5\)

This view is corroborated by former prime minister Nsengiyaremye,

> . . . there was formation of militias. At first it was the youth movements of parties
responsible for leading political meetings, but eventually they turned into fighting
forces. The process continued with arming, and the situation has seriously
worsened from September 1992 until the end.\(^6\)

When the Interahamwe was founded by Murenzi Desirée, in Kigali at the end of 1991,
eleven leaders were elected, five of them representing a national committee, which
organized the youths at each strata of government. Bangamwabo says they were primarily,
at first, an urban group of young civil servants gathered for an ideological aim—to create
political awareness among the youth, and to recruit new members, but were not considered
as militia. Witness RGM at the ICTR says the Interahamwe “were never recognised by
MRND as part of the party, nor was it approved by the Ministry of Justice. Therefore,

---

\(^4\) Ibid.

\(^5\) Audition du professeur Prunier, CER, Sénat de Belgique, 11 juin 1997, pp. 18/7 à 18/10.

\(^6\) Audition de M. Nsengiyaremye, CER, Sénat de Belgique, 18 juin 1997, PV, p. 3/4.
Interahamwe had no legal status, it was a steering committee established in Kigali.”

Witness MEM testified at the ICTR that he heard the name ‘Interahamwe’ for the first time in a speech by Habyarimana, at a meeting in Ruhengeri in November 1992. All MRND members in Ruhengeri préfecture were there, celebrating the re-formation of the MRND. “The Interahamwe dancers [who had come from Kigali] were wearing different kinds of clothing: some wore traditional clothes, others wore the MRND uniform and others were dressed normally.”

As much as it has been considered a racist/ethnicist group, surprisingly its first president, Robert Kajuga, had Tutsi ancestors, and there were Tutsi, as well as Hutu, members. The organization was made up of jobless young men (as were the youth organizations of the other parties), but these were on the whole orphans or refugees from the war-stricken areas in the north. President Habyarimana was the main financier, giving 500,000 RwF (about $4,200) to the organisation (which was created without funding), which was used to purchase kitenge⁸ ‘uniforms’ (in MRND colors, bearing either an effigy of Habyarimana or the MRND logo), and to provide transportation to meetings and rallies.⁹

Regarding the name ‘Interahamwe’, Dr. Bangamwabo testified at the ICTR that it means “those who have the same view because they are together, people who have the same height, gait and possibly the same objectives, and it means that they stand in solidarity. It does not mean those who attack together”. Notwithstanding its initial activities, the

---

⁷ At the ICTR, witness "G", testified that in 1993 Habyarimana had gathered the MRND executive committee at a Kigali hotel to raise funds for the Interahamwe, pledging 1.5 million RwF ($12,600), with the secretary general of MRND, Joseph Nzirorera, giving 300,000 RwF ($2,500), the director of Banque Commerciale 200,000 ($1,700), and the head of Banque Continentale 500,000 ($4,200). The Prosecutor v. Théoneste Bagosora et al., Case No. ICTR-98-41-T

⁸ Cotton wrap-around, similar to a sarong, but in the Rwandan case also a pajama-like tunic and pants, in vibrant colors or patterns applied in a batik technique

⁹ The Prosecutor v. Théoneste Bagosora et al., ibid.
*Interahamwe* became progressively militarized over the next two years, and figured largely in the genocidal events.10

Increasingly worried about the RPF’s ability to successfully pursue the war, Habyarimana called a meeting for high-ranking military officers, and chaired by Bagosora11 at the École Supérieure Militaire (ESM), on 4 December 1991, to form a military commission with the directive “to further study and respond to the question: What must be done in order to defeat the enemy militarily, in the media, and politically”.12 The commission deliberated for two weeks before issuing a report, an entire copy of which is no longer extant. It initially had limited distribution, then on 21 September 1992 Déogratias Nsabimana, chief of staff, sent a copy to all sector commanders with the instruction to circulate it, emphasizing the parts about the “definition, identification and recruiting grounds of the enemy”.13 This document has often been pointed to as a kind of ‘smoking gun’ to implicate Habyarimana and his administration in a genocidal plan to eliminate the Tutsis, but as the ICTR noted, and ruled,

> It is common ground that defining the enemy is done by military authorities in many countries. Based on such a definition, the armed forces may adapt its strategies and order its resources. Consequently, the establishment of the Enemy Commission on 4 December 1991 was not in itself unusual or illegitimate, in particular in view of the fact that there had been hostilities on Rwandan territory

---

10 “Increasingly, innocent Tutsi civilians became the target of vicious attacks by Hutu *Interahamwe* militias, often assisted by Presidential Guard elements. . . . beginning in early 1992, the PG became heavily involved in the recruitment of *Interahamwe* . . . [and] by late 1993 an estimated 50,000 had received military and political training in the Mutara camps. By then the PG had become so thoroughly politicized, regionalised, and indeed ‘clanicised’ that it could best be described as a military extension of Habyarimana’s household, a kind of neo-patrimonial inner circle held together by regional and kinship ties. It is easy to see . . . why the PG emerged as a key participant in the massacre of moderate Hutu politicians and Tutsi civilians, why the tensions between the PG and the regular army erupted into bitter confrontations in the wake of the air crash, and why the strongest opposition to the Arusha accords came from the upper ranks of the PG” (Lemarchand, 1994: 600).

11 This may be explained by the fact that he was the highest ranking officer present.

12 *The Prosecutor v. Théoneste Bagosora et al.*, Case No. ICTR-98-41-T. Aloys Ntabakuze and Anatole Nsengiyumva were members

13 Ibid.
since the RPF invasion on 1 October 1990. . . . [It] is therefore difficult to conclude . . . [there] is sufficient evidence of a conspiracy within the Commission around late 1991 to exterminate the Tutsi ethnic group.\footnote{Ibid.}

To this finding the ICTR said that there was no evidence supporting the idea that an individual or a group of extremists within the commission “imposed their view on the other members or exercised a particular influence on the Commission’s conclusions”\footnote{Ibid.}.

However, a word of caution regarding the members of the commission’s ten members is in order, since many of them have been implicated in genocide.

**Accused:** Col. Théoneste Bagosora (found guilty of masterminding the genocide, sentenced to life); Col. Anatole Nsengiyumva (guilty of genocide); Maj. Aloys Ntabakuze (guilty of genocide).

**Deceased:** Col. Déogratias Nsabimana (died in Habyarimana’s plane explosion); Col. Pontien Hakizimana (deceased, but in June 1992 was retired by Habyarimana because of his extremism); Maj. Juvenal Bahufite (deceased, continued the war against the RPF, after it victory, from inside Zaire).

**At Liberty:** Col. Marcel Gatsinzi\footnote{Hirondelle (2004d), “Dallaire named General Marcel Gatsinzi and General Leonidas Rusatira as among those who wanted a peaceful resolution of the conflict that pitted the army against the RPF.”} (joined the victorious RPF in August ’94 and became Minister of Defense); Colonel Félicien Muberuka\footnote{Muberuka repeatedly testified at the ICTR that “the Army and the authorities had tried to stop the killing but were unable to do so, and that there was no plan or intention to exterminate the Tutsis”. ICTR CASE No. ICTR-98-44-T, 30 October, 2008, The Prosecutor v. Joseph Nzirorera.} (at liberty), Major Pierre Karangwa (accused of genocide, Dutch citizen since 2004).

**Missing:** Maj. Augustin Cyiza (missing April 2003), former Vice-president of the Rwandan Supreme Court and human rights advocate of considerable standing.

It is a strange mix for a military working committee, of Hutu extremists and Hutus who defected to the RPF.
The Church at the End of 1991

In December, the Bishop of Kabgaye, Mgr Thaddée Nsengiyumva issued a pastoral letter titled “Let’s Convert and live Together in Peace”, which was critical of the Church’s reticence in the face of the important social matters racking the country, and went as far as calling the Church corrupt because of its collusion with Habyarimana’s regime while neglecting the plight of the peasant-farmers. The letter also addressed the war and the refugee problem; in Nsengiyumva’s estimation there was no reason to be engaged in war; the refugee problem could be reasonably solved and that would put an end to the RPF’s rationale for fighting. It was a bold missive, and put the Church in the middle of the fray, including the peasant-farmers’ demands in light of Habyarimana’s failed economic policies. The Church, from its beginnings in Rwanda, had been involved in the government’s development programs and strategies, but in the ‘80s it hadn’t kept pace with the socio-political developments, especially the people’s disillusionment with promised economic and political reforms, and had lost many of its faithful to lay organizations and NGOs, who wanted more say and more (immediate) action regarding these pressing issues. The Church was losing out, and Nsengiyumva wanted to bring it back to relevance. One of the most important changes in Rwanda since the beginning of the century was this beginning marginalization of the Church, and at its worst it failed not only to prevent the genocide, but to save the lives of the victims. The secularization of

---

19 43% of the population were illiterate; only 8% were in secondary school, and less than 1% in higher education. Only 3% of the population lived wholly within the cash economy, the biggest employer in the formal sector was the government. Most peasant-farmers were self-employed, few surviving on farming alone, being engaged in pursuits like brick-making, carpentry and sewing, and active in the parallel economy, if only occasionally, which included cross-border trade and barter, or smuggling, with neighbouring countries (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 1995, cited in Sellström and Wohlgemuth, 1996: 17).
Rwandan society revealed how superficial the Church’s moral impact had been.

The trust in the government had taken a hard hit, as well. Longman found in his research in Rwanda, from June 1992 to April 1993, that many Rwandans did not support the adoption of a multiparty system, because they did not consider it to represent a real change. In the view of many of the people I interviewed, the only substantial difference between the parties was in their geographic and ethnic bases of support, not in their programs. As one peasant near Butare stated, "This multipartyism doesn't say anything to me. It is for the rich. When you have nothing to eat, you cannot go into a party. [I will support] the party that helps me to live well."  

And even those people who, in principal, were in favor of multipartyism believed the ‘new’ opposition parties weren’t new, but would follow in the footsteps of Habyarimana’s regime if given the chance. This profound change in the people’s attitude toward authority was what had divorced them from the Church, as well. People had, since the ’59 revolution, been awakened to the dynamics of change regarding their position vis-à-vis the power structures; they were no longer captive to a relatively petrified patron-client closed system without the possibilities of change. And even if only 43% of the population could read and write, that was enough to increase awareness among the communities exponentially, and a cash economy had clued them into a competitive, wider world of trade and self-initiative. Literacy and a crude kind of capitalistic opening to economic independence (and risk taking) was dramatically changing the country and the way people saw their lives, even though they were still relatively poor.  

---

21 The majority of people watched the new competition among elites with growing alienation, since none of it seemed to have any connection with their lives. What rural Rwandans wanted was not more self-seeking politicians, but policies and programmes to alleviate their severe distress. What they got from their leaders was a proliferation of largely irrelevant new political groups and the insistence that the real predicament was the treachery of their Tutsi neighbours. The most significant consequences of the so-called democratization movement were profoundly
The people] began to speak their mind without regard for the legal consequences, and they no longer offered authority figures (whether inside or outside the government) the respect and deference to which they previously were accustomed. The authority of law in the country declined noticeably, with crime rates rising sharply and the public resorting increasingly to vigilante justice.\textsuperscript{22}

Though the war was destroying the agricultural economy (“the government had frozen the farmgate price of coffee at its 1989 level and was not allowed under the World Bank loan to transfer State resources to the currency equalization fund”),\textsuperscript{23} and farmers were destroying hundreds of thousands of coffee plants to make room for planning food crops,\textsuperscript{24} the regime was not simply a predator, and did have some successes, albeit too little too late. Habyarimana persisted in trying to develop areas of the infrastructure. He failed in an attempt to establish an air link with Egypt, but succeeded in signing an agreement for doctors and medical technicians from Egypt to help manage a new, high-tech hospital in Kigali constructed by the Saudis, which had been unutilized because Rwanda had no able personnel to manage it.\textsuperscript{25} The president was also able to get funding from various sources to rehabilitate the telephone system and improve transport, to increase communications and power projects, such as the hydroelectric dam at Rusumo and a petrol pipeline connection from Dar es Salaam to Mwanza, and to secure a Kuwait loan to finance the Ngororero-Mukamira portion of Gitarama-Mukamira road. With few natural resources, and the national economy dependent on coffee and tea exports,

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{23} Chossudovsky, 1995: n.p.
\textsuperscript{24} “In June 1992, a second devaluation was ordered by the IMF leading -- at the height of the civil war --... Because of over-cropping of coffee trees, there was increasingly less land available to produce food, but the peasantry was not able to easily switch back into food crops. The meagre cash income derived from coffee had been erased yet there was nothing to fall back on. The system of savings and loan cooperatives which provided credit to small farmers had also disintegrated” (Chossudovsky, 1995: n.p.).
\textsuperscript{25} Flaten, State Dept. Communiqué, 18-20 Feb 1992.
Habyarimana did manage to moderately build the manufacturing sector; starting from no industrial base, production\(^{26}\) had come to make up almost 16% of the GDP. Yet, through an endemic problem in the one-party structure that provided insulation of its bureaucrats, the economic system suffered: “the system of internal accounting controls was inadequate. . . significant weaknesses were identified including no segregation of duties, inadequate purchase procedures, and poor management of fixed assets,”\(^{27}\) and local coffee traders and their intermediaries, for instance, continued to appropriate large profits, to the detriment of the peasant-farmers. Similarly, the ASPAP (Agricultural Surveys and Policy Analysis Project)

had material instances of non-compliance with laws, regulations, and the Grant. . . commingled donor funds, made personal loans to employees, and incurred costs in excess of the 1988 budget. The fraud allegations involved questionable payments for petrol, stationery, auto repairs and loans to employees the ASPP account has been criminally charged and the Mission has agreed to recover all misappropriated funds from the Government of Rwanda. This investigation should result in a recovery of approximately $12,545. We recommend that the Director, USAID / Rwanda:

1.1 determine the allowability and recover, as appropriate, $51,831 of questioned costs from the Agricultural Surveys and Policy Analysis Project; and

1.2 determine the allowability and recover, as appropriate, $625,856 of unsupported costs from the Agricultural Surveys and Policy Analysis Project.\(^{28}\)

The IMF and the World Bank, as well, were pressuring Habyarimana to reduce government expenditures.

The State administrative apparatus was in disarray due to the civil war but also as a result of the austerity measures and sinking civil service salaries. . . . A situation which inevitably contributed to exacerbating the climate of generalised insecurity which had unfolded in 1992. . . . A report released in early 1994 also pointed to the total collapse of coffee production due to the war but also as a result of the failure

\(^{26}\) “. . . the most important sub-sectors comprised the production of beverages and food, detergents, textiles and agricultural tools, such as hoes and machetes” (Sellström and Wohlgemuth, 1996: 19.

\(^{27}\) Jarman, 1992: 2.

\(^{28}\) Ibid: 2-3.
of the State marketing system—Rwandex, the mixed enterprise responsible for processing and export of coffee, had become largely inoperative. . . . the World Bank . . . had ordered in 1992 the privatisation of Rwanda's State enterprise Electrogaz. The proceeds of the privatisation were to be channelled towards debt servicing. . . . the Rwandan authorities were to receive in return . . . the modest sum of $39 million which could be spent freely on commodity imports. The privatisation, carried out at the height of the civil war, also included dismissals of personnel and an immediate hike in the price of electricity which further contributed to paralysing urban public services. A similar privatisation of RWANDATEL, the State telecommunications company under the Ministry of Transport and Communications, was implemented in September 1993. . . . the World Bank recommended scrapping more than half the country's public investment projects.29

The regime’s attempt to demonize the RPF was beginning to gain traction—people were starting to see the invasion as an attempt to reinstall the monarchy and responded violently; in Kibilira


These were not confined to rural areas. In Kigali, “arbitrary and random killings by soldiers became commonplace.”31 Leading the demonizing of the RPF, and stemming from the splitting up of the political system, was the new CDR party (Coalition pour la Défense de la République), started in March 1992 by Jean Bosco Barayagwiza and Hassan Ngeze32 (who published the notorious Ten Commandments of the Bahutu), and led by

29 Chossudovsky, op cit.
30 OAU, op. cit., also “On the occasion of particularly egregious abuses, such as the Bugesera massacre, they actually took diplomats to witness the events. When confronted by such evidence, the diplomats ordinarily intervened with the Rwandan government, discreetly in less important cases, more formally by a joint visit to the authorities in cases like that of Bugesera. These occasional protests sometimes resolved short-term problems but failed to affect Habyarimana’s overall policy. Donor nations regarded human rights abuses generally as the result of the war and they chose to work on ending the war rather than on addressing the violations as such.”
32 Ngeze and Barayagwiza were found guilty of genocide by the ICTR.
Martin Bucyana. It was the ‘extremist’ partner to the MRND, also based in the northwest of the country, and its youth militia, the Impuzamugambi, assisted in the genocide. Throughout this period, the newly-formed CDR, the military, and extremist elements of the MRND were threatening to make fierce reprisals against Habyarimana if he allowed certain concessions to the RPF during his negotiations to end the war, the CDR, particularly, being vehemently opposed to the BBTG.

Extremist army officers colluded with the circles surrounding Habyarimana and the Akazu to form secret societies and Latin American-style death squads known as ‘Amasasu’ (bullets) and the ‘Zero Network’.33

The amasasu34 was created early in 1992 within the Rwandan army by diehard officers so zealous in wanting to hunt down the RPF that they were soon handing out weapons to the CDR militias and MRND extremists, and assisting the death squads.35 “A reign of terror prevailed: murder, rape, harassment or imprisonment could befall any Tutsi at any time.”36 This descent into the ‘abyss’ of violence toward Tutsis in response to the RPF invasion, rather than a concerted effort at dialogue to bring the war to an end, is perhaps the greatest indictment of the Habyarimana administration (although the ‘administration’ at this point seems less and less a real, workable entity, fractured as it was by its different entities’ attitudes toward the RPF and the refugee problem and democratic reform), because it clearly became an irreversible step along the road to greater and greater acts of violence.

---

33 Caplan, 2007: 23.
34 Acronym for Alliance des Militaires Agacés par les Sécultaires Actes Sournois des Unaristes = Alliance of soldiers Provoked by the Age-old Deceitful Acts of the Unarists (‘Tutsis’). Amasasu were Rwandan soldiers led by Bagosora.
35 The death squads were formed as early as 1991. An exposé in the magazine Umurava revealed “the Zero Network’s intimate connections to Habyarimana and his responsibility for the death squads. Its leaders included three of Habyarimana’s brothers-in-law, his son-in-law, his personal secretary, the head of military intelligence, the commander of the Presidential Guard and Colonel Théoneste Bagosora, director of the defence ministry and a feared activist in the Hutu Power movement (OAU, op. cit.: 7.18).
36 OAU, ibid.
that went unpunished, thus setting the stage for an acceptance of violence on a level such as a genocidal event. In this regard, Lemarchand describes how

By 1992, the institutional apparatus of the genocide was already in place. It involved four distinctive levels of activity or sets of actors: a) akazu, which is the core group, consisting of Habyarimana’s immediate entourage, i.e. his wife (Agathe), his three brothers-in-law (Protée Zigiranyirazo Séraphin Rwabukumba Sagatwa and Eli Sagatwa), and a sprinkling of trusted advisors (most notably Joseph Nzirorera, Laurent Serubuga and Ildefonse Gashumba); b) rural organizers, numbering anywhere from two to three hundred, drawn from communal and prefectural cadres (préfets, sous-préfets, conseilleurs communaux, etc.); c) the militias (Interahamwe), estimated at 30,000, forming the ground-level operatives in charge of doing the actual killing; and d) the presidential guard, recruited exclusively among northerners and trained with a view to providing auxiliary slaughterhouse support to civilian death squads. Thus came into being an organizational structure ideally suited to the task at hand.37

According to Melvern,38 the Zero Network (Réseau Zéro) members were all akazu, and had a network of sympathizers in local authorities. Members allegedly included:

In the military:

- Bizimungu, Maj. Gen. Augustin – Exercised authority over the entire FAR, sentenced to 30 yrs. for genocide.
- Ndindiliyimana, Col. Augustin – Commander Gendarmerie, held ministerial posts at various times from 1973, acquitted of genocide, 2014
- Nsabimana, Déogratias– FAR Chief, died on board Habyarimana’s plane crash.
- Nsengiyumva, Lt. Col. Anatole – Commander FAR, private secretary and aide-de-camp to Habyarimana, guilty of genocide and sentenced to life.
- Ntabakuze, Maj.

38 Melvern, 2004: 27-29. Information concerning the above lists of members’ names came from: Christophe Mfizi, former director of ORINFOR 14 years (open letter published in Paris), who coined the term; Filip Reyntjens, Oct. 1992, announced in the Belgian Senate the death squad’s Bugesera Massacres of March (source was three insider informants); Bacre Waly Ndiaye, UN Special Rapporteur on Summary and Arbitrary Executions, stated a second power existed alongside official authorities; Johan Swinnen, Belgian ambassador, cabled Brussels (concerning Bugesera)—“commando group had been recruited from the national gendarmerie school, the École Nationale de la Gendarmerie in Ruhengeri”; Janvier Africa—said he got job with security services, Service Central de Renseignements, through Pascal Simbakangwa, who ran it: massacres of Bagogwe and of Tutsi in Bugesera took place in Simbakangwa’s house, Remera, Kigali. (see Article 19, 1997: 20-21).
And 76 civilian members, among whom were:
• Barayagwiza, Jean-Bosco – One of founder of CDR and RTLM, Director of Political Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, guilty of genocide and sentenced to 32 yrs., died in prison.
• Bizimana, Jean-Damascène – Sec. Gen. Foreign Ministry.
• Bizimungu, Casimir – Foreign Minister, central committee MRND, ministerial posts, signatory of 1991 cease-fire with RPF, acquitted of genocide 2011.
• Kabuga, Félicien – His son married Habyarimana, financier of the genocide, president of RTLM’s board of directors (declared RTLM as voice of Hutu Power). At large, but wanted for genocide.
• Mugesera, Leon – deported back to Rwanda from Canada 2012 to face genocide charges. Still on trial 2014.
• Ngirumpatse, Mathieu – President MRND, guilty of genocide, sentenced to life.
• Nzirorera, Joseph – Sec Gen MRND, Ministerial posts, accused of genocide and died while on trial 2010.
• Zigiranyirazo, Protais – Habyarimana’s brother-in-law, Préfet of Ruhengeri, wealthy businessman who “ran the country” with Sagatwa and Rwabukumba, acquitted of genocide 2009.
Death Squad members named by the above sources:
• Bagosora, Col. Théoneste – found guilty as mastermind of genocide and given life sentence.
• Nkundiye, Maj. Leonard – Commander Presidential Guard
• Nsengiyumva, Anatole – Head military intelligence
• Ntirivamuna, Alphonse – Habyarimana’s nephew, Director of Public Works and main leader of Death Squads.
• Rwabukumba, Séraphin – Habyarimana’s brother-in-law, CEO of import-export La Centrale, key figure in arms trade.
• Serubuga, Col. Laurent.
• Simbikangwa, Pascal.
• Zigiranyirazo, Protais.

---

39 Bagosora et al hearing, 2005, ICTR, case no. ICTR-98-41-T, 25 October:
Bagosora: I made acquaintance of Juvenal Habyarimana. I already saw him at primary school, but he was older than me. At secondary school, we did not study together. I really got to know him when I became an officer. So it was at the time that I became an officer that I got to know him. He was chief of general staff and would undertake inspections of all units, and he came to the unit in charge of where I worked. So wherever I worked, he would come to inspect. So I got to know him through his inspections of the units.
Question: And it is through these inspections that his wife becomes the godmother of your eldest child?
Bagosora: Well, you see, from ’64 to ’67, a chief who inspects at least once a year -- finally, I was able, let us say, to become a family friend in that period. And when I went to Kigali, I would visit him. I was still celibate -- a bachelor. And then when I got married, I'd also visit him, and we asked the Habyarimanas to be the godparents of our daughter, and they accepted.
Examples of the intimidation among political parties that was part of the escalating violence are given by two eyewitnesses below: the first by Ladislas Ntaganzwa, the head of a local branch of the MDR in Nyakizu, and leader of the youth wing Jeunesse Démocrate Républicaine (JDR); and the second example is from an anonymous informant:

In *kubohoza*, what they were doing was forcing people out of the MRND and into MDR. To give you examples of people who were treated this way, there was Ndekezi Thaddée who was a victim of *kubohoza*. He was beaten, but afterward he agreed to join the other party. And there was Mutagano Innocent who did not agree to change parties and was injured.

The MDR came to knock on the door. You had to come out. “Go to your room and bring out your MRND card.” And then they could beat you or force their way into your house. You would bring your card, and there were these poles on which they placed the card after stabbing a hole in it. They did the same thing to your MRND hat, impaled it and displayed it on a pole. The card represented the person who was the target of *kubohoza*. After being the target of *kubohoza*, the person was now visibly MDR.

During this time, when the MDR was fighting to establish its predominance, crime was increasing in Nyakizu, as elsewhere in Rwanda. It became difficult to tell whether crimes were political or not because criminals cleverly disguised their acts as politically motivated. Authorities did little to bring the disorder under control, and in March, some *Interahamwe* and soldiers from the presidential Guard were sent to Bugesera to attack some targets defined beforehand in order to destabilize areas and thereby sabotage the democratic process. General protests stepped up, mobilizing thousands of people, and

---

40 "Taking political recruits by force or by threat became known as *kubohoza*. The term was later used to refer to aggressive action against any political opponent" (HRW, op. cit.)

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.
Habyarimana eventually had to give in to the pressures, making an agreement with the opposition parties on 14 March to install a new government to negotiate a peace settlement with the RPF; improve internal security; review and evaluate performances of current and future political appointees and reshuffle or remove them as necessary; settle the refugee issue; press on with SAP; prepare for elections to be held by April 1993 at latest; and organize national debate on whether national convergence should be held—latter is opposed by MRND on grounds it might lead to undemocratic removal of current president and others in leadership capacities.

A new coalition government was sworn in on 7 April—elections slated for a year later, pending negotiations with the RPF (deemed a political party by the end of 1992)—with Habyarimana remaining president and head of the army, and his MRND keeping half the cabinet posts (Ministry of Defence, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Youth and Associate Movements, Ministry of Public Administration, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research, and Culture, and the Ministry of Family and Women’s Affairs), especially important among them the interior and defense ministries. The main opposition party, the MRD, garnered the valuable post of prime minister (going to and Dismas Nsengiyaremye), as well as two cabinet slots, while the PL and PSD were allotted six seats between them, and the small PDC managed to receive one post. Important for future hostilities, the CDR was excluded. The opposition parties immediately started acting to free the State from the MRND: the large number of State ‘assets’ formerly utilized by the MRND that had to be turned over included office equipment and supplies, buildings, and

---

43 Center for International Development and Conflict Management 2010.
44 Dorsey, 1994: 146.
45 “Two new ministries added to cabinet: Tourism and the Environment; and Women and the Family. First time cabinet contains two women” (ICTR, 2012: 29).
vehicles. This turnover was slow going and varied from region to region. Even more important was pushing MRND personnel out of government positions, and it took a year to pry about one third of the burgomaster positions out of the MRND’s control. After the MDR’s Agathe Uwilingiyimana became minister of primary and secondary education, she got rid of the nefarious quota system against the Tutsis and replaced it with one based on merit; the regime’s response was to send thugs to her home to beat her (this was to be a tragic adumbration of her assassination 7 April 1994 ordered by the same instigators). The new parties celebrated their new status with public songs and dances, strangely mimicking the animations of their nemesis, Habyarimana. But, on one hand, their vicious and aggressive tactics—they “tolerated or even encouraged MRND supporters to assault members of the opposition or to burn and pillage their houses,” in order to place them in a bad light with the public—tolerated and encouraged violence, creating an escalating environment of violence that can be seen as helping pave the way for the 1994 genocidal event; especially marking this development was the militarization of the MRND’s Interahamwe youth wing. On the other hand, in an oddly contradictory development, the internal political shift that happened after the formation of the coalition government “produced agreement in the summer of 1992 to launch what would become a sustained

46 “In Bwakira commune, for example, sector leaders reported that in some places Habyarimana and the MRND would be chosen by only 50 percent of the voters,” and in some areas in the country, in retaliation for the abuse of office by the local MRND bureaucrats, people refused to pay taxes, took back land wrongly seized and apportioned for bad selfish development schemes, and refused to participate in umuganda (HRW, op cit.).

47 HRW, ibid.

48 “There was an assumption that the emergence of new political parties – the process simplistically equated with democratization – would curtail the attacks on innocent civilians. This proved naive. Unaccustomed freedom of association came perilously close to anarchy. Formal political democracy had to function in a society devoid of the culture of democracy. Disorder spread. In fact, assaults on civilians and political figures of all stripes increased sharply following the establishment of the coalition government in 1992, and continued until the genocide” (OAU, op. cit.: para 7.19).
process of political negotiations, the Arusha process”. 49 U.S. Ambassador Flaten gave the following impression of Habyarimana at this time, which reveals the president’s quandary with negotiations and his difficulty in bridging the political gap between the one-party state and democracy:

In a broader sense, President Habyarimana was a good listener and usually sought advice from me on many issues. At the time one of the RPF people went to the U.S. Embassy in Harare, Zimbabwe, and asked that would the Americans participate in the peace agreements and contribute to dialogue between the RPF and the Government. This was the beginning of the dialogue. It was the beginning of the negotiations which ultimately ended up in 1993. Subsequent discussions between the RPF and the Government took place in Gbadolite and Tanzania and the U.S. was not part of them. So I made a request through the Foreign minister to Habyarimana asking him whether he would welcome U.S. participation in the negotiations in getting a dialogue started and Habyarimana said yes. At one point Habyarimana was very troubled by the position taken by the hardliners, the position taken by his prime minister he had made a coalition with and also the position of his government. So I witnessed a president of a country caught in the middle. Habyarimana was talking to me about democracy and he said he had tried to make a democracy in MRND and that it didn't work. And I told him you can't make a democracy in one party. That was his scope of learning. So I told him that there was a need to form other political parties in the country.

On April 22nd, Habyarimana, appointed as the MRND candidate in the next presidential election, was forced to give up his military title and functions (after twenty-nine years as chief of staff of the army) in order to satisfy the law which forbids the military to hold political office. A month later, on May 10th, he announced that he was going to restructure the armed forces following a period of organized mutinies in Gisenyi, Kanombe, and Ruhengeri, which included looting, raping, stealing and massacring by troops who went out of control in fear of losing their livelihood if a peace agreement were to be concluded. The soldiers were incensed by Prime Minister Nsengiyaremye’s

49 Jones, 1997: 5
suggestion that after demobilization, the troops could do other jobs like “draining swamps”.

50 Habyarimana subsequently planned on retiring army and gendarmerie commanders (such as Col. Serubuga and Col. Pierre-Celestin Rwagafilita), and four other

50 Hirondelle, 2002a.
colonels. He tried to name Bagosora\textsuperscript{51} as Chief of Staff, but the opposition parties considered Bagosora unacceptable, and finally agreed to the more moderate Col. Nsabimana.

Two weeks later, the opposition parties met with the RPF in Belgium and Paris, from where they issued a joint statement saying that Habyarimana’s regime was racist and corrupt, and that he must vacate the presidency. They reached an agreement May 29\textsuperscript{th} to hold a peace conference to end the two years of civil war. Habyarimana asked U.S. Secretary Cohen during his trip to Rwand for help to persuade the opposition to moderate its language and criticism of him and the MRND, so that there could be more cooperation in the BBTG, and said he wanted to invite foreign observers to monitor the elections so they will be fair. This showed the fear and apparent weakness of Habyarimana vis-à-vis the RPF-opposition parties coalition. Cohen replied to the president that the right of refugees to return was non-negotiable to the RPF, and they also didn’t believe democracy was possible with Habyarimana at the helm of government. To which Habyarimana countered by saying that he had agreed to Prime Minister Nsengiyaremye chairing cabinet meetings, and that he had already affirmed his commitment to the right of return of refugees. His only reservation concerned the integration of the RPF into FAR, which he said was opposed by a large number of officers and troops, many of whom would be mothballed. When Cohen asked if there were any extremists in the president’s coterie that were fomenting violence, Habyarimana strongly denied it at first, then said that this was

\textsuperscript{51} Habyarimana’s relationship with Bagosora is hard to make out, but it seems that Bagosora ambitiously had his eye on the presidency, and that he had “the support of Habyarimana’s wife and her brothers and of his own younger brother, Pasteur Musabe [director African Continental Bank, one of main fundraisers for Akazu, good friend of Bagaragaza, murdered in Cameroon February 1999] who directed a large commercial bank, and was described by one insider as the most important civilian in the Akazu” (HRW, op. cit.).
the first time he had heard such an allegation and would need time to look into it, adding that any terrorism in the country was the work of the RPF. When questioned about the economy and international funding, the president replied that everything was under control save military expenses, which had ballooned out of control and expectations because the war had continued beyond predictions that it would end in 1991.52

France sold around $24 million worth of arms to the regime in the four years after the RPF invasion, much of which, along with arms from Egypt and South Africa, ended up in the hands of the militias. Figure 9 illustrates how fed up the populace was with

Figure 9: Habyarimana Buying Arms
Cartoon in Kanguka, 30 June 1992

Source: Wallis, 2014: 31

52 See Flaten’s State Dept. Communiqué, May 1992
53 Between 1990-1993, Rwanda bought $6 million in arms from Egypt through Crédit Lyonnais, and $86 million from South Africa, among others. Most of the arms were financed under the guise of the Structural Adjustment Program.
military spending, while they were unable to make ends meet. In the cartoon, Habyarimana is saying, “Your Excellency Mitterrand, can you lend me a lot of weapons and ammunition? I will pay you if I survive.” The People, standing behind a sign that reads ‘Innocents to be killed’, are saying, ‘Can we boil this ammunition to get some food on our tables for dinner? Aren’t they to exterminate us?! We will be the ones left to pay after Ikinani’s death”. France’s involvement in the war, besides supplying arms, was drawn attention to by an article in *La Libre Belgique* 2 February 1992 which revealed that Lt-Col. Chollet, the head of the French Military Assistance Mission to Rwanda, was “advising the Rwandan chief of staff in such tasks as drawing up daily battle plans, accompanying him around the country, and participating in daily meetings of the general staff,” and further substantiated in a letter from the Rwandan ministry of foreign affairs to French ambassador Martres, documenting the fact that Chollet “has just received unlimited power to direct all military operations in this war . . . our army is now run by a Frenchman”.

A cease-fire was signed in Arusha, Tanzania, June 1992, under OAU auspices. The Rwandan government and the RPF agreed to a neutral group of OAU military observers as monitors, and Rwanda guaranteed the right of refugees to return. The government cautiously accepted the idea of RPF forces integrating with the FAR, (which probably everyone believed has no chance of succeeding). Habyarimana, after the signing,

---

54 In the cartoon, Habyarimana is referred to as Ikinana. “Habyarimana declared his fame (*ikivugo*) as *Ikinana*. He adopted this designation as part of a praise-name that he bestowed upon himself: *Ikinani cyanantiye abagome n’abagambanyi*, meaning ‘The invincible one whom opponents and traitors failed to defeat.’ After Habyarimana allowed a multi-party system in the 1990s, . . . the media chose another meaning of the term *ikinani*: ‘tough, excessively difficult, and disrespectful of social norms,’ in order to ridicule him. They suggested that he was *kwivuga yirarira*—blowing his own trumpet (Mironko, 2004: 197-198, cited in Wallis, 2014: 31).

55 Wallis, *ibid.*
registered his frustration, “A few months ago I met with the parties here, and all the parties
denied having any contact with the enemy. And now they have signed with him. I no
longer understand”. The agreement of a return of many thousands of refugees to Rwanda
at this juncture, when there were over half a million internally displaced Rwandan citizens
fleeing the RPF’s advance is one of the insanities of the war that the RPF had brought
about, and which placed Habyarimana in an impossible position, increasingly on the
defensive to accept counter-defeating demands from the RPF, the opposition parties, the
hardliners (both inside and outside the akazu), and the Rwandan people. Meanwhile, a
significant percent of the population is starving and without homes; many destitute youths
are easily recruited into and begin to fill the ranks of the Interahamwe, who are no longer a
political-awareness youth wing, but a full-fledged agitation and fighting unit. It is
surprising that, as violence erupted and grew, and the various political parties jockeyed for
power, civil society was going through its own changes, as people came to believe that the
government was not going to do anything for their benefit.

The expansion of personal freedom for many people in Rwanda was linked less to
government reform than to their own action and organization in civil society. People
organized outside the state sphere in an increasing number of associations to pursue
their own interests. The political parties focused on the state and had very little link
to these organizations. In part because of this, they failed to build links with the
population. The changes that garnered the widest public support—the expansion of
press freedom, the end of umuganda and animation, the refusal to obey corrupt
officials—occurred not as a result of formal political movements but from actions
taken by individuals independently, often encouraged and empowered by
organizations that were not overtly political.

In this environment, a journalist asked Habyarimana point-blank what he thought about

56 Quoted in a U.S. State Dept. Communiqué, June 92.
being “libeled in newspapers, meetings, in taxis, and practically everywhere”. The
president’s disingenuous reply was,

I can do nothing about it. You journalists practice your trade, but should not
engage in insults. It is said that I have houses in Greece and Cyprus and Belgium.
_Le Soleil_ said that I have 25 million dollars in foreign banks. I want to tell you that
I have not one single brick in a foreign country. These people have no proof.58

Hounded by criticism, the Habyarimana regime tried to divert the population’s cynicism
that was distancing them from the regime by putting the blame on the opposition parties
for the breakdown in government and for other social ills. There is a fundamental problem
here of not being able to filter out Habyarimana’s motives: whether he was in touch with
or sincerely cared about the people, or whether he was caught up (perhaps even powerless)
in the politics of retaining power at any costs.59

After signing a cease-fire in July, and the first protocol of the Arusha Accords on
17 August,

Habyarimana declared on the radio that he would not permit negotiators to “lead
our country into an adventure it would not like.” Three days later, MRND and CDR
supporters killed dozens of Tutsi and members of parties opposed to Habyarimana
in the Kibuye massacre. During these weeks, the president was apparently
conducting private negotiations with the RPF through a Jesuit priest, seeking to
obtain assurance of an amnesty for himself in return for his resignation.60

It seems possible that this attempt to protect himself from future retaliations could have
something to do with the warning that the head of military intelligence had given him in
advance of the peace negotiations with the RPF, that “in the event of RPF advances, the

58 Quoted in a U.S. State Dept. Communiqué, op. cit.
59 Morrison et al, in _The Growth of the American Republic_, “describe how in that era ‘privilege controlled politics’,
and ‘the purchase of votes, the corruption of election officials, the bribing of legislatures, the lobbying of special bills,
and the flagrant disregard of laws’ threatened the very foundations of the country” (Wallis, op. cit.: 41).
60 HRW, op. cit. In a chillingly precise foreshadowing of the events to come twenty months later, the intelligence
officer said that in the event of RPF advances, the military would kill the political leaders responsible for concessions
to the RPF, and the population would massacre the Tutsi before fleeing the country.
military would kill the political leaders responsible for concessions to the RPF and the population would massacre the Tutsi before fleeing the country”.\textsuperscript{61} In the same month, James Gasana, then Minister of Defence, wrote a letter to President Habyarimana on 26 July 1992 and informed him that senior officers were members of the AMASASU\textsuperscript{62} and that he was receiving insulting phone calls from them. Gasana fled Rwanda a few months later in fear of his life due to AMASASU death threats.

At any rate, the military had become another serious player in the contest with the RPF and the advent of the BBTG. Habyarimana’s attempt to implement what he called a policy of \textit{équilibre},\textsuperscript{63} to reduce conflict and encourage his key ideas of peace and unity among the population, had dissipated in the environment of competition among the power holders and seekers. The country was on the verge of bankruptcy, and food aid was brought in through Tanzania and Burundi. From the first signing of the Accords in August ’92 until the final settlement in August ’93, both sides in the conflict recruited and trained forces and bought arms while Habyarimana and the RPF waffled back and forth on the issues of the refugee problem of a new constitution, and the RPF’s insertion into the government.

In September 1992, the second Arusha protocol on BBTG institutions was discussed.


\textsuperscript{62} “Alliance des Militaires Agacés par les Séculaires Actes Sourdons des Unaristes” [“alliance of soldiers irritated by the underhanded acts of those belonging to the UNAR party]. . . also a word in Kinyarwanda that means “bullets, or the report of a weapon which has been fired” (Prosecutor vs. Bagosora, Section 2.8, Para 544). A clandestine Hutu extremist group formed to incite ethnic division and violence.

\textsuperscript{63} See Kellow & Steeves, 1996: 204.
The RPF calls for the resignation of the present coalition government, including the civil service. It also proposes a national reconciliation committee of ten members with full executive and legislative powers; a prime minister and vice-prime minister filled by the RPF; a defense minister would come from either the MRND or the RPF; the committee would come to power within three months; refugees would be allowed to return within six months; elections would be held once this was accomplished. This proposal was rejected out of hand by the Rwandan government. The RPF countered by proposing a seven-member presidential council, which was also rejected. Talks then terminated and the N’Sele accord collapses. A joint military commission of RPF and Rwandan military brass meet in Addis Ababa, but the talks stalled over the issue of integrating military forces and of disarmament.64

Aid continued to be allocated to the Rwanda government; food aid from the International Development Agency in cooperation with the UN Development Program, and from the World Food Program, all amounting to about $38 million. In addition, there was $5.6 from Belgium to help with the SAP, and $10 million from the U.S. for an NGO project. In addition, as part of the ongoing separation of the MRND from the State apparatus, the party/regime handed over all the State assets it had, which amounted to credits of about $36 million, and around $12.5 million worth of property holdings. Without continued aid from abroad, the government would have collapsed. At this point Habyarimana was at loose ends; the revenues from rents on imports/exports and the money from foreign loans that he had disbursed in order to keep in power, had largely dried up because of the costs and effects of the war, and the failed economy. As Habyarimana failed to bring on board the opposition parties against the RPF, the extremists in the MRND created the Coalition for the Defence of the Republic (CDR) at the end of September in a push to rally Hutus around a blatant racist agenda.

64 Dorsey, op. cit.: 155-56.
On October 30th, the second part of the Arusha Accords was signed by the RPF and the Rwandan government. The Protocol of Agreement on Power-Sharing in the Accords assigned the political parties the main responsibility for setting up the BBTG. This represented “a test of good faith with respect to their willingness to implement faithfully all the commitments under the timetable they had drawn up by mutual agreement with the United Nations”.65 This hope was shattered two weeks later, when Habyarimana renounced the agreements in his “scrap of paper” announcement (a week after that the MRND propagandist Léon Mugesera, MRND vice-chairman for Gisenyi prefecture, in a famous speech, invited his fellow party members to engage in mayhem and extermination against Tutsi and Hutu opposed to the MRND).67 It is telling that Habyarimana did not denounce Mugesera’s incitement.

---


66 Habyarimana’s referral to a ‘scrap of paper’ echoes the common phrase “not worth the paper it’s written on”, and is an understandable comment on the Arusha Accords vis-à-vis his well-founded mistrust of the RPF and of the opposition parties’ representatives at Arusha. Additionally, written documents had not existed in Rwanda before the early 1990s, after which period barely a third of the population reached literacy by the time of Habyarimana’s presidency. So, there was a broad mistrust of the ‘abstract’ nature of written agreements versus the reality on the ground, which was often enough considerably at variance. An illuminating parallel to this Rwandan case is the example Andrew Pettegree (The Invention of News, 2014: 22) gives where the medieval Church was “in the forefront in the transition from a culture where inherited wisdom was preserved by memory to one of written record. . . . lay folk were not always prepared to concede that verbal reports were any less authoritative than, as they put it, ‘words written on animal skins’”. Finally, but perhaps most important, Rwandans generally, but the Tutsi elite especially, were considered practiced in the art of dissembling the truth, and the RPF being composed mostly of Tutsis, Habyarimana would have probably ‘expected’ them to lie, in one way or another. And not without reason: they did infiltrate the government and its political parties, while secretly stashing arms in the building they occupied in Kigali during the wait for the BBTG to be put in place, and engaged in acts of political and military sabotage. Expressly, Habyarimana and others knew the RPF invasion was to seize power and not to ‘dislodge a dictator and instill democracy’. This is not to excuse Habyarimana’s acquiescence to instances of the use of violence against civilians, but to illustrate that the phrase ‘scrap of paper’ is grounded in several aspects of reality that have nothing to do with the mistaken belief held by most writers on Rwanda that Habyarimana’s statement showed disdain for a peaceful resolution of the war. Also see Spearman’s communiqué to U.S. State Dept., 26 Oct. ‘90, where Habyarimana is quoted as saying, “Words and declarations mean nothing if the ceasefire cannot be made to hold”, as well as Habyarimana’s address at an MRND rally, 16 November 1992: “The MRND supports the negotiations and I personally support them, to bring us to real peace. Papers will not bring peace on their own. Peace is what you feel in your heart. . . . their [opposition parties] spokesperson in Arusha should not play about and bring us papers that he confuses with peace. Are papers synonymous with peace? . . . I personally support the negotiations so that they can bring us real peace. But peace is not confused with papers.”

67 HRW, 1999a.
During a long meeting with US Representatives in November, Kagame talked of the difficulty in trying to resolve the problem of integrating the RPF forces into the government’s army during the transition period, complaining the government wanted a 15:1 ratio, which left his troops in too vulnerable a position within the completely Hutu FAR military; the ethnic conflict permeates everything whether anyone wants to admit it or not.

Kagame said that he expects to remain in the military following the signing of a peace agreement. While he claims to want to keep the military apolitical, he is also interested in the possibility of a political career. Kagame stated that he would like to return to Ft. Leavenworth through the IMET program as a Rwandan officer and complete the army command and staff course.68

Habyarimana keeps close ties to Mobutu, writing to thank him for moderating the peace negotiations at Arusha, calling him “My Very Dear Brother”, and asking for help in convincing the RPF to accept the Accords’ institutional framework and go along with the democratic process, which is on track to having elections in the near future. At an MRND rally held in Ruhengeri on the 16th of November, Habyarimana reaffirmed that the people’s interests were paramount and that the negotiations in Arusha were being conducted on their behalf, and not for party purposes. This speech is when he describes the importance of action over the written promises that have gotten nowhere:

“The papers will not bring peace on their own. Peace is what you feel in your heart. [Our country’s representative at the Accords] should not play about. . . . he should not tell stories . . . and bring us papers that he confuses with peace. Are papers synonymous with peace?”69

He urges the local cadres to become more involved:

68 U.S. Embassy, Kigali, communiqué to State Dept., November 1992. This statement should also make clear his meaning when referring earlier to the peace agreement as a worthless scrap of paper.

69 ICTR document Exhibit No. DN 248, “Speech by President Juvenal Habyarimana at MRND Rally Held in Ruhengeri on 16 November 1992
I ask the officials of our party in all the prefectures to get closer to the members of cellule committees—all our supporters at the basic level and farmers/stockbreeders—in order to discuss with them. I usually say that a tree is not made up of branches alone. A tree rather has as a basic element, firm roots which nourish it. Farmers and stockbreeders constitute the roots of our party. Get closer to them and talk with them so as to find out their ideas and their problems.\textsuperscript{70}

He separates himself from the opposition parties in the coalition government by inveighing against them for not investigating the murders in Bugesera and Nyabikenke, for not proving that the \textit{Interahamwe} caused the trouble in Gitarama or Kibuye, and alleging that they are conducting some kind of cover-up. He also tries to smooth over the problem of IDPs by enjoining each Rwandan to take charge of a displaced child during the remainder of the war. The president then appeals to the traders to come up with materials to make uniforms for the \textit{Interahamwe}; this, and the following excerpt from his speech, demonstrates Habyarimana’s concept of the \textit{Interahamwe} as a quasi-military force, as he refers to them as ‘soldiers’:

When the right time comes, I will send you a message. I will ask the \textit{Interahamwe} to accompany me. I was told that during my campaign my soldiers will accompany me so as to campaign for me. Is there a problem if they do this? However, I know that it is mostly the \textit{Interahamwe} who will do my campaign because I am with them.\textsuperscript{71}

Also at the MRND Ruhengeri rally was Dr. Casimir Bizimungu,\textsuperscript{72} from the Central Committee of the MRND. A top official in the administration and close to Habyarimana, he was Minister of Health then Minister of Foreign Affairs 1987-1993, and trusted as a government signatory of the 1991 cease-fire with the RPF. In his introduction to

\textsuperscript{70} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{72} Acquitted of genocide by the ICTR in 2011.
Habyarimana’s speech, he exhorted the *Interahamwe* to “refrain from all types of anti-democratic acts and ideas. We are in difficult times, times requiring wisdom and discernment, tolerance, peaceful co-existence, even if we have divergent views.”73 Another speaker, a woman *militante*, described the gains made by women in the regime rendered possible by the MRND:

> We, the agro-breeders have hitherto set up *tontines*74 to promote the welfare of our families. We have learned to operate savings accounts with the insured *Banques populaires*, in order to safeguard our assets. We have learned about family planning through regular training at the IGA75 centres—previously, women thought that their sole duty was to procreate continuously. Furthermore, Rwandan women have never been excluded from the various public institutions. Thanks to the gains made by our Movement, Rwandan women even occupy ministerial posts. We shall remain united, we have experienced reforms, we shall overcome, we the women of Rwanda. If we do not pay attention and if we continue to destroy each other and to be sidetracked, we risk losing everything.76

This speech provides a micro-look into certain aspects of some women’s lives at the time, but her testimony is more a reflection of the people’s communal initiatives and ingenuity than of the government’s paltry involvement, and is also a deceptive segue from the forced *animation* praises, smokescreens for the government’s ineptitude (one example being the fact that AIDS had reached epidemic proportions). In the midst of war these speeches at the MRND rally evade the most important problems of the times. For the next two and a half months, Arusha protocols are deliberated but Habyarimana rejects the one regulating transitional institutions. His refusal set off demonstrations, which have become regular

73 ICTR document, ibid.
74 A micro-finance system that allows everyone in a trusted group to invest to increase revenues and obtain credit. Basically a revolving pot of money, members pay an equal amount each day or month, and a portion of the collected funds is disbursed to an individual to finance an enterprise, who then pays back the loan at very low interest. Tontines had long existed under the mutual aid form called *ubudehe*. *Inter Press Service*, 4 August, 2014.
75 Income-generating activities
76 Ibid.
reactions to his failure to make progress toward peace and the BBTG. In the meantime, the Church continued actions to try and stop the war, and Mgr. Vincent Nsengiyumva continued to paint the regime in positive strokes, presenting Habyarimana as an “advocate of good government, democracy, and national unity, rather than denouncing his complicity in ethnic violence and corruption and his resistance to democratic developments”, illustrating the distance between the hierarchy and priests and the lay leaders on the ground.

**Opposition Parties Form Coalition**

At the beginning of 1993, the three major opposition parties, the MDR, PSD and PL formed a coalition called the Forces Démocratique du Changement (FDC). In response, the MRND, the CDR and three small parties joined to form the Alliance pour le Renforcement de la Démocratie (ARD), and were blamed for most of the violence around the country. On 9 January 1993 a compromise was reached between the various parties and the RPF, and they signed a power-sharing agreement for the transitional government: the agreement allotted six cabinet posts, including the presidency, to the ruling MRND, five to the RPF, four to the opposition MDR, and the remaining seven to three other opposition parties. This gave the RPF and the opposition parties together a two-thirds majority in the 22-member cabinet, which was sufficient to override any MRND votes. Under the agreement, the Assembly, which was to be divided among the country’s 17 registered political parties, would also effectively be controlled by the RPF and the opposition. The openly anti-Tutsi CDR has been exclude from the new government. The agreement

---

scheduled local elections to be held six months after the end of the transitional period, which by most estimates should last for only one year; however nine Hutu MRND ministers issued a statement saying the MRND should not accept minority role assigned to it under the accord. In addition, in an official statement the MRND accused Rwanda's Foreign Minister of treason for signing an agreement with the RPF. Meanwhile, the moderate elements in the Hutu power structure lobbied for a more comprehensive settlement with the RPF.78

78 See Dorsey, op. cit.; 159.
RPF Violates Cease-Fire Agreement

Only a month later, the major turning point in the 1990-1994 war period was the RPF’s violation of the seven-month-old cease-fire on 8 February 1993, when it attacked in strength along the northern front in the region of Byumba, barely 25 miles from Kigali, and doubling the area they controlled. The opposition parties that had been negotiating with the RPF in good faith were suddenly thrown back on their heels as they realized their hopes and efforts for a real outcome in establishing peace followed by the installation of a BBTG, with their parties garnering a larger part of the ministries than the MRND was being undone: the RPF, in this act of attempting to grab power by sheer force of arms, proved that they had only been using the opposition parties in order to weaken and defeat the MRND, their only block to a successful overthrow of the government. The naked aims and aggression of the RPF suddenly revealed, the opposition parties were left in temporary disarray, split between those who were still willing to try to work with the RPF, and those more willing to join the MRND in a bid to stop the RPF from over-running the country. Why did the RPF violate the Accords and attack, when the Accords were successfully moving to a BBTG that included them as an authentic political entity and significant part of the military? There are (at least) three aspects of the RPF’s actions to be considered at this juncture: 1) The supplies to the RPF soldiers were not going to last forever, and Habyarimana’s waffling on the Accords was, in some large degree, founded on the hope that he could wait out the RPF until they ran so low on arms and food, that they couldn’t
ensue the war; this coupled with the fact that 2) Museveni couldn’t indefinitely hide his support for the RPF from the international community and his citizens, allowing the RPF supply lines from Uganda while they blocked commercial transport from Rwanda through Uganda to Kenya—the pressure on Museveni translated to pressure on the RPF; 3) the RPF leadership, after three years of consideration of and negotiations concerning the BBTG, had been forced to realistically face the unacceptable proposition that they would not be in a controlling position within the government over time; being a traditionally disliked minority group, who had made war on the country for three years, they would not gain votes or representation by appointment in the administration, either nationally or locally. Probably none of the above three elements was entertained by the RPF when they made the decision to invade the country, because they were naively convinced that they could overwhelm FAR’s weak and unmotivated resistance, and that the Rwandan people would welcome them as liberators, freeing them from the tyranny of Habyarimana’s regime. As the Rwandan populace fled in terror from the advancing RPF forces, the RPF leadership had slowly been forced to acknowledge that they were seen as interlopers (which, in fact, they were—their knowledge of Rwanda was almost nonexistent), and thus they would have to, once in government, win the hearts and minds of the population (no small feat considering their hostilities had displaced one-eighth of the Rwandan people, creating a million internal refugees). Keeping the three aspects above in mind, it is possible to see the reasoning behind the RPF’s resumption of the war, but their total disregard for the deadly repercussions that could follow the Hutu’s perception that they were bent on conquering the country and restoring Tutsi hegemony is inexcusable.
Clearly, the shift of political allegiances within the oppositional forces in Rwanda was a result that the RPF must have considered before their breaking the cease-fire. The French government was particularly upset. They had concluded long before that the RPF might win militarily but [could not win] politically. The government could not win militarily, though it might command the numbers to win politically. A negotiated settlement was the best way for France to salvage its interests in Rwanda and it deployed 400 troops in the two weeks after the RPF resurgence. The UN Security Council did not place the conflict on its agenda until a month after the RPF resumed hostilities. On March 19, the RPF, after condemnation by the international community and the Rwandan political parties, and not willing to engage the French troops, stopped their offensive and retreated from almost all the new territory it had conquered, while the territory they abandoned was named a de-militarized zone, patrolled by the UN. Following these threatening events, there was a call for a civilian self-defense program, which Habyarimana seconded, but there was no immediate result.

After the RPF’s violation of the cease-fire, Habyarimana sent a letter to the OAU on 14 February, hoping to engage their sympathies and support:

Despite the violation of the ceasefire by the Rwandan Patriotic Front and the disarray in the entire country, the Rwandan people still prefer negotiations to confrontation by arms to achieve the so much sought-after peace. That is why I urge you, Sir, to intervene again with the Rwandan Patriotic Front to enjoin it to return, without delay, to former military positions recognized by the Group of Neutral Military Observers to stop the war for good and to pursue the last leg of peace negotiations. If the Rwandan Patriotic Front has any demands to make of the Government of Rwanda, it should do so through negotiations in the same manner as the Government of Rwanda proceeds on issues in the Arusha Accords on the points which it believes are against the democratic aspirations of the Rwandan

---

1 OAU, op. cit.: para 8.1.  
2 HRW, 2006.
people.
The Government of Rwanda has done everything to deal ruthlessly with those who had caused the upheavals and atrocities in the North-East of the country. . . . You would be misinformed, Sir, if I did not tell you that all these social tensions that have finally degenerated into ethnic violence, that we have, moreover, put under control, are actually as a direct result of the war triggered in October 1990. You would easily appreciate that all of that can actually reawaken rancor. I am convinced that only negotiations between the Government of Rwanda and the Rwandan Patriotic Front can restore peace in Rwanda and set everyone’s mind at rest.
The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, bearer of this letter, will tell you in detail how devastated a country Rwanda is and the Rwandan Government’s determination to sign, without delay, the Peace Accord which is the only guarantee for national reconciliation and economic reconstruction of the country. . . . In that regard, I believe that the neutral Political and Military Commission should meet quickly to determine the responsibilities of the Organization of African Unity and the Government of Rwanda. 3

Habyarimana also sent letters to Germany, the U.S., and Nigeria, asking for their support, saying that he wanted to implement the Accords. This was followed in March by a letter to Boutros-Boutros Ghali, Secretary-General of the UN, asking for neutral observes to monitor the border between Uganda and Rwanda, and complaining about the RPF violating the ceasefire agreement of 12 July 1992, but emphasizes that Habyarimana wanted the coming cease-fire talks on 16 March 1993 to go well. At the same time he wrote to Bernard Kouchner, the Health Minister in Paris, professing his belief that the ultimate solution to the problem of the displaced persons is the restoration of peace in the country. That is why the path of negotiations between the Rwandan Government and the Rwandan Patriotic Front should be given precedence. International pressure to tame the intransigence of the Rwandan Patriotic Front is expected. 4

---

3 Exhibit No. DNZ486, Case No. ICTR-98-44-T.

475
In coordination with these appeals, Habyarimana held an unsuccessful conference with members\(^5\) of the MDR, PSD, and PL, as well as some lesser parties. But he persevered in his campaign to win back disaffected Hutu. Powerholders elsewhere on the continent, dependent upon French support, were watching the outcome carefully and were considering the usefulness of a continuing French alliance according to the result. France’s Africa section also championed Rwanda in order to have a secure base from which to manage a potential crises in Zaire; a January 1993 report by the French Treasury concluded that “with the risks of Zaire disintegrating, Rwanda remains an interesting pole of political and economic influence in the region.”\(^6\) In this regard, Mitterrand wrote to Habyarimana on 18 January, worried about continued military assistance to him in light of the Arusha Accords. Mitterrand was also concerned about Habyarimana’s regime’s human rights violations, but didn’t want to risk losing the president’s loyalty to France, so the French ambassador, Martres, ignored the massacres and

a supporter within the French Foreign Ministry wrote soon after the International Commission published its report that the Habyarimana regime was ‘rather respectful of human rights and on the whole concerned about good administration,’ and

in a shocking echo of extremist Hutu propaganda, this author explained that the RPF, and not Habyarimana, should be blamed for the massacres of the Tutsi, because their agents (provocateurs) had infiltrated and caused the Bugesera massacre as well as the slaughter of the Bagogwe in 1991.\(^7\)

---

\(^5\) “Donat Murego of the MDR and Stanislas Mbonampeka of the PL, both already hostile to the elected presidents of their respective parties and both major actors in leading segments of their parties into an alliance with Habyarimana by the end of the year. . . . By January 1992 Murego had become increasingly identified with Hutu Power. Murego warned that the Interahamwe were going to launch a civil war in which they would exploit hostility against the Belgians. He blamed Habyarimana, the businessman Kabuga, MRND president Ngirumpatse and propagandist Nahimana for fostering this anger against the Belgians” (HRW, op. cit.).


\(^7\) HRW, op. cit. The U.S., on the other hand, showed increasing concern with human rights abuses in Rwanda. “Following publication of the report of the international commission in March, the State Department announced it
Even after the genocide, Martres recalled that Habyarimana
gave the impression of a man of great morality. President Habyarimana prayed
regularly and went to mass regularly. . . generally, the image President
Habyarimana presented to President Mitterrand was very favourable.\(^8\)

Yet Martres well knew the Rwandan reality. Christophe Mfizi, a former Habyarimana
associate, who in 1992 exposed the existence of the Zero Network, personally briefed
Martres on the details.\(^9\) Nothing changed Martres' views. This unquestioning support of the
regime by French officials sent the conspirators the signal that they could get away with
just about anything.

It should be considered at this point, with France’s (and international) concern for
human rights abuses, that the violation of human rights occurring in Rwanda was to some
degree attributable to the judicial systems susceptibility to manipulation by the
government.

Although the Constitution provides for an independent judiciary, it also makes the
judicial system dependent on the executive branch and gives the President ultimate
authority to appoint and dismiss judges. Also, the judicial system is hampered by
the low educational level of the vast majority of judicial officials, the lack of
material and equipment for the courts, and the absence of compiled jurisprudence. . .
controversy over the legality of the leadership and initial decisions of the newly
constituted Superior Council of Magistrates paralyzed the judicial system. In
addition, *Rwanda had no Minister of Justice during the first six months of 1993*

---

\(^{8}\) Interviews with Martres and Mfizi in *The Bloody Tricolour*, BBC Panorama, 28 August 1995, cited in
OAU, op. cit.

\(^{9}\) Ibid.
Marcel Debarge, the French Minister of Cooperation arrived in Kigali, in February, and espoused a common front against the RPF, which was endorsed by all the political parties. This ‘common front’, and the impulse to create a civil defense program, soon led to the creation of the Hutu Power environment. With the arrival of Hutu Power, kubohoza was used to enforce not just political loyalty but also ethnic solidarity. A politically active businessman declared, “When Hutu Power was installed here, everything changed. Anyone who was Tutsi or who did not speak the language of Hutu Power was the enemy.” By early 1994, MDR-Power claimed to be the only channel for Hutu to oppose the RPF.

Habyarimana soon made ‘consulting’ visits to Mobutu, and to Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo, to seek their council on how to maintain his presidency in the face of the problems he was facing. Following their advice, he contrived to split the two most powerful opposition parties, the MDR and the PL, into pro- and anti-government factions (that is, those against negotiating with the RPF, and those willing to negotiate), in order to polarize their members and confuse the public. Four months later, in mid-July, the MDR was divided into

a moderate group under Twagiramungu and into a reactionary Hutu Power group controlled by three men: DismasNsengiyaremye, Fro douald Karemera, and Donat Murego, . . . Hutu Power proponents, who at one time were strongly opposed to Habyarimana’s policies, later reversed course and threw their support behind him when they realized, after several talks with the RPF (behind Habyarimana’s back), that the RPF were already in a position to assume considerable power—by force or

---

10 U.S. Dept. of State, 1994b.
11 “Two important opposition parties split over the question of the desirability of continuing with efforts to implement the accords, while their anti-Arusha accord members formed a new coalition with Habyarimana’s MRND and the CDR. The coalition became known by its rallying cry ‘Hutu Power’ and its voice became the RTLM” (Des Forges, 2007: 45).
12 Nyakizu interview by Human Rights Watch/FIDH, October 20, 1995.
by the drawn-up peace accords—and, so, did not have to broker any deals with the parties in opposition to the MRND.\textsuperscript{13}

Justin Mugenzi, the leader and founder of the PL, who joined the cabinet as Minister of Commerce in 1993, told the ICTR about his adverse relationship with Habyarimana over almost 20 years. In 1975, Mugenzi had been jailed but acquitted in the murder of his wife, yet Habyarimana had kept him in prison for six more years because Mugenzi’s hateful in-laws were close to the president. Near the time Mugenzi was released, some soldiers under Habyarimana’s orders killed Mugenzi’s brother-in-law because he was suspected in taking part in a coup against the president. Mugenzi told the ICTR that he had started the PL party as a means to topple Habyarimana from power.\textsuperscript{14}

In the midst of war and political upheavals, Habyarimana and the government still had to pay attention to the economy enough to prevent the country from falling into complete disaster. Just before the RPF invasion, Habyarimana had appointed an advisory board to work on “management of imports, measures to spur economic performance, improvement in the transport sector, debt-management and use of food aid”,\textsuperscript{15} with the realization that Rwanda’s “numerous micro environments, Rwanda’s physical setting, creates demands that are difficult to meet via centralized, state-controlled marketing”.\textsuperscript{16} Pottier has given the following reasons why State intervention in regulating food markets hasn’t worked well:

\textsuperscript{13} Lemarchand, 1995: 9.  
\textsuperscript{14} Africa News Service, 2005.  
\textsuperscript{15} Pottier, 1993a: 5-6.  
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.
• the outlook for raising people’s cash levels remained too bleak for the government to be convinced that centrally controlled marketing is a worthwhile, cost-effective initiative.
• the diet of most Rwandans is bland and unconducive to the rapid incorporation of new foods.
• upwardly mobile individuals, politicians and planners included, have the means to procure food from areas of abundance whenever this should become necessary. . . they stand to gain very little from a sustained effort to improve food marketing in the interest of the entire nation.
• ensured access to international food aid makes it easy not to reform.
• need for on-farm production of seed, even though exceedingly difficult to achieve, makes the goal of effective state intervention a daunting task.
• the experience of the late 1960s may help explain why the Rwandan government in the 1980s was reluctant to increase its capacity for central intervention.
• an ideology which is non-egalitarian – For . . . centuries, Rwandan politics has been infused with an ideology which is non-egalitarian. Chacun pour soi is the motto. . . . The dominant view is that food security is, has always been and could remain, a strictly local issue, a personal affair anchored in patronage.17

And André has described how the above “processes of individualization and monetarisation of land rights engendered inequalities, resulting in marginalised access to land and the increased and rapid impoverishment of the population”,18 with distress sales being 67% of all land sales;

“the rapid loss of lands via this pauperization engendered the creation of a 'landless' class. Within the space of five years, the proportion of landless or near landless households increased from 29% in 1988 to 37% in 1993.19 Almost every family suffered a substantial reduction in income. By the early 1990s . . . 86% of the total population lived below the poverty line, putting Rwanda ahead of Bangladesh and Sudan, with the questionable distinction of having the highest poverty figure in the world.20

---

17 Ibid.
18 André, 2003: 171.
19 “The appalling conditions of poverty and resulting inequalities in 1990-1992 are described by Marysse et al (1995: 47) in the following terms: ‘In 1990, a 'rich' household (tenth decile) had 180 times as high a monetary income as that of a poor household. In 1992, the . . . rich household had an income 485 times higher. The rich household gained, in one day, the equivalent of the annual income of the poorest family! . . . 80% of the rural population thus sees their income degrading. There was not only an erosion of purchasing power, but also a more and more uneven distribution; only 20% of the population saw improvement in its living conditions.’” (cited in André, 2003: 171).
20 OAU, op. cit.
The government was grappling with these problems vis-à-vis the democratization process and the BBTG, and the power players among the political parties, who were constantly at odds over the question of how the coalition decided economic policy.

On 16 March, the Arusha peace talks resumed. Habyarimana gave a national speech one week later where he reaffirmed his ‘constant’ intent to “engage in serious and relentless talks free of any ulterior motives”\(^{21}\) with the ‘RPF-Inkotanyi’\(^{22}\). He acknowledged the one million internally displaced people, then added that it will be “increasingly more difficult to ensure their survival in the camps. . . the solution to their problem is their return to their homes, to their lands”, seemingly absolving the government of any responsibility owed to them. He belittled the UN commission’s critical appraisal of the human rights abuses and the attacks carried out on Tutsis in several communities, explaining that the ‘banditry’ was a product of the war, and that nothing of the kind had happened in his entire presidency up to the 1990 invasion. He also brought up the strong number of voices demanding that the youth wings be dismantled, particularly the ‘armed militias’, and encouraged the political parties to “take concrete measures to encourage all those youths, members of various political parties, to interact, tolerate one another and to cast out any temptation that they may have to engage in confrontations. . . They should all work together to make of our youth a nursery school of thought which, in our fledgling multi-party democracy, should shape our society and steer it towards progress”\(^{23}\).

He stressed that the multi-party process was advancing, that

\[\text{Sixteen political parties are operating. Each day, they contribute to building a society founded on plural ideas which, though variant, are nonetheless}\]

\(^{21}\) Habyarimana, 1993b.
\(^{22}\) Harkening back to Rwanda's militia tradition, RPF fighters also refer to themselves as the "Inkotanyi," or the "the indefatigable ones." (Mwakikagile, 2012: 239-40).
\(^{23}\) Habyarimana, ibid.
complementary and should ultimately usher in consensus-based national politics. . . multi-party democracy has become a solid building block in our democracy.\textsuperscript{24}

He then appealed to the various religious groups to uphold their role as peacemakers. He ended by reminding everyone how he had brought about a better socio-political system for everyone, first by the \textit{aggiornamento}, followed by the National Synthesis Commission, and the resulting shift from a single-party state to multi-party democracy.

The president was trying to drum up support for the upcoming limited election in March to replace burgomasters “removed for unsatisfactory performance or who had fled or resigned their posts as a result of \textit{kubohoza}\textsuperscript{25}”. He and his party weren’t very successful, winning only 16 of 40 posts, mostly in the north, and losing burgomasters in areas with no elections. The MDR took 18 posts, mostly in their central stronghold. Habyarimana and his MRND were facing competition for followers that they had never had to do and were threatened with losing their dominance of political life. The CDR accused Habyarimana of no longer being concerned with the nation’s interests, and called the cease-fire acceptance “an act of high treason”.\textsuperscript{26} Within the MRND, there had arisen the realization that Habyarimana’s role as president of the country was taking up all of his time, and that the MRND party’s needs required the efforts of a full-time leader, and Habyarimana was asked to step down. They replaced him with a former minister, Mathieu Ngirumpatse, a Hutu who was the same age as Habyarimana and had been similarly schooled in his youth, then had worked in the General Prosecutor’s Office as a deputy prosecutor. In 1973 Habyarimana appointed him ambassador to Ethiopia, followed by ambassadorship to

\textsuperscript{24} Habyarimana, ibid.

\textsuperscript{25} Practice by which the politicians forcibly recruit and attempt to hunt or at least destabilize local authorities (governor, mayors, municipal councilors) with which they are not favorable.

\textsuperscript{26} HRW, 1999a.
Germany. In 1985 he received his Ph.D. at the University of Strasbourg and was appointed as a diplomatic advisor in Habyarimana’s office. From there he moved to the directorship of the National Insurance Company (SONARWA), rising, finally, to the post of Minister of Justice. Before being nominated head of the MRND, he had been unanimously sought after for the post:

I was approached by representatives of different segments of the population, civil society, opposition political parties, the power in the person of the president and his family, churches and even diplomatic representations. They all asked me one thing: become President of the MRND.27

His value in the position seems to have been that he had an unimpeachable character, and was someone all sides in the Arusha negotiation process could trust because he had also remained outside politics, had good interactions with Tutsis, and good contacts within the religious community. Still, it was a dangerous post to occupy. He, himself, said, “I knew that the mission would be difficult. I ran the risk of being murdered. During this period, many political leaders paid with their lives. I was aware of that fact”.28 His work would prove to be a fruitless endeavor, as he confessed later,

I began my pilgrimage with each group, to spread the word. I tried to convince them! I explained that negotiation was the best way to achieve durable solutions and that it was in the interest of the people. . . . Eventually, I realized that my concerns were far from their own. That military force was stronger than words. The goal of keeping or having power was above all. Human life, the suffering of the people, had no meaning. . . . But also, from my experience, the real negotiations are not public. I did not accuse or humiliate anyone, at the risk of exacerbating tensions. I did not want to put myself first in line. I was looking for a just and lasting solution. I met the most senior leaders of the RPF, and Western ambassadors. I talked to the military. I had discussions with leaders of political parties, I saw all these people, all without exception in the utmost discretion. I realized that I was like in a theater, a dramatic play. I could neither punish nor

27 ICTR case profile of Ngirumpatse.
reward. I could not put pressure nor honor the commitments I had to take. I had no power.\textsuperscript{29}

Ngirumpatse’s words, however true, or not—he was found guilty of genocide by the ICTR and sentenced to life in prison—they show that multiple forces were arrayed around the peace process and the move to a BBTG, with the most powerful ones being against Arusha’s success. If the MRND nominated him as party leader, it could have only meant that they considered his prowess as a prosecutor the best to push their agenda forward. In light of the ICTR trial, Ngirumpatse came to embrace the Hutu Power cause, and despite (or because of) his feeling of being powerless, must have acted lethally against the Tutsis. Perhaps this one of many lessons (and tragic consequences) to be drawn from the effects of being in the poisonous atmosphere of the war and then the genocidal event after Habyarimana’s assassination, that people of a neutral nature become radicalized and slip into criminal mind sets and behaviors, without realizing it, even rationalizing it.

Ngirumpatse, for example, was thrown together in the MRND leadership with Édouard Karemera (vice-president), and Joseph Nzirorera (general secretary of the MRND), who were both put on trial with Ngirumpatse at the ICTR; Karemera was sentenced to life and Nzirorera died while on trial. The three MRND leaders had control of the Interahamwe, and were implicated in that group’s genocidal actions. Nzirorera,\textsuperscript{30} a civil engineer, was at Habyarimana’s side since 1973, had held two ministerial posts, and was also implicated in the Bagogwe murders. Karemera was trained as a lawyer, and had been Minister of

\textsuperscript{29} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{30} Robinson (Peter Robinson.com: Nzirorera Opening Statement – ICTR) states that “On 30 December 1991, he [Nzirorera] left government when his political party, the MRND, relinquished a number of ministries under the multiparty system inaugurated by the Constitution of 10 June 1991. After 31 December 1991, Mr. Nzirorera was never again a member of the government”. There follows the question, then, of why he would take the helm, two years later, of the MRND.
Institutional Relations. The fact that the three most powerful men in the MRND in early 1993 would all be involved in genocidal acts a year later, suggests the extremist inclination of the party before the April 1994 massacres. Habyarimana’s growing distance from and tense relations with the MRND bring up the question of his exact position vis-à-vis the extremists in the party.

**RTLM**

The extremists found a voice for their ethnic/racist Hutu Power beliefs on 8 April, when they started their own radio station, RTLM (Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines), in response to the opposition parties’ insistence on the government’s Radio Rwanda taking a different course. In the same regard, Ferdinand Nahimana, an MRND devotee and mouthpiece (for 14 years, Nahimana had written and published articles that encouraged the Hutus to rise up against the Tutsis, as well as against moderate Hutus, and praised the supremacy of the northern Hutus), was removed from his influential post at ORINFOR, where he had supervised Radio Rwanda, and was replaced some months later by the opposition party member Jean-Marie Vianney Higiro, who was instructed to guide the radio in a nonpartisan stance. As for RTLM, 80% of the founders were from only three prefectures in the north, the majority from Habyarimana’s Gisenyi and Ruhengeri region. Félicien Kabuga, a prosperous businessman, was one of the biggest sponsors of the station, along with Basabose, Musabe, Ntilivamunda, and Rwabukumba. When

---

31 Nahimana was found guilty by the ICTR of inciting genocide through RTLM, and sentenced to 30 years.  
32 Kabuga also bankrolled the Interahamwe and the purchase of arms for the militia.  
33 Businessman, and one of the founders, whose daughter was married to a son of President Habyarimana.  
34 CEO of BACAR, Bagosora’s brother, and was assassinated in Cameroon in 1999. “An old friend of current Rwandan President Pasteur Bizimungu, Musabe worked at the BCA directly under Valens Kajeguhakwa, the current
RTLM started broadcasting, under the directorship of Nahimana, on 8 July, it wasn’t overtly malignant, offering comments from the man-on-the-street, and interspersing between the playing of popular music opinion pieces designed to counter the criticisms, both real and political, of the MRND by other media outlets. RTLM soon outstripped other media in its reach to the public because it offered a popular and more accessible format to the peasant-farmers—illiteracy was widespread and “the population had become increasingly dependent on radio”. However, three months later, its message changed dramatically in response to the assassination of Melanchoir Ndadaye, the Hutu president of its southern neighbor, Burundi, on October 21st. Nahimana has said that, soon after Ndadaye’s murder, RTLM shifted to an extremist message, and became known as a ‘Hutu

---


38 “Those who argue that RTLM was set up with the express aim of instigating mass murder right from the start miss the point. They fail to see the frightening process by which a station that was set up merely to air the political views of one group became the megaphone through which people were incited to mass murder. The content analysis revealed that each time the RPA made advances, the tenor of the broadcasts would change, becoming more extreme, and more blatantly so, as time went on” (Kimani, 2007: 110-124).

39 Kellow and Steeves, 1998: 125. “In a conference paper presented in March 1994, RTLM editor-in-chief Gaspard Gahigi claimed that Radio Rwanda's formal and outmoded language was a major reason for its lack of impact on the Rwandan population. According to Gahigi, Rwandans were 'poorly informed' because the 'official media has ... retained its traditional rhetoric' (ICTR exhibit P76: 16). RTLM, on the other hand, presented informal and unstructured commentaries on various subjects, usually in the form of dialogues, and relied on lengthy interviews with guests to fill time. They also introduced the modern concept of audience participation, broadcasting RTLM's studio telephone number and inviting listeners to call in with their comments. Broadcasters often relayed messages from listeners or referred to conversations they had had with those who called the station” (*Article 19*, 1996: 84–7).
The opposition parties, of course, were alarmed by RTLM’s hate-filled programming, and Higiro, the director of ORINFOR, Alphonse Nkubito and François Nsanzuwera from the Kigali prosecutor’s office, and Faustin Rucogoza, the Minister of information, along with others, tried to bring RTLM to bay;

On 26 November 1993, RTLM officials Ferdinand Nahimana, Jean-Bosco Barayagwiza and Félicien Kabuga were called to a meeting at the Ministry of Information. There, RTLM was warned about its broadcasts, which were unsubstantiated, irresponsible and caused ethnic division within the population.41

In November, RTL had incredibly, brazenly, called for the assassination of Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana and the Prime Minister-designate Faustin Twagiramungu.42 But opposition member’s hands were tied in trying to stop this kind of naked incitement of violence, by Habyarimana’s protection of the station.

When the RTLM journalists were summoned [to the prosecutor’s office] in March, neighborhoods in Kigali that were controlled by the Interahamwe and Impuzamgambi were in such a state of continuous violence that people were afraid to set foot outside after dark.43

A board of directors was never appointed for RTLM, consequently there was no responsible brake on the type of broadcasting permitted, so the Hutu Power ideology had free reign to spread its ugly message. Along with the militias and Network Zero, RTLM was a powerful underlying mechanism in the build-up to the genocidal event, and had the support of the president; for example, Simon Bikindi, a song writer of anti-Tutsi songs, and very popular on the station, has said that he consulted with Habyarimana,

---

40 ICTR transcript, 23 September 2002: 105–8. And from March 1994, RTLM was nicknamed “‘Radio Nkotsa’ (Nkotsa being a bird signifying doom and bad omens” (ICTR transcript, 14 October 2002: 2) or ‘Radio Rutswitsi’ (rutswitsi means to burn, which in Rwanda refers to sowing and spreading ethnic violence” (ICTR transcript, Nsanzuwera testimony, 24 April 2001: 42–3).
41 ICTR transcript, 5 April 2001: 129–31, and 135–6 and exhibit P28E,
43 ICTR transcript, 23 April 2001: 43–50
Nzabonimana (minister of youth and sports), and military authorities on song lyrics that could be played on air.\textsuperscript{44} Concerning the station’s content, Kimani says that individual broadcasters – not their guests or government officials – were most likely to use the airwaves to disseminate hate. Based on a sample of taped broadcasts, individual journalists dominated the station's programming and accounted for most of the inflammatory statements.\textsuperscript{44} [and] It is important to remember that RTLM broadcasts were not responsible for introducing the language and ideology of hatred into the Rwandan community. Such language and the ideology of ethnic conflict and polarization already existed in Rwanda in the form of a powerful social construct involving ethnic identity. The language had been further developed in 1990–93 by Kangura and other media allied with Hutu Power.\textsuperscript{45}

It is also valuable to look at RTLM from a point of view that asks what role a radio station can actually have in inciting violence. Carver asks us to consider that Most commentary on Rwandan hate radio has worked on the simple assumption that since RTLM broadcast propaganda for genocide and genocide did indeed occur, there must be a causal relationship between the two ... the notion that people could be incited to acts of extreme violence by the radio is only tenable if it is accepted that RTLM propaganda unlocked profound or even primordial hatred. [Milles Collines] may have produced propaganda for the genocide but it did not incite it.\textsuperscript{46} (my emphasis added). \textellipsis RTLM broadcast hate propaganda, there was genocide, and therefore one caused another. If we were talking about almost any other issue – violence on television, pornography or whatever – those arguing in favour of a ban would attempt to demonstrate at least a cursory link between the broadcast and the action. There is now an abundant research to suggest that it is impossible to draw a linear causal link between what people see or hear in the media and how they behave. But because it is genocide we abandon our critical faculties.\textsuperscript{47}

Nonetheless, in considering Habyarimana’s connection to RTLM, it is clear from the list of shareholders that the he was the principal holder of stocks, and the his family and

\textsuperscript{44} Hirondelle, op. cit.: 5 October 2009.
\textsuperscript{45} Kimani, op. cit.. Kimani gives some valuable examples of the kinds of inflammatory vocabulary in use before RTLM’s creation, especially from Kangura, starting in 1990.
\textsuperscript{47} Carver 1996, cited in Mironko.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shareholders</th>
<th>Shares</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HABYARIMANA Juvenal, Kigali</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>1,000,000 RwF ($8,333)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BASABOSE Pierre, Kigali</td>
<td>600,000</td>
<td>600,000 RwF ($5,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUSABE Pasteur, BACAR</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>500,000 RwF ($4,166)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTILIVAMUNDA Alphonse, BACAR</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>300,000 RwF ($2,500)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RWABUKUMBA Séraphin, LA CENTRALE, BACAR</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>200,000 RwF ($1,666)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAMANA Claver **B.C.R.</td>
<td>130,000–100,000</td>
<td>130,000–100,000 RwF ($1,083–$833)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The vast majority of the 1,191 original investors bought in at 5,000 RwF ($42), the minimum share. Total shares reached 15,812,572 RwF ($131,771).

*BACAR = Banque Continentale Africaine Rwanda  
**B.C.R = Banque Commerciale du Rwanda  
***BK = Bank of Kigali

associates had control over a controlling percent of shares, even though the president claimed that he had nothing to do with the station.\textsuperscript{48} This claim, in the face of the fact that “Belgian ambassador Johan Swinnen, former Defence Minister Leo Delcroix of the Christian People's Party and former Foreign Minister Willy Claes of the Flemish Socialist Party”,\textsuperscript{49} all attempted to persuade Habyarimana to restrain the station’s extremist messages. Habyarimana’s ‘excuse’ was to plead that he was powerless against the freedom of the press.\textsuperscript{50}

Attacks on journalists were all too frequent and severe, as reported by the Committee to Protect Journalists in 1993, and consisted of assaults or killings, none of which resulted in arrest or imprisonment: Callixte Kalissa, a TV producer, was shot dead in Kigali; Ignace Ruhatana, \textit{Kanyarwanda}’s editor, was beaten, and documents he was carrying on human rights issues almost stolen; and Alphonse-Marie Nkubito, the well-known prosecutor and human rights activist, luckily survived a grenade attack.\textsuperscript{51} The degree of outright violence had ramped up to the point that a special rapporteur for the UN Commission on Human Rights, visiting Rwanda from April 8\textsuperscript{th} to the 18\textsuperscript{th}, recorded over 2,000 killings in the recent two-year period and, because the victims were almost singularly Tutsi, was of a mind to label the murders ‘genocide’.\textsuperscript{52}

Ndiaye’s UN report also revealed several important findings. First, most of the interviewees said that the repatriation of refugees would create problems, such as: there is

\textsuperscript{48} BBC, 1977. “On 22 January1994, RTLM installed a new broadcast tower of 1,000 watts, with two new frequencies, on Mont Muhe, in Habyarimana’s home region” (HRW).
\textsuperscript{49} BBC, ibid.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{51} \textit{Article 19}, 1997: 21.
\textsuperscript{52} UN Economic and Social Council, Commission on Human Rights, “Report by Mr. B.W. Ndiaye. Special Rapporteur, on his mission to Rwanda from 8 to 17 April 1993”, Para 19.
not enough land to receive them; businessmen feared that the Tutsi who have been successful in other countries would want to take control of the Rwandese economy; and most people believed that the FPR and Rwandan Tutsis wanted to re-establish the monarchy. On the other hand, most people considered it possible for Hutu and Tutsi to peacefully live together, with only a small number of elite power holders intent on using ethnic/racist hatred to stay in power; a ‘shadow’ power [the akazu] operates within and around the regime; the judicial system is outdated, harking back to precolonial form, and its ineffectiveness\(^{53}\) allowed impunity for those perpetrating the violence and killings, along with the authorities not having the will to prosecute offenders.

It is easy to say that Habyarimana, as president, could have put an end to the violence, or should have prevented its development. But, if it were that simple, what prevented him from doing it? The violence was ruining the country, the economy, and causing even greater separation between the MRND and the other parties, and not to the benefit of the MRND, so as he looked over the state of affairs in his country, how did he see things? The argument could be made that, after he had taken the presidency from Kayibanda, as a military commander he wasn’t ready for the presidency, especially of a newly-formed country with enormous developmental problems that would take decades to make function, even at the most minimal level, but which problems were all tied to the inability to feed an already overpopulated State whose demographic was rapidly growing beyond control. Instead of instituting a stern birth control program, coupled with

\(^{53}\) The legal training given to judges is far from satisfactory. It may be noted, for instance, that out of 659 judges, only 34 have studied law at an advanced level, and that none of the cantonal court judges have any legal training. In addition, out of 84 government procurators, only 18 hold degrees in law; . . . There are only about 40 lawyers in Rwanda, and no bar association. Accordingly, almost anyone can claim to be "an attorney at law". As a result, a high proportion of accused persons are not assisted during their trial or receive only very poor assistance" (Ibid). Also see Stockman, 2000: 20-41.
economic measures that recognized the acute limitations of the agricultural sector and thus developed a diverse array of entrepreneurial possibilities (especially the involvement of banks in micro loans, and the increase and opening up of cross border trading in the formal and informal sector, and the faster development of small and large manufacturing), the Second Republic continued a self-destructive agenda of parastatals, with a small number of rent-seeking elites in the country living parasitically off revenues collected by the State through the nationalized coffee and tea industry, and off aid monies from international donors. Any positive measures would have required a thorough opening up of the State mechanism, which was impossible under the one-party system; Habyarimana was strangled before he got started by continuing Kayibanda’s failed premise of government. They both held an incompatible philosophy toward the State structure, professing democracy on one hand but operating as isolated dictators, narrow-mindedly favoring their pocket-sized home regions over the rest of a diminutive country. Such restricted vision can be traced in continuity to a traditional socio-political matrix, which underlay the First and Second Republics in its thick sets of interrelationships (habitus) and worldview. As these different levels of society moved forward from the precolonial past there was surprising little real change in the elite levels. Though the Hutu were freed from the patron-client contract through independence and statehood, they remained peasant-farmers without profitable avenues that would allow them to significantly increase their land holdings or to invest in substantial non-farm ventures; the economy remained stagnant, while the power elite skimmed off the limited available profits. For Habyarimana to have tried to change the established power relationships and open up the country to a vibrant
free market untouched by cronyism and bureaucratic interference would have brought
about his immediate downfall. As it turned out, this result was only delayed a year,
anyway.

On 30 April, Braeckman interviewed Habyarimana in Kigali, and he had the
following to say about Arusha and the war:

[On the progress of negotiations] At Arusha, it is much a question of mutual
confidence, and willingness. I consider, however, that the main guarantee must be
international: we attach a lot of importance to the observers' presence, of which
Belgium is a part, and we wanted to include the international community in a
clearer, more visible way, by means of the United Nations. That is why we invited
the UN Secretary-General to be represented at Arusha. Of course, there was an
attack on February 8th. It surprised and disappointed us. The FPR whitewashed
this offensive by explaining that it was the answer to the events of Kibuye, Gisenyi,
and Ruhengeri. However, these excesses took place at the end of January. Can you
imagine that an attack on the scale of that of February 8th can be decided and
launched in a few days? In fact, the RPF offensive was prepared since November
or December. 54

The RPF was flexing its muscles to test its strength vis-à-vis the FAR forces, and also to
hasten the peace process by putting pressure on the Rwandan government. Habyarimana’s
only answer, as it will be throughout the remaining months before his assassination, is to
call on international assistance, as cease-fire monitors and supporters in the peace process.

[On the buffer zone deserted by civilians] An agreement was signed between the
Prime Minister of Rwanda and the president of the FPR according to which the
buffer zone should benefit from a security guaranteed by international troops. We
had hoped for UN troops. The FPR has more trust in the OAU. Maybe we can find
a compromise and expand the troops of the OUA to international experts.
[On the UN report of human rights violations] It seems to me that this report is
unbalanced between the responsibilities attributed to the Rwandan authorities and
those of the FPR, especially as this document was made after the RPF offensive,
where the atrocities committed by them were obvious. In this report, the Rwandan
government and I answered first of all by voicing certain reservations concerning
assertions which seemed to us unwarranted, based on doubtful and ambiguous

testimonies. However, we admitted that things got out of hand in the North and in other regions. They are owed to the war, to the surprise of the population in the line of the offensive. They are also owed to the badly included multiparty system: in certain regions there were confrontations between political parties. All this we admitted. Some measures were taken and we made a commitment to work with some countries to help us improve the situation.\textsuperscript{55}

It is interesting that the RPF has more trust in the OAU than in the UN, especially since it has the backing of the U.S., but it is important for them to not be seen as illegitimate interlopers by ‘fellow’ African States.

[On the future possibility of troop demobilization] The uncontrolled dispersal of weapons in the country raises a serious problem. It creates insecurity and crime. The demobilization risks aggravating this problem. That is why we hope that this demobilization is planned so that the soldiers back in civilian life are not sent at once to the hills. I would like them to go through learning workshops at grammar schools. This period of training would be a moment of transit for them. Former soldiers have to forget the rifle and the grenade.\textsuperscript{56}

There is really not much Habyarimana can say that will not ring hollow to the troops; they are keenly aware that there will be no jobs waiting for them when they are cut free from the army—their rationale for joining the military in the first place was to get room and board, because most of the recruits were out-of-work youths. In the government’s bankrupt situation, there are not only a scarcity of teachers and schools, but public services are being cut drastically.

[On Rwanda passing through the BBTG phase without rupture] We hope so, because the people want stability. We may criticize all that we have done since 1973, but there were many positive points, in particular this climate of stability. We tried to create unity, the feeling of belonging to the same nation. The war ruptured all this and we have to try to redo this unity, to make a success of national reconciliation. Fortunately we are not alone: the visitors, the suggestions which we receive, we consider them as expressions of sympathy, which strengthen our own

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid.
Habyarimana’s speechifying and reality too often part ways. From 1973 he had harped on the necessity of ‘unity’, but has prevented the measured return of refugees for twenty years while applying the repressive quota system on Tutsis, and has favored his home region to the exclusion of other regions, especially the south-central prefectures representing Kayibanda’s old political stronghold. And his one-party state structure, itself, is, at base, not unifying; because it forbids the inclusion of other parties, and therefore keeps out of government the many competing and healthy mix of different points of view necessary to maintain a balanced system.

There is something of a disconnect between what Habyarimana observes and is exposed to, and what he puts into effect; for example, drawing up a constitution modeled largely on that of the United States, spending time in France, talking with French president Mitterrand and his staff, spending time in New York at the United Nations, meeting diplomats from all walks of life, and then returning to Rwanda to govern like an unenlightened ‘old’ communist such as North Korea’s Kim Il Sung. As U.S. ambassador Flaten remarked, Habyarimana had no concept of how democracy works. But the principles of it are not that difficult to grasp, and Habyarimana is not a stupid man, yet when he confesses that he doesn’t see why a one-party government hasn’t served democracy, it forces one to consider where the confusion lies. He clearly cannot escape the Rwandan matrix in which he was born, grew up, and continues to operate. It appears that he has been trying for twenty years to force whatever his concept of democracy is through

---

57 Ibid.
a Rwandan precolonial, colonial, and post-independence funnel and wrapped in a non-democratic military/Church framework, resulting in an odd mélange that fights against and within itself more than being able to develop a robust, interaction among all members of society. He failed to bring ‘unity’, ‘peace’, and ‘development’, his three-word mantra throughout his reign, because the schizophrenic system he put in place was not capable of driving through a clear and comprehensive vision. Being intelligent does not automatically translate into being able to manage others or run a government. And as has been stated earlier, creating and governing a new State where there was nothing before is a formidable task that requires the shared vision of the vast majority of citizens, and not just a handful of power holders at the top. It is fair to say that the RPF invasion forced Habyarimana, for the first time, to seriously consider power sharing in a more open socio-political system. Not that the RPF honestly wanted such a system themselves, but their demands at Arusha were bound by the BBTG protocols, which tied to a time deadline that couldn’t be ignored forever. Habyarimana was caught in the middle; between the Hutu extremists on one side, and the RPF on the other. By accepting the Arusha Accords he could stave off complete military defeat, which was clearly unacceptable to him, because it would mean the RPF taking over government and the military completely. But, by doing so he risked the very real threat of being killed by the extremists, in the MRND, the CDR, and the military, and their plunging the country into an unwinnable and destructive war. As a general, he wouldn’t have wanted to see his troops defeated, but at the same time, as part of the Accords, he would have had to get rid of half his men and officers to make room for the RPF forces. The options were distasteful. For those who disparage the president for
dragging his feet on implementing the Arusha Accords, it is only reasonable to keep in mind exactly what he was facing. He had some blood on his hands, to be sure, with the murder of Kayibanda and his top officials, and by allowing the violence and murders being committed by the youth militias, especially the *Interahamwe*. How much of the recent mayhem is attributable to his inability to stop it is a question difficult to answer, because elements in the military had become unable to control, and the strength of the Akazu, the Zero Network, and the Death Squads is also difficult to gauge in relation to their ability to threaten and cajole the president into acting one way or another. Was Habyarimana’s investment in RTLM an honest political maneuver to counteract RPF’s broadcasting station, and was the president against the ethnic/racist hatred carried on RTLM’s airwaves? It appears, from witnesses at the ICTR, if they can be trusted, that Habyarimana did nothing to tone down or stop the incitements to violence by the radio station. Yet, in his reported talks with the U.S. ambassador, with Mitterrand, with the OAU leaders, and in his addresses to the Rwandan public, he was constantly suing for peace and an end to the violence. There are so many contradictory aspects to Habyarimana’s behavior from the war period, 1990 to 1994, that it demonstrates a confused mind, and an inability to push a consistent policy forward. One observer of Habyarimana’s reign sees the president as a victim:

> On being pressured into accepting multi-partyism and power-sharing with the RPF, Habyarimana lost control; he fell victim to a determined wave of extremism within the *Akazu* of his own in-laws. Habyarimana could thus be described as a double victim: a victim of the international peace industry and of his protégés, not in the least the soldiers he had handpicked to serve in his presidential guard.\(^58\)

---

\(^{58}\) Pottier 2002: 37.
And that observation is not to excuse the president’s actions but to put them in context.

In May, Habyarimana was working to put together a new coalition. At around the same time, Emmanuel Gapyisi, an MDR leader, was attempting to put together a coalition across party lines, among nationalists who felt that neither the RPF or Habyarimana represented the best interests of Rwanda. The alliance was named the *Forum Paix et Démocratie* (Peace and Democracy Forum), and was successful in picking up a number of important members, but then Gapyisi was murdered, on 18 May 1993, and the alliance fell apart without him. Gapyisi’s murder was followed by attempts on Stanislas Mbonampeka, the PL leader, Defense Minister Gasana, and the CDR leader, Célestin Higiro. Incensed by Habyarimana’s support of the continuing violence, Prime Minister Nsengiyaremye, whose mandate was soon ending, drafted a letter to Habyarimana, accusing him of “wanting to cause troubles inside Rwanda and to start the war again in order to get a settlement that would protect his own power”:

> Terrorist groups are now preparing attacks on various politicians and disturbances throughout the country to try to start the war again. In other words, you feel you must find a subterfuge that would enable you to avoid signing the peace agreement, to bring about the resignation of the present government—so as to put in place a bellicose government devoted to you—to begin the hostilities again in an effort to push the RPF troops back to their former positions . . . and to demand the renegotiation of certain terms of the protocols that have been signed already.60

Yet, even amidst this internecine viciousness, the chances for a peaceful settlement

---

59 Habyarimana’s response when interviewed by a Rwandan journalist: “Well, I was as shocked as the others on learning about the assassination. Personally, I did not know Mr. Emmanuel Gapyisi. . . . he was a member of a forum which was trying to bring together various opinions. Right from the beginning, the forum was opposed. . . . as it was bothering some people. That is what makes me believe that the assassination has a real political character. . . . The consequences are, concerning democracy, that it would be serious if the people did not understand that democracy means reciprocal tolerance, the spirit of compromise, respect for the opinion of others. If. . . . Gapyisi was a victim of his own ideas, that would be a serious attempt against the democratisation process” (BBC, 1993). No investigation of the murder appeared in court.

60 Dismas Nsengiyaremye, Premier Ministre, to Monsieur le Président de la République Rwandaise, no. 528/02.0, June 6, crossed out and replaced by July 6, 1993 (ARDHO), cited in HRW, 1999a.
to the war actually grew, with a protocol on the repatriation of refugees and the resettlement of displaced persons being signed at Arusha on June 9th, which was followed by the UN Security Council adopting Resolution 846, which formed a UN observers presence in the country (At the end of May, Habyarimana had met with U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs George Moose at the African/African-American Summit in Libreville, where he implored Moose to back Rwanda’s request for a UN presence—the RPF wanted the OAU—in the country). Meanwhile, the various party hopefuls were going about planning how to apportion the various cabinet posts, always leery, now, about the RPF’s reliability. When proposing candidates for replacing the prime minister at the end of his mandate on July 16th, there arose a major fight within the MDR. Party president, Twagiramungu, who believed that sticking with the RPF as a negotiating partner was the only way to get rid of Habyarimana and cripple his MRND party, nominated Agathe Uwilingiyimana, but other leaders in the MDR were unwaveringly set on Jean Kambanda. On 17 July, Habyarimana met with the opposition parties and appointed Uwilingiyimana to replace Nsengiyaremye as Prime Minister, in spite of the fact that she had been vetoed by all the parties except the MDR. The former prime minister and other MDR members, in disgust, barred Uwilingiyimana and Twagiramungu from the party.

62 Menand (2011: 79), “. . . a saying of Roosevelt’s (apparently a Balkan proverb): ‘It is permitted you in time of grave danger to walk with the devil until you have crossed the bridge.’ The Allied coalition was held together by one common goal: the total defeat of Nazi Germany. [This seems to have been the strategy of the opposition parties— if they had united and walked with the RPF ‘devil’ across the BBTG bridge, afterwards they could have bided their time and the majority vote by the Hutu population would have eventually worked in their electoral favor].”
63 Minister of primary and secondary education. She and Habyarimana became arch enemies, and she was one of the first Hutu opposition party members to be murdered (especially brutally) at the onset of the genocide.
New Coalition Government

On July 18\textsuperscript{th}, the new coalition government was formed, with Uwilingiyimana as prime minister, and represented a split within the MDR based upon the jockeying for power among the party’s leaders, and engineered by Habyarimana’s appointment of Uwilingiyimana against the wishes of factions inside the MDR. Days later, Nsengiyaremye and Defense Minister Gasana, who had severely criticized Habyarimana for failing to sign the peace agreement, fled Rwanda after grave threats to their lives. Multipartyism had come to mean a continuing maneuvering for power in the proposed BBTG, with the professed need for a democratic government long ago shelved, and the press accusing politicians of “belly politics”.\textsuperscript{64} The result was that most of the parties had split into competitive factions that rendered their parties ineffective, especially what had been the strongest ‘democratic’ party, the MDR; the pro and anti-FPR wings negated each other.

Habyarimana increasingly showed an attitude of detachment, or aloofness, that caused some consternation among international relations. When Cornelio Sommaruga, president of the International Committee of the Red Cross, visited Rwanda in July and brought up the problem of the huge number of anti-personnel mines along the northern front, Habyarimana replied that he, of course, knew about the mines, but that in his opinion it was more important to "de-mine people’s hearts than wheat fields or potato

\textsuperscript{64} Van Hoyweghen, op. cit.: 392-93. “Belly Politics” are characterised by a controlling government and the interdependence of the elite in control of the private and public spheres; actors on both sides use their status to strengthen their economic and political power. For an in-depth look at ‘belly politics’; see Bayart, 2009, especially Chapter 9.
And Rwanda’s most important donors finally were giving the president ultimatums: unless he stop delaying the singing of the Arusha Accords, they will cut off his foreign aid. France was also threatening to remove its troops.

---


66 Allegedly, Museveni, sometime in July, not only sent troops twice to help the RPF, but urged the RPF not to sign the Accords (The Shariat 6-12 Sept 9 quoting Tanzanian newspaper The Mirror, No 126, second issue, May 1994, and the Ugandan Monitor; cited in Crawford, 1999).

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Prefecture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Habyarimana, Juvénal</td>
<td>MRND</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prime Minister</td>
<td>Uwilingiyimana, Agathe</td>
<td>MDR</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Butare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>Gasana, Anastase</td>
<td>MDR</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Kigali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister of Interior</td>
<td>Munyazesa, Faustin</td>
<td>MRND</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Kigali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister of Justice</td>
<td>Ntamabalyiro, Agnès</td>
<td>PL</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Kibuye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister of Defense</td>
<td>*Gasana, James</td>
<td>MRND</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Byumba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister of Agriculture</td>
<td>Nzamurambaho, Frédéric</td>
<td>PSD</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Gikongoro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister Primary/Secondary</td>
<td>Mbonimpa, Jean-Marie Vianney</td>
<td>MDR</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Kibuye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; Scientific Research</td>
<td>Mbangura, Daniel</td>
<td>MRND</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Gikongoro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister of Finance</td>
<td>Rugenera, Marc</td>
<td>PSD</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Gitarama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister of Public Affairs</td>
<td>Mugiraneza, Prosper</td>
<td>MRND</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Kibungo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister of Information</td>
<td>Rucogoza, Faustin</td>
<td>MDRH</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Byumba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister of Commerce</td>
<td>Mugenzi, Justin</td>
<td>PL</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Kibungo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister of Planning</td>
<td>Ngirabatware, Augustin</td>
<td>MRND</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Gisenyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister of Health</td>
<td>Bizimungu, Casimir</td>
<td>MRND</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Ruhengeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation &amp; Communications</td>
<td>Ntagerura, André</td>
<td>MRND</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Cyangugu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister of Work &amp; Social</td>
<td>Ndsingwa, Landoald</td>
<td>PL</td>
<td>Tutsi</td>
<td>Kigali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affairs</td>
<td>Gatabazi, Félicien</td>
<td>PSD</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Butare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister of Public Works and</td>
<td>Ruhumuliza, Gaspard</td>
<td>PDC</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Gitarama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>Nyiramasuhuko, Pauline</td>
<td>MRND</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Butare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister of the Family &amp; the</td>
<td>Nzabonimana, Callixte</td>
<td>MRND</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Gitarama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition of Women</td>
<td>*Replaced by Bizimana, Augustin July 30</td>
<td>MRND</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Byumba</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Table 14. Government of 18 July 1993
Arusha Accords

Finally, Habyarimana, under pressure from all sides, signed the Arusha Accords on 4 August 1993, with Alexis Kanyarengwe, political chairman, representing the RPF.

The Arusha agreement was actually a portfolio containing several protocols and agreements: 1

- The N'sele cease-fire;
- The Memorandum of Understanding on the rule of law, signed on 18 August 1992;
- Memoranda of agreements on the sharing of power within a BBTG signed in Arusha, October 30, 1992 and January 9, 1993;
- The Memorandum of Understanding on the repatriation of refugees and the resettlement of displaced persons, signed at Arusha June 9, 1993;
- The Memorandum of Agreement on the integration of the armed forces of both sides signed in Arusha August 3, 1993;
- Finally, the memorandum of agreement on the final provisions, signed in Arusha August 3, 1993.

All these texts were an integral part of the peace agreement in Arusha. In short, the agreement stopped the war, and accepted power-sharing plus the repatriation of refugees. The details included the following: a BBTG (broad-based transitional government) was pledged to be formed within thirty-seven days, with Habyarimana as president, a Hutu prime minister, a twenty-one member cabinet with the RPF Tutsis having five seats, and a cap of 19,000 solders in the army, with 60% of troops composed of FAR, and the officer

---

1 Belgian Senate, 1997-1998.
contingent split 50/50 with the RPF (the country’s clear inability to support an army of that size apparently never entered the discussion). Multiparty elections were set for the middle of 1995. Uwilingiyimana had been asked to step down by her party, and Habyarimana appointed MDR’s Faustin Twagiramungu as prime minister. The MRND was slated for 6 of the 21 cabinet posts, with the MDR taking five, including the prime minister, the RPF having five, as well, including deputy prime minister and minister of the interior, five for the PSD, three for the PL and one for the small PDC.\(^2\) A Transitional National Assembly of seventy members made up of members from the several parties was also supposed to be initiated.\(^3\) 2,500 UN troops (UNAMIR) were to be deployed before the BBTG was set to be installed on 10 September,\(^4\) to oversee its fair implementation, but were delayed a month, not arriving until 5 October. UNAMIR was to no avail, as the Accords were never initiated.

UN peacekeepers arrived in late 1993 to replace French forces, as called for in the accords, but this switch only exacerbated the paranoia of the governing Hutu elite, which felt it was losing its last line of defense. Ironically, while the French have been widely blamed for contributing to the genocide by supporting the Hutu government of Habyarimana, it was actually this French military withdrawal that raised Hutu fears to the breaking point and prompted the final radicalization of politics that culminated in the genocide.\(^5\)

The tragic problem with the Accords was that they were so one-sided; the government’s side was represented by two different delegates, first by the MDR’s

\(^2\) “The power-sharing arrangement in government was to give the RPF and the opposition parties together a two-thirds majority in the 22-member cabinet. This would have been enough to override any initiative invoked by the MRND and its Hutu extremist ally, the CDR” (Egan, 2010: 370, cited in Clark, 2011: 15).


\(^4\) September 10\(^{th}\) was chosen because it is the beginning of the planting season, and represented a ‘change in the air’ (citation lost).

\(^5\) Kuperman, 2001: 11.
Boniface Ngurinzira, and then by James Gasana, of the MRND, and between the two men they were representing multiple group concerns that were incompatible (added to this relative confusion was Bagosora’s contentious and upsetting presence—he did all the talking in the August 23rd and 27th meetings, and had little interaction with the RPF).6 The RPF, on the other hand, was unified behind a clear agenda, and was therefore able to win much more than was either reasonable or ultimately acceptable. The government’s military, for example, flatly denounced the protocol for sharing officers and troops, feeling that, once again, the Tutsis were taking control—if they were only around 10% of the population (in 1993), how could they demand equal representation?—and were completely unwilling to be thrown into a jobless society. The akazu and other extremists saw their power base considerably eroded, with the real prospects that, after elections in 1995, they would be even further marginalized, not to mention their well-founded fears that many, if not most, of them would be brought up on criminal charges by a new government that they had no control over, and that would contain people they had treated grievously. There were considerable elements within the MRND, as well as the entire CDR party, who voiced their opposition to the signing. The CDR’s hostility to the Accords is easy to understand—they were excluded from the process by the demands of the RPF; Habyarimana supported the CDR’s inclusion in the power-sharing protocols and helped organize demonstrations in their support.

6 “In an essay entitled ‘L’assassinat du Président Habyarimana ou l’ultime opération du Tutsi pour sa reconquête du pouvoir par la force au Rwanda’, Bagosora makes clear that he held firmly to the radical ideas of the CDR, as propagated by RTLM and such newspapers as Kangura. He has no hesitation in stating repeatedly that the struggle, one that is age-old (séculaire), is between the ‘Hutu people’ and the Tutsi, not between political groups. For this reason, the negotiations at Arusha should have been between Hutu and Tutsi rather than between political parties and any future discussions should be held between two ethnically defined sides” (Aboganena, 1996: 18, cited in HRW). Also Hirondelle, 2004, February 3.
Prunier suggests that Habyarimana signed the Accords “not as a genuine gesture marking the turning-over of a new leaf and the beginning of democratisation in Rwanda, but as a tactical move calculated to buy time, shore up the contradictions of the various sections of the opposition and look good in the eyes of foreign donors”. That assessment, however, ignores the fact that Habyarimana told Ambassador Flaten, the UN Secretary General, Jacques-Roger Booh-Booh, other dignitaries, and the Rwandan people over the four-year period of the war, that he wanted peace, and that he fully agreed to and signed the Accords in Dar es Salaam on 6 April 1994. But, perhaps most important is the unavoidable consideration that Habyarimana had no choice but to take the lesser of two evils: abide by the Accords and save a number of cabinet posts for the MRND that always had a chance of being enlarged during future elections, because the Tutsi RPF would most probably lose seats due to a Hutu president, prime minister and majority cabinet, and a Hutu population voting them out; or refuse to abide by the Accords and the RPF will take the country by force of arms and set up their own government, leaving out the MRND and most of the other parties’ members. Habyarimana desperately needed international donor aid, but the threat of an RPF military takeover loomed larger and much more immediate. A not inconsequential factor in his signing was the large-scale emergency involved in one million internally displaced Rwandans herded together and starving on the outskirts of Kigali. Equally alarming was the growth of the Interahamwe to a force 30,000 strong, sitting like a loaded gun. These were part of several overriding issues influencing his decision to sign the Accords, and that cannot be reduced to any single cause. (And not to

---

8 See Eltringham, 2003: 349.
be discounted in his hesitation to sign, and something that must have stuck painfully in his
craw—as the president under the BBTG, he was effectively reduced to being a ceremonial
head of state). But inherent in this line of enquiry into an African head of state’s attitude
toward power sharing, is the long tradition of

powers of the State concentrated in the hands of individuals or groups who are
above all preoccupied with separating their political fate from the hazards of a
competitive game over which they are unable to exercise total control.9

This ‘preoccupation’ served Habyarimana and his coterie well for seventeen years, and
was not to be easily shed.

An important part of the Arusha negotiating process involved a broad range of
actors with a vested interest in the peace-making procedure, who were decisively led by
the Vatican making contact between the RPF and the Rwandan Foreign Minister, Boniface
Ngurinzira,10 and greatly facilitated by Tanzania's President Ali Hassan Mwinyi. Clark
incisively points out that “Rwanda became a laboratory wherein sub-regional and regional
inter-state organizations tested their capacity to engage in conflict management”,11 and that
“the structure of international rivalries helped to exacerbate rather than moderate the
conflict”.12 But perhaps the most important, and far-reaching point he makes is that

the involvement of so many actors encouraged the belief that the international
community was sincerely committed not just to resolving the conflict but also to
implementing any peace agreement reached;13 [my emphasis]

---

10 Eltringham, ibid.
which was false and dangerously misleading. Collins\textsuperscript{14} also makes the valuable observation that it was never recognized by anyone over the long period of negotiations that the ‘arm-twisting’ of Habyarimana violated, in fact, the very principles of democratization that the RPF was suing for,\textsuperscript{15} and that such double-dealing swept through the ‘talks’.

This is not to imply that the disregard for a democratic sensitivity was a major failing of the negotiations. Among any number of things, a major stumbling block was the essence of the Rwandan State as found in Bayart’s explanation of the African State, below:

Coexisting within the heart of any given power are several time-spaces, whose adjustment is problematic and always precarious. Consequently the State in Africa is not an ‘integral State’ but a State of ‘variable polarisation’. . . . Its structure is fundamentally indirect, . . . The majority of African politicians have, however, yearned for a total, ‘well-policed’ State, . . . It should be said that up until now they have failed to achieve this ideal; the development of an ‘integral State’ from a ‘soft State’, . . . has not taken place despite advances in the technology of social control. Seen from this angle the postcolonial State is not dissimilar from its colonial and precolonial predecessors. It obeys a law of incompleteness. It functions as a rhizome of personal networks and assures the centralisation of power through the agencies of family, alliance and friendship, in the manner of ancient kingdoms, which possessed the principal attributes of a State within a lineage matrix, thereby reconciling two types of political organisation wrongly thought to be incompatible. . . . Such a form of power . . . is one political affirmation amongst others, which does not lack for historical equivalents and whose mark we now know is to be found in the most powerful centralized state structures of the west. . . . Georges Lavau observes that, “the new monarchies which became established from the sixteenth century were not formed outside of (or in opposition to) feudalism but rather were established in the heart of feudalism and made use of many of its elements”\textsuperscript{16}.

\textsuperscript{14} Collins, 1998: 16-17.
\textsuperscript{15} “Equally interesting is the fact that both the 1993 Arusha Accords and the 1995 new Constitution lack these provisions; one would think that the Rwandan Patriotic Front, which purported to bring democracy to Rwanda, would have insisted upon having such provisions in both documents” (Mvuyekure, 2002).
\textsuperscript{16} Bayart, op. cit.: 261-62.
Bayart’s observation hits on a number of central points applicable to Habyarimana’s administration and the disruptive problems it faced trying to adjust to the State matrix. In trying to come to terms with the opposition parties and with the RPF (which was considered a sixth party in the negotiations), the president encountered “not an ‘integral State’ but a State of ‘variable polarisation’”. Also, through his entire presidency he “yearned for a total, ‘well-policing’ State” and “failed to achieve this ideal”. We have already examined the idea that his regime was connected to and “not dissimilar from its colonial and precolonial predecessors”, and that the Second Republic functions as a rhizome of personal networks and assures the centralisation of power through the agencies of family, alliance and friendship, in the manner of ancient kingdoms, which possessed the principal attributes of a State within a lineage matrix, thereby reconciling two types of political organisation wrongly thought to be incompatible.17

Finally, Habyarimana’s regime was established “in the heart of” the “several time spaces” that derive from the traditional past.

An understanding of these mechanisms underlying the ‘African’ State of Rwanda, Habyarimana at the helm, will help inform much of the dynamics driving the Second Republic and its response to the challenges to its authority. Equally important, accepting that Bayart’s description represents an observed set of characteristics found in a large number of sub-Saharan States, Habyarimana, as a head of state, is not an abnormality, but must be always considered linked to the continent’s socio-political entities in significant ways. It does not diminish his unique personality, but he is “in the heart” of the State mechanisms and restraints and, just as an American president is unable to act like a Stalin, 17 Ibid.
neither is Habyarimana able to act like a Mitterrand. The Arusha Accords play across and among incompatible actors and State mechanisms. As such, they were doomed from the start, and Habyarimana, alone, is only singled out at the loss of understanding the complexity, on many levels, of socio-political underlying and continuing traditions of the State, and the many personalities, local and international, involved. This doesn’t in any way lessen the negative, and even destructive, actions of certain agents, including Habyarimana, but puts them in greater perspective, without being conflated.

In a 2005 *New Times*\(^{18}\) interview with former ambassador, Robert Flaten, he gave his opinion regarding the problem surrounding the peace agreement and installing the BBTG. One problem had been the peacekeeping force, itself: “Both the RPF and the GOR had requested a strong peacekeeping force from the UN and we didn’t provide that force”. Flaten also blamed the various external parties involved in the peace process, as Clark suggested above, for not seeing the process through with their involvement; Flaten thinks that “both sides made an honest agreement and needed help and when they didn't get help the killings took place”. Flaten also offers some information about Habyarimana and the other parties that is quite astonishing, giving a rare insight their knowledge of political systems:

> I remember President Habyarimana asked me whether I would help him create democracy in Rwanda and we (the U.S.) became immediately very active. There was a lot of internal opposition to the government, and the Hutus from the South were unhappy with Habyarimana’s Hutu diehards from the North. But within my first six months as Ambassador in Rwanda there had been a formation of four new political parties, and I invited all the leaders of the political parties to the USA to

---

\(^{18}\) *New Times, Rwanda, 8 November 2005.*
study democracy, including the PL (known as Tutsi party), and they all came to the U.S. and studied democracy and later returned very enthusiastic. [my italics].

One wonders what to make of this ‘democratic experience’ in light of the subsequent genocidal event, and whether, if there had been many more people like Flaten, constantly engaged with the various responsible agents representing both sides of the peace agreement, that a different outcome would have ensued. But the fact that Habyarimana asked Flaten for help in creating a democracy needs some serious thought about whether he was sincere or whether he was just playing politics, trying to enlist the sympathies of the U.S. for his government so he could keep receiving aid. Habyarimana’s motives, as always, are confusing. For example, he met with Museveni on 3 September to put in place an infrastructure that would allow, on 1 October, commercial traffic through Kagitumba, on the Uganda-Rwanda border route in the northern corridor (which also necessitated talks with Kenya’s president, Arap Moi), and Habyarimana said that Rwandese refugees were free to go back home, that they could acquire passports in any embassy in Africa or abroad. He followed-up this meeting with a tour of the countries which had contributed to the return of peace in Rwanda, accompanied by MRND Minister of Transport, André Ntagerura, and PL Minister of Labor, Landoald Ndasingwa, a Tutsi. In a speech at the Francophone Summit, in Port Louis, Mauritius, 16-18 October—which included members from Belgium, Burundi, France, Senegal, Zaire, Egypt, Tunisia, Mali,

---

19 Ibid.
and the Congo—Habyarimana appealed to them for support in initiating the democratic process, and outlined the most urgent aspects:21

- integration of the two armies and formation of a single national army;
- reintegration of thousands of demobilized soldiers into the socio-economic life of the country;
- repatriation of refugees, and their socio-economic integration;
- re-establishment of war-displaced persons on their lands;
- reconstruction and economic rehabilitation of the country; and
- strengthening of the democratic process, and the holding of free elections.

It would seem that Habyarimana was doing more genuine reaching out here (and over the last four years) as opposed to throwing up a political smoke-screen in order to buy time and somehow scuttle the peace process, by which ploy he would have certainly risked alienating all of the countries present, causing considerable ill will that would be very difficult to repair. If it was an honest appeal, then it would seem to be evidence that he wasn’t trying to derail the move to the BBTG, which goes against almost every opinion on his presidency, which viewed him as colluding with the extremists.

At this same time, Habyarimana visited Washington, D.C., and met with Secretary Christopher, Under Secretary of Defense Wisner, Acting USAID Administrator Jim Michel and Assistant Secretary Moose. Christopher, who knew surprisingly little about Africa (at one meeting with his top advisers, several weeks after Habyarimana’s plane crash, he pulled an atlas off his shelf to help him locate the country), waffled on U.S. financial assistance, citing the “financial constraints” his government faced (he would, a week after the genocide started, send “one of the most forceful documents to be produced in the entire three months of the genocide to Madeleine Albright at the UN—a cable

21 “Speech of Major General Habyarimana Juvenal, President of the Republic of Rwanda, at the Francophonie Summit, Port Louis, Mauritius, 16—18 October 1993.”
instructing her to demand a full UN withdrawal”\textsuperscript{22}). No one addressed Habyarimana's stated reservations about the Accords nor the fact that the 10 September transition deadline had passed unmet.\textsuperscript{23} Habyarimana was worried about meeting the conditions of the SAP, and the country urgently needed the World Bank and the IMF to release the currently suspended credits. Moose assured him only that the special disaster assistance to the hundreds of thousands of displaced would continue. Habyarimana also complained that the RPF’s strong objection to the presence of the French in Rwanda had caused them to forego sending troops as part of a peacekeeping force.\textsuperscript{24} However, it was acknowledged that the BBTG was responsible for assuring stability and security during the twenty-two-month transition. Elections were planned at the local level first, with national presidential and parliamentary elections set for the end of the transition period.

**Burundian President Assassinated\textsuperscript{25}**

Melchior Ndadaye,\textsuperscript{26} Burundi’s first popularly elected president, and a Hutu, was murdered by the all-Tutsi army on 21 October.\textsuperscript{27} The killing sent a shock wave throughout Rwanda at every level. Ambassador Flaten, in the *New Times* interview above, considered

\textsuperscript{22} Power, 2001.

\textsuperscript{23} Ferroggiaro, 2004.

\textsuperscript{24} However, when Habyarimana met with Mitterrand on 11 October, he was assured that “France was ready to assist in the reconstruction of the country, and in the implementation of the Arusha agreements” (Radio Rwanda, 14 October 1993).


\textsuperscript{26} “Melchior Ndadaye (March 28, 1953 – October 21, 1993) was a Burundian intellectual and politician. He was the first democratically elected and first Hutu president of Burundi after winning the landmark 1993 election. Though he moved to attempt to smooth the country's bitter ethnic divide, his reforms antagonised soldiers in the Tutsi-dominated army, and he was assassinated amidst a failed military coup in October 1993, after only three months in office. His assassination sparked an array of brutal tit-for-tat massacres between the Tutsi and Hutu ethnic groups, and ultimately sparked the decade-long Burundi Civil War” (OAU, op. cit.).

\textsuperscript{27} A little-mentioned aspect of the ethnic strife in Burundi, is that ethnic designations had, since independence forty years before, been removed from national ID cards. The fact that this didn’t prevent the political manipulation of ethnicity, has some bearing on the question of ID cards and their relative importance in the Rwandan genocide.
that the assassination dashed the hopes of Rwandans that the peace process could succeed. This observation was also born out by Rwandan experts like Reyntjens, who said that Ndadaye’s assassination had “spelled the end of the peace process in Rwanda”,28 and Des Forges, who believed that “The movement known as Hutu Power, the coalition that would make the genocide possible, was built upon the corpse of Ndadaye”,29 because it strengthened the Hutu hardliners, and validated their position. The Great Lakes scholar, Lemarchand, cautions that Burundi and Rwanda

cannot be understood independently of each other. Historically, and to this day, ethnic strife in the former has had a profound impact on the destinies of the latter, and vice versa. Just as the Hutu-led revolution in Rwanda has contributed directly to the sharpening of ethnic polarities in Burundi, so the assassination of . . . Ndadaye (a Hutu), at the hands of the all-Tutsi army, . . . provides the indispensable backdrop for an understanding to the Rwanda genocide.30

There had already been massacres in Burundi of thousands of Hutu citizens, as well as Tutsi officials, with untold thousands fleeing the country, but Ndadaye’s murder, as part of a military coup (which subsequently failed), resulted in

one of the worst massacres in Burundi’s bloody history. An estimated 50,000 people, divided between the two ethnic groups, were murdered while between 800,000 and one million Hutu refugees fled into Rwanda, Tanzania, and Zaire.31

The murder further polarized the political parties into a Hutu Power camp and a ‘moderates’ camp, that led to hard bouts of infighting for control of upcoming cabinet posts, which caused a further delay of the BBTG. But, by far, the most damaging and immediate effect in Rwanda was to strengthen the extremists’ contention that the RPF

30 Lemarchand, 1994: 385
31 OAU, 2000: para 7.34-35. Flaten, in his testimony before the ICTR (2005: 68-69), recalled that, “Before I left Rwanda [Nov. 1993], I personally told both President Habyarimana and Gen. Kagame that whoever resumed the war would be responsible for killings like those that had just occurred in Burundi...."
Tutsis couldn’t be trusted to share power, and to legitimize the Hutu Power\textsuperscript{32} movement, which ‘took off’ at a mass rally just two days after the assassination, and included members from among the various political parties\textsuperscript{33}—the ethnic card was proving more cohesive than party loyalty. Ambassador Rawson says of the period and the failure of Arusha, that,

The upheaval in Burundi in October 1993 certainly changed a lot of attitudes about the possibility of living and working out differences together in the political context. the agreement was fundamentally flawed. We were never able to get the [convening] of the national assembly or the government established, because the parties were split internally, and the whole of the Arusha accord was based on party participation.\textsuperscript{34}

One study of internal conflicts has made the following valuable observations that relate well to the Rwandan situation and the breakdown of the Accords:

• Internal conflicts are intrinsically difficult to resolve. Fractional leaders mobilize followers by stressing the narrow identities that balkanize societies. They also exploit group grievances, which means that participants in an internal war have a tendency to shift loyalties easily.
• Factions are quick to form new alliances; it depends on what they see as in their best self-interest at the time. The complexity of internal conflicts also makes it harder for those interested in preventing them to anticipate catastrophes and to develop effective policy responses.
• Another major problem is the lack of suitable mechanisms for conflict resolution. Conflicts between states are often solved using such traditional means as treaties, mediation, or foreign aid. These means, however, may not be applicable where the conflict is an internal one. The reason is that in such conflicts, the state itself often

\textsuperscript{32} “At the time of the genocide, Froduald Karamira was Vice-President of the MDR and one of the leaders of its extremist wing, MDR-Power. . . . that was hostile to any cooperation with the RPF, and opposed to the Arusha Accords. He is known for his 23 October speech during which he called for the Hutus “to rise” and “take the necessary measures”, and to “look within ourselves for the enemy which is amongst us”. It was he, who on the occasion of this meeting and for the first time in public used the term “Hutu Power”, which, from then on, designated the coalition of the Hutu extremists. He thereby became the principle ideologue of this doctrine. From 8 April 1994, he participated in the formation of the interim government. He went on the air daily with RTLM to incite massacres of the Tutsis” (Trial Watch: www.trial-ch.org).
\textsuperscript{33} “Present were members of the part of the MDR now resolved to reject cooperation with the FPR, members of the MRND and CDR, and even some Hutu members of the PL, increasingly skeptical of their party’s link with the RPF” (OAU, op. cit.).
\textsuperscript{34} Frontline, 2003a.
abandons or forfeits its traditional role of protecting its own citizens. When the state is disintegrating, regimes either cannot or will not serve as peacemaker and protector, and they are often not amenable to normal diplomatic appeals. Indeed, the state is typically converted into a tool of one person, group, or faction, becoming a predatory instrument of group repression. This scenario occurred in Rwanda in 1994.\(^{35}\)

Habyarimana’s MRND benefitted by the increasing divide in the opposition parties, and by attracting the support of some important political leaders from those parties. Habyarimana used some of these cross-over politicians to “challenge the interpretation of the Accords”, hoping to secure cabinet positions for these new allies, and to get the CDR somehow included. His aim was to block vital decisions in the transitional assembly—“such as impeachment proceedings that could strip him of his power and leave him vulnerable to prosecution for past crimes”\(^{36}\)—by controlling more than one-third of the total votes. The CDR still held it against Habyarimana for having conceded too much to the RPF. But African leaders at this point were still convinced that the president was truly committed to the peace process, born largely from their strong desire to see Rwanda emerge as a positive force in the region, but they, like most onlookers, could not have realized how fast Hutu Power thinking was catching hold, ramped up by Ndadaye’s death and the violence that followed it. The role of the akazu in the Hutu Power movement is not clear, but their fluid group certainly welcomed it as part of their long-standing determination to keep the RPF out of Rwanda.

A week after the Hutu Power rally, “a commission of Rwandan army officers met


\(^{36}\) Cmdr. HQ Sector [Col. Luc Marchal, Commander of the Belgian contingent, UNAMIR] to COPS, no. 1554, January 15, 1994 (confidential source); Reyntjens, 1995: 17, (cited in HRW, op. cit.).
to organize the [civil defense] program. Just as Bagosora had indicated in early 1993, they recognized the need to distribute firearms in a way that would ‘avoid suspicions among the different layers of the population and among political parties.’ The supporters of Hutu Power were “roughly the members of the old Gapyisi network: the Donat Murego-Froduald Karamira Parmehutu fraction of MDR, a few lost PSDs, Ruhumuliza and his friends in the PDC”.

At the beginning of November, Habyarimana reportedly chaired a meeting at the Rebero Hotel, were it was decided to “distribute grenades, machetes and other weapons to the Interahamwe and to CDR young people. The objective was to kill Tutsi and other Rwandans who were in the cities and who did not support them [the Interahamwe and CDR]”. The militias continued to grow stronger from late 1993 and into 1994, they acquired more weapons, and set up roadblocks—the ubiquitous barriers that would epitomize the genocide—while harassing passersby. Journalist Joseph Mudatsikira, of *Rwanda Rushya*, described the atmosphere in the capital, in February 1994:

> Terror reigns in the city of Kigali and the surrounding area. People have been killed, injured, and dispossessed of their goods; houses have been looted and destroyed. ... Those responsible for these excesses are known: the MRND and CDR militias, supported by the Presidential Guard and the gendarmes.

---

37 Des Forges (2002b) is of the opinion that “The civil defence was meant to assassinate Tutsis and was implemented in October 1993 with no official act formalising it. . . . political leaders close to . . . Habyarimana began to plan the civilian defence programme. . . . [and although] there were killings of civilians by RPF before 1994 . . . there were enough professional military resources and adequate UNAMIR peacekeeping forces to deal with the aggression and that, therefore, the arming of civilians was unnecessary.”


39 Prunier, op. cit.


This situation became a permanent feature of the city, so much so that one foreign writer, when asking a Rwandan friend why Habyarimana no longer made public appearances, was told that “if he did, he would be subject to verbal and possibly physical assault by the population.” And the ethnicist/racist radio station RTLM, as mentioned before, had even asked over the air, on November 26th, for Prime Minister Uwilingiyimana and Prime Minister-designate Twagiramungu to be killed.

Not everyone was caught up mindlessly in the violence. Several senior FAR officers informed UN Commander General Romeo Dallaire on 3 December about a “Machiavellian plan’ that Habyarimana, personally, was hatching with officers from his home region”, warning that more massacres like those recently perpetrated in regions that have concentrations of Tutsis will happen, as a way to incite the people against the Tutsi and the Accords, and to provoke the RPF into violating the cease-fire. The senior officers also alluded to the plan to kill Twagiramungu, as well as Félicien Gatabazi, leader of the PSD party. The defection of these senior officers, who had been associated with the circles they were informing on, was highly unexpected but it appears that their consciences

---

42 Taylor, 2005: 139.
43 “Habyarimana’s supporters demonstrated outside the university and threatened to close it down. They were led by the wife of the university rector, Pauline Nyiramasuhuko, minister of family and women’s affairs and their son, Shalom Anselme Ntahobari, . . . who would become the most important local militia leader in Butare town” (HRW, op. cit.). Many of the violent actions and demonstrations were adumbrations of the things to come. Pauline Nyiramasuhuko would be found guilty of genocide by the ICTR and will be the first woman to be convicted of directing and ordering genocidal rape. As the war years press on, there appear a large number of genocide perpetrators associated with Habyarimana’s administration and the MRND. Also, Guichaoua, cited in Hirondelle News Agency (Sept 29, 2004), said that Nyiramasuhuko “had a preferential relationship with the Habyarimana family. . . [and that] Pauline Nyiramasuhuko and her husband, Maurice Ntahobari, rose up in various government positions because they were family friends to the presidential couple.
44 OAU, op. cit.
45 OAU (ibid: para 7.15) gives a list of atrocities carried out against Tutsis: October 1990, January 1991, February 1991, March 1992, August 1992, January 1993, March 1993, and February 1994. “On virtually each occasion, they were carefully organized. On each occasion, scores of Tutsi were slaughtered by mobs and militiamen associated with different political parties, sometimes with the involvement of the police and army, incited by the media, directed by local government officials, and encouraged by some national politicians.”
were troubled, because they proclaimed they “were filled with revulsion against these filthy tactics”.  

There were moderate groups that tried to offset the negative influence of the violent methods being employed to destabilize the peace accords, but they couldn’t engineer a coordinated front, nor could peaceful tactics hope to succeed against the militias’ strong-arm techniques (not unlike those employed by Hitler’s Brownshirts in the run-up to the 1933 elections). It is not to Habyarimana’s credit that he was remote from the whole situation, nor supportive to the UN mission, and that Bagosora was effectively acting as the government’s mouthpiece.  

Jacques-Roger Booh-Booh, the UN Secretary-General’s Special Representative, gives below a valuable personal account of his meetings with and thoughts about Habyarimana in the December-January period leading up to the genocide:

- Habyarimana did not facilitate my task and showed me a lukewarm confidence. He did not take seriously the realistic political advice which Boutros Boutros-Ghali and I had granted him. He requested no favors from MINUAR or myself, because he knew that it would be groundless.
- During our numerous interviews, Habyarimana appeared to me as being worried above all about perpetuating his power, following the example of some of his African peers, single-party leaders and fathers of nations.
- He had neither an heir apparent by his side, nor a credible alternative political vision in his persistent blocking of the peace process, and seemed, although he denied it, to personally control, without sharing, the affairs of the country.  

When president Habyarimana received my proposal to take the oath of Head of State, with the Secretaries and members of parliament by December 30th, 1993, at the latest, he flew into a rage. He asks me unceremoniously: “How can the special representative, on his own initiative, fix a date for the implementation of institutions? There is a president of the Republic in this country which has a word to say in a situation like this”.

---


47 Major Brent Beardsley, assistant to General Dallaire, in testimony to the ICTR (Hirondelle, 2004, January 30).

48 Booh-Booh, 2005: 3-65.

49 The United Nations Assistance Mission For Rwanda.
• The President, apparently calmed by my intervention, was nevertheless opposed to
the installation of the FPR battalion in the National Council of Development
[CND] building, which is the seat of legislative power; for him it was very
dangerous because he had to use the street leading to the CND every day to go to
work.
• The withdrawal by France of her contingent Northwest of Kigali, in December
1993, seemed to have annoyed him a lot. . . . in the phone conversation that Boutros
Boutros-Ghali had with him November 3rd, 1993, Habyarimana insisted then that
the French soldiers be made part of MINUAR. But, no assurance in this direction
had been given to him by the Secretary General.

Several important observations are made here:

1) Habyarimana’s distance from the UN contingent, which was also noted by General
Dallaire, and is hard to explain—he has, to this point in the peace process made it widely
known and clear that he supported the democratization of the country. Of the possible
explanations: he has been lying, and now that he is faced with the real prospect of the
BBTG coming into effect he wants nothing to do with it, or he is retreating under threat to
stay out of the peace process;

2) Habyarimana’s desire to stay in power, perhaps because none of his children were
involved in politics and he has no heir—does this mean that his desire to hold on to the
reins of power supersede the needs and desires of the country? Is this related to the above
observation, in the sense that he would scupper the BBTG in hope of keeping the
presidency and the MRND’s hold on power?

3) He had no alternative credible vision of politics for the country, outside the BBTG—
then, in light of 1 and 2 above, the confusion in the president’s mind; his inability to
reconcile the desire to stay in power (in an unworkable system) with the inescapable
impetus toward the BBTG ; and
4) France’s limited support was a serious concern—there was a change in personnel within the African Bureau at the Elysée, and the new director was not sympathetic to Habyarimana’s administration. France had been the only stalwart supplier of arms, troops, and aid, but it’s involvement was no longer to be taken for granted.

During this period of Habyarimana’s struggles, a journalist, Colette Braeckman, met with him and describes her meeting with him like this:

his hair greying, his face gaunt, sighed, ‘It is fashionable today to criticize what we have done. Nevertheless, I can say to you that all of us, together, really tried to tear away from poverty and for a long time we did not do so badly.’

The situation appeared to be wearing him down. His weariness, in some part, may have been connected to the alleged marital problems he was having. A witness at a hearing in the Office of the King’s Prosecutor, Brussels, testified that

Abbot Spiridion Kageyo, the curate of Rambura. . . . was the confidant and confessor of President Habyarimana and knew perfectly well that the President wished to divorce his wife, this meaning under the terms of Rwandan legislation that the President would have retained all his goods while dispossessing his wife and family-in-law. . . . The Jesuit priest Mahame, Provincial Father, was the grey eminence of the President even though they drifted apart towards the end. He was also involved in the couple’s problems and prevented them from divorcing by persuading the President to accept the Arusha Agreements and not allow the divorce scandal to bursts out, suggesting that he should divorce after transferring the Presidency while recovering his property managed by his brothers-in-law. His confidences were reported to me in late 1993 by Jesuit priest Jean-Berchmans Gasenge, who was in Cyangugu when the events occurred.

The prelude to the genocide had already begun at this point. From a woman who testified at the ICTR, we learn that her husband, who was working as a driver in the office

---

51 Joseph Twahirwa testimony, Office of the King’s Prosecutor, Brussels, Annex: Hearing 1, No. 49500, April 1995.
of the president, in the intelligence unit, and involved in politics with the MRND party, had revealed to her that if he

remained within the MRND, it would mean that he would start by killing me, and his mother. Because I am Tutsi, and his mother was Tutsi, I understood this to mean that the massacres were going to be against the Tutsi population. As a result of this, my husband wrote a letter of resignation from the party. I think that this was either at the end of 1993 or the beginning of 1994.52

This is a remarkable historical marker, actually putting a genocidal statement in place before April 1994, and a clear indictment of the MRND and its internal policy. If the witness is telling the truth, then it is a true ‘smoking gun’ of intent. French ambassador Martres has said that “diplomats and military officers discussed the risk of genocide beginning in 1990, and . . . the 1994 genocide could have been foreseen in October 1993”.53 UN Secretary General, Boutros-Ghali, at the beginning of 1994, had requested France, the U.S. and Belgium to put pressure on Habyarimana to stop the escalating violence, but France allegedly obstructed the effort. Authorities in New York tilted toward France regarding policy on Rwanda, and also favored Booh-Booh’s information over UNAMIR’s reports. Booh-Booh was a fellow African (from Cameroon) with Habyarimana, and as such he had a biased appreciation of the president’s trustability and aims, hoping to persuade Habyarimana through dialogue to pursue the peace agreement.

Even Boutros-Ghali who, from 13 January,

“set a goal of getting Habyarimana to halt the preparations for violence within forty-eight hours, . . . waited until February 10 to take the matter to the Security Council, despite indications much earlier that the Rwandan president did not intend to cooperate”.54

54 HRW, op. cit.
Yet, as André Ntagerura, Minister of Transport, ‘dean’ of the MRND, and thirteen years in the Habyarimana administration, said, on 23 January, “The president was no longer in charge, and the MRND was operating independently of him”. Ntagerura also told General Dallaire not to count on Habyarimana to bridge the differences among the oppositional parties, and that the RPF was trying to persuade Hutu cabinet members to join them and leave the MRND a minority, essentially without power.

Habyarimana Sworn in as President of BBTG

Habyarimana was sworn in as President of the transitional government, before the national and the constitutional court, on 5 January, for a 22-month period, as mandated by the Arusha Accords, but the installation of the BBTG was postponed because of the opposition’s rejection of Habyarimana’s proposed council of ministers. Habyarimana’s oath of president:

I, Habyarimana Juvénal, in the name of Almighty God, solemnly swear before the nation that I will loyally fulfill my functions, remain faithful to the Republic of Rwanda, respect the state institutions, and promote the interests of the Rwandan people, while respecting the basic law and other laws.

In a radio address on 6 January 1994, Habyarimana gave his explanation for the problems with the BBTG:

I should like to inform you that we had promised ourselves that we would establish before 31 December 1993 the transitional institutions provided for in the Arusha Peace Agreement. This has not been possible, for the consultations between political parties, including the RPF, have not yet resulted in conclusions permitting the establishment of the transitional national assembly and the formation of the

---

55 Dallaire, 2003: 162.
56 Ibid.
57 Court of Appeals Justice, Joseph Kavaruganda (Habyarimana’s former classmate at the Kabgayi Junior Seminary), administered the oath to him Jan 5th, but had fallen out with the president.
58 BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, January 6, 1994; Embassy of Rwanda in Switzerland, 8-February 2005.
BBTG. . . . officials of the RPF have been in Kigali since 20 December 1993, that yesterday, 5 January 1994, the President of the Republic took the constitutional oath provided for in the Peace Agreement, and that intensive consultations which will result in the designation of members of parliament and of the Government, are currently under way. For the time being, the MRND, MDR, PSD and PDC parties and also the RPF have already made available lists of members who will be part of those two institutions. There seems to be consensus on these lists. The discussions now under way concern the list from the Liberal Party which has split into two factions. . . . I am continuing to take initiatives with a view to finding this much-needed balance. Accordingly, on 27 December 1993, I organized a meeting of leaders of political parties who are to participate in the BBTG. I still hope that these consultations will have a successful outcome.59

Before the 5 January planned inauguration, Booh-Booh had had a foreboding about the BBTG’s chances:

Although the date for setting up the transitional institutions had been set as 5 January 1994, and the security battalion and RPF officials who were to take on high responsibilities during the transition had arrived in Kigali, I noted that some political parties had still not ironed out their internal differences. The suggestions made by religious leaders, Western ambassadors in Kigali and UNAMIR to assist them in reaching a compromise with respect to MDR and PL came to nothing. How do you put institutions in place under such conditions? . . . . Within MRND as within RPF, everyone wanted to control the transitional institutions. In the end, the distribution of posts accepted by the political parties in Arusha was poorly handled as a result of the political stance of the two main parties to the Arusha Accord, MRND and RPF.

The President of the Republic would not hear of being brought before the Constitutional Court by two thirds of members present and voting an Assembly controlled by RPF in the event that the fundamental law was violated. His demands went as far as rejecting any Tutsi Minister of Justice from PL and any Minister of the Interior designated by RPF.

RPF was also determined not to allow MRND to control the Assembly and the transitional Government, which would jeopardize its vital interests. RPF wanted the institutions put in place . . . [but] did not want to allow Habyarimana and MRND to manipulate the small parties as they liked and control the peace process. . . . In the face of these contradictory MRND and RPF positions, calls for negotiations and compromise proved vain, because both sides had greatly distanced themselves from the Arusha Accords.60

59 BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, ibid.
60 Booh-Booh, 2005: 3-4.
The Prime Minister, Uwilingiyimana, tired of the stalemate, which threatened to destroy the implementation of the Accords, published the list of deputies to be sworn in on 5 January. Habyarimana immediately informed the PM that he would prevent the swearing-in ceremony of deputies and ministers if her list were followed through, and on the 5th he actually had his troops stationed in parliament to stop the delegates.

The *Interahamwe* militia, supported by members of the Rwandan Armed Forces and the Presidential Guard, also took over some major roads in Kigali that day. In particular, they blocked two junctions on either side of the Parliament building where the RPF military officials were housed, and made no secret of the fact that they wanted to fight them. UNAMIR soldiers and Rwandan civilians were assaulted and stripped of their valuables. RTLM appealed to the people to join with the militia in terrorizing the population of Kigali. Meanwhile, UNAMIR remained silent in its barracks. UNAMIR soldiers and civilians had been advised not to move from their homes. UNAMIR did not contribute to ensuring security anywhere in Kigali that day as expressly required of it by the Security Council. . . . General Dallaire's attitude remained a real mystery to me. To see UNAMIR soldiers humiliated in this way was a nightmare.61

Booh-Booh was invited by Habyarimana to attend a meeting of the signatories to the Arusha Accord at the president’s office on 8 January. The Prime Minister, Uwilingiyimana, and opposition party cabinet ministers were there, along with the RPF’s first vice-president, Patrick Mazimpaka, and the Tanzanian Ambassador as a facilitator. From the start, Habyarimana and Uwilingiyimana got in a heated argument, with the president accusing the prime minister of making them look ridiculous by her poorly-considered actions of publishing the delegates names, to which the PM accused the president of trying to sabotage the peace process, calling him “The number one liar in the country”, after which the meeting suddenly ended. This aborted gathering signaled a

---

61 Booh-Booh, ibid: 5.
serious divorce between Habyarimana and Uwilingiyimana.62 Her fate was sealed from that point, and she was among the first opposition members to be killed at the start of the genocide—Bagosora is highly culpable: in a meeting including Major Beardsley, of the UNAMIR force, he apparently

used swearwords each time the prime minister’s name was mentioned. ‘I sat next to Bagosora in the meeting,’ Beardsley said. ‘Every time Agathe’s name was mentioned, he swore in French and showed no respect for Agathe.’63

Two days after the failed inauguration, there was a definitive meeting at MRND headquarters that included key Hutu Power personnel MRND president, Ngirumpatse, Minister of Defense, Bizimana, Army Chief of Staff, Nsabimana, National Police commander, Gen. Ndindilyimana, and Interahamwe president, Kajuga, as well as secret police (SCR) operatives. The group resolved: to store arms at the homes of trustworthy army officers, because UNAMIR had recently seized a cache of weapons; to target UNAMIR Belgian soldiers in an attempt to get them to leave the country; and to continue attacking Tutsis, as well as opposition party members.64 The next day the Interahamwe conducted a violent demonstration as the National Police stood aside. Reminiscent of the “Bahutu Ten Commandments”, a written invective titled “Seventeen Ways to Treat a Hutu” was circulated, in Uganda as well as Rwanda, and “includes advice to Tutsis to carry a bamboo stick to identify them as such, and a warning that a child born to a Tutsi mother and Hutu father should be killed by its mother or her neighbours”.65

62 Booh-Booh, ibid: 81-82.
63 Hirondelle, 2004: op. cit.
64 HRW, op. cit.
65 The Economist, 1994: 43.
On 11 January, General Dallaire got wind of above Hutu Power meetings’ plans, and, along with Booh-Booh, met Habyarimana to warn him that they would inform the Security Council if any threats of violence were carried out”.66 The same day, ministers Nyiramasuhuko and Nzabonimana, and authorities of Kigali prefecture, joined in a vicious demonstration by the *Interahamwe* and CDR. It is a debatable how much Habyarimana was directly involved in the escalating violence, especially by the CDR and the *Interahamwe*, but at this juncture a high-level informant, named Jean-Pierre, who worked directly for the MRND president, and for the army chief of staff, declared that the president didn’t have full control over all elements of the MRND or the faction that surrounded him.67 Meanwhile, Justin Mugenzi, minister of trade and industry, and PL leader, who had been a staunch enemy of Habyarimana, made open his dramatic switch from liberal politician to Hutu Power extremist, in a rally held in Nyamirambo stadium, Kigali, on 16 January, where his accomplices surreptitiously distributed weapons. The next day, assassins made a failed attempt on his life. Rwandan leaders acknowledged that an explosion of violence was never far from the surface as long as the Accords remained in gridlock.

Over the next week, the pressure on Habyarimana to institute the Accords ramped up considerably. Boutros-Ghali sent a rapid démarche to Habyarimana demanding him to act within forty-eight hours. The U.S. and Belgian ambassadors, plus the French *chargé d’affaires*, all visited Habyarimana, urging him to carry out the Accords, and the U.N. was

---

66 HRW, op cit.
68 Acquitted of genocide by the ICTR in February 2014.
ready to go to the Security Council, one of its representatives, Iqbal Riza, recommending that Habyarimana’s behavior “should be evaluated in two areas: first, disarming the population and dismantling the stocks of weapons and second, forming the transitional government”. But he was not encouraging, admitting that the militias were continuing to distribute weapons, this despite the fact that the president and the MRND persistently refuted the idea that the Interahamwe were engaged in military activities. The Interahamwe were part of a self-defense plan, called “Organization of civilian self-defense” (“Organisation de l’Auto-Défense Civile”), hatched by elements in the government and seconded by Habyarimana in March the previous year. It was to be employed under the general direction of the interior and defense ministers, consisting of a matrix of organs and committees able to coordinate administrative, military, and political agents trained to conduct the population “in self-defense against the RPF, protect public property, obtain information on the presence of the enemy locally and denounce “infiltrators” and enemy “accomplices,” to provide information to the armed forces, and to counter any enemy action until the armed forces arrived”. This plan had now (17 February) come to the attention of some officers in the gendarmerie, and when they

---

69 Assistant to Kofi Annan (who was Assistant Secretary-General, Peacekeeping Operations until March ‘93, then became Under-Secretary-General). Boutros-Boutros Ghali was UN Secretary-General through the Arusha Accords and the genocide.
70 HRW, ibid.
71 Ibid.
72 ICTR, Prosecutor v. Bagosora (p. 4, para 156 & 157), “Rwanda’s Gendarmerie Nationale was comprised of approximately 6,000 personnel in early 1994. The chief of staff of the gendarmerie in 1994 was General Augustin Ndimbiliyimana whose functions were performed with the assistance of four bureaus: G-1 (Personnel and Administration), G-2 (Intelligence), G-3 (Military Operations) and G-4 (Logistics). The main responsibility of the gendarmerie was to maintain public order and to enforce Rwanda’s laws. However, where necessary, gendarmes could participate in military operations with the Rwandan Army. This was particularly so during war-time. When so deployed, they generally received “secondary” assignments, such as guarding military positions. The gendarmerie was reported to be poorly equipped, irrespective of whether it was performing a police or military role. Gendarmes
approached Habyarimana about it he replied that “If the RPF begins the war, we have plans to deal with their accomplices”.73 When they expressed their fear that a war might ensue, he deferred them to the minister of defense, who directed them to the army chief of staff, Nsabimana, and the matter was checked. Three days later, Nsabimana showed Jean Birara at the National Bank a list of 1,500 persons to be eliminated in Kigali. The same day, assassins tried to kill Prime Minister-designate Twagiramungu. The next day, 21 February, Félicien Gatabazi, the leader of the PSD, was murdered, and UN civil police investigating the case reported that those involved were close to Habyarimana, including his son-in-law, Alphonse Ntilivamunda. Following the arrest of some suspects, the police and the Kigali prosecutor were subsequently threatened by Simbikangwa, a secret service torturer.

Gatabazi’s murder was part of a series of killings perpetrated by the hardliners at this time, targeting politicians who were trying to get the BBTG on track again;74 in retaliation, the extremist CDR party’s leader, Martin Bucyana, was killed in Butare.75 Regarding Habyarimana’s relationship to the CDR, Alphonse Higaniro,76 in testimony to the ICTR, said that the alliance began at the end of 1993, lasted only two or three months, and failed

---

73 HRW, ibid. “At a party celebrating national day of Senegal, Bagosora told people, “The only plausible solution for Rwanda would be the elimination of the Tutsi.” Among those present at the time were Dallaire, Booh-Booh, Maral, and Shariyah Khan, adviser to Booh-Booh. Bagosora reportedly told Maral that if the RPF attacked successfully, the Rwandan forces had plans for guerrilla warfare against them.”

74 “Gatabazi . . . played a key role in the PSD and in the democratization process, most recently in helping to broker party differences and reestablish the unity of the opposition parties. . . . Gatabazi came into direct conflict with the president over a plan to reorganize the ministry in a way that would sideline the president's son-in-law, director of the lucrative office of bridges and roads. Rumors suggested that the son-in-law controlled a slush-fund used to finance MRND and CDR activities, and, some say, death squad activities. The reorganization plan, which needed presidential signature, has never been approved” (Ambassador Rawson, cable to State Dept., 24 Feb. 1994).

75 HRW, ibid. At Martin Bucyana’s funeral in February 1994, Ngeze said that if President Habyarimana were to die, the Tutsi would not be spared (ICTR, Case No. ICTR-99-52-T).

76 Director of SORWAL, a matchstick factory, minister of transport and communication. After disagreements with Habyarimana’s brother-in-law, Sagatwa, he was exiled in 1992 to southern Rwandan. Sentenced by the ICTR to 20 years in prison for genocide.
because the CDR was opposed to the Accords and opposed to the president, whom they considered soft.

On 25 February, the day before the BBTG was set to be installed, Habyarimana called an all-party gathering, apparently in an effort to discuss ways to circumvent the Arusha Accords by interpreting them in a more acceptable way to the extremists, especially in a way that included the CDR, somewhat appeased the military, and made it possible to block RPF initiatives, as well as the collusion of moderate politicians with the RPF. Boutros-Boutros Ghali, when he got wind of the meeting, called the president and gave him “a shot across the bow” as a warning that he should not try to recreate a government outside the Arusha context. On the same day, Habyarimana called Booh-Booh to warn him that his life was in danger.

The next day, Habyarimana arrived at the National Development Council building in anticipation of installing the BBTG, only to be faced with the absence of the RPF, the PSD and of the two prime ministers. Those attending the ceremony included Booh-Booh, Gen Dallaire, the diplomatic corps in Kigali and other representatives. Habyarimana announced over Radio Rwanda:

I cannot establish a transitional broad-based transitional government while the prime minister who will lead it is absent. . . . Somebody wanted to make a joke. He said: “Honestly, it is a strange situation in Rwanda, to have two prime ministers, one for a government that no longer functions, and another for a government that has not yet arrived”. The ceremony was . . . scheduled to take place yesterday afternoon. But with the death of Gatabazi, we had to postpone it until this morning at 10:00, and at 8:00 pm the prime minister postponed it another 14 hours. . . . I do not see, after all these consultations and discussions, what is left for me to do. So,

---

77 Also on this day, Habyarimana confided to Booh-Booh that his life had been threatened, but did not reveal by whom (OAU, op. cit.).
78 Embassy cable from Rawson, 24 February 1994.
79 HRW, ibid.
since the media are here, I take this opportunity to launch an appeal to the Rwandan population not to lose hope, to remain committed to peace, which they have always sought and abided by, and which was disrupted by an unfortunate chance. Let all the events we have gone through, the disasters we have talked about, be a lesson for us to remain united despite the various parties to which we belong, despite the various regions we were born in and despite our ethnic affiliations. We all are and we all remain Rwandans, all equal, with equal rights.\textsuperscript{80}

On the 27\textsuperscript{th}, Habyarimana called another meeting of all parties, as he had done two days earlier, and at the end of the gathering they issued a communiqué that stated they had found a solution to one of the two main problems holding up the BBTG installation, to wit:\textsuperscript{81}

\begin{itemize}
\item All the 11 deputies appearing in the list of 5 January 1994, will be sworn in while the case of the 4 deputies in the list being contested would continue through the judicial process.
\item Concerning Ministerial positions, members of the Political Bureau of the MDR would submit a list of two ministers to the Prime Minister Designate who, on his part, would have the right to designate one minister (for a total of three ministers for the MDR).
\item The second point in the conclusions of the communiqué seem to indicate that consensus has still not been reached on the problem of the Parti Libéral, as it appears that one of the two factions of the PL, namely the so-called “Lando” faction (referring to Mr. Landouald Ndasingwa, Minister of Social Affairs) reportedly expressed “serious” reservations on the following formula apparently supported by the other faction, namely the so-called “Mugenzi” faction (referring to Mr. Justin Mugenzi, Minister of Trade):
\begin{itemize}
\item The “Mugenzi” faction would designate 5 parliamentarians and two ministers;
\item The “Lando” faction would designate 6 parliamentarians, including a candidate for the post of speaker of the transitional parliament, and one minister.
\end{itemize}
\end{itemize}

The only problem is that the solution for the PL has always been opposed by the RPF, and the political parties know that. But an important shift has occurred among the parties, which Booh-Booh explains:

\textsuperscript{80} Radio Rwanda, February 26, 1994.
\textsuperscript{81} UN cable: Booh-Booh to Kofi Annan, 28 February 1994.
With Mr. Landouald Ndasingwa apparently more isolated than previously, it could be said that his faction generally regarded as allied to the FPR, has suffered in favour of the “Mugenzi” faction which is widely seen as allied to President Habyarimana and the MRND. The pressure could now shift from the President to Mr. Ndasingwa as well as the FPR to make the necessary compromises in order to allow the transitional institutions to be put in place. This pressure might include the “moral” influence of the church since, as you are aware, the proposed solution for the PL problem had earlier been advance by the council of bishops.  

But there is an even more serious hurdle in the path of the BBTG’s installation, which is the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of the two armies. Habyarimana had already made it known that the government had no money to carry out the DDR, and that his government would need assistance in the following areas before it could be considered: “1) organization of cantonment sites [military quarters]; 2) repossession of arms illegally in the possession of civilians; 3) demining operations; 4) payment of demobilization bonuses; 5) training and education of demobilized soldiers; and 6) provision of employment for soldiers needing no further education/training.” The DDR was geared to begin three months after the BBTG was put in place, but everyone acknowledged that the BBTG would collapse without DDR funding. The problem was that the funds were not available, and no country or organization is willing to underwrite the large cost.

Habyarimana finally met General Dallaire, on 1 March, the last day of UNAMIR’s mission. Also on hand were Ruhigira, chef de cabinet, Nsabimana, FAR chief of staff, Ndindiliyimana, head of the gendarmerie, and Bagosora. They talked for about 45

---

82 Ibid.
minutes, about the internally-displaced person problem, the recent drought, and the number of peacekeepers needed to effectively carry out the UN mission. Habyarimana showed complete distrust in the RPF, and voiced his concern that the MRND should have more weight in the negotiations, as they had been dictated to by the RPF up to then. Dallaire told the president that the World Bank was threatening to stop its funds to him if he didn’t get the BBTG up and running “by today”. That meeting was followed by one with Ambassador Flaten, who, in a 2005 interview, said that he believed Habyarimana “was consistent in his support for the process he had asked us to help in. The regime was working with us in building democracy and peace.” Flaten also didn’t agree with the allegations that the 1994 genocide was planned in advance.

“That part does not fit with my experience in Rwanda. We learned of a plot to kill Tutsis, saw lists of people to be killed, and learned of threats against those supporting the Arusha accords. But we were not aware of plans to commit genocide.”

His opinion was that a small group of extremists, particularly the CDR, were able to overcome the desire of many government officials and derail the Accords.

At the beginning of March, the Belgians received word from an MRND informant that the party had developed a plan to kill all the Tutsi in Kigali if the RPF started the war again. Habyarimana is alleged to have ordered a stop to the arming of militia, but it didn’t take effect. Another head of the CDR, Alphonse Ingabire, was murdered, and in response the CDR attacked some PSD members, killing one and wounding others. In the circumstances, Rwandan NGOs understandably pleaded with the UN Security Council to beef up and keep UNAMIR in place, otherwise the people would be left unprotected to fall

85 Hirondelle, 2005.
victim to certain violence. This plea occurred during the import into Rwanda of 581,000 machetes by Félicien Kabuga, the main funder of the Interahamwe, and father-in-law to one of Habyarimana’s sons.86

From 26 February to 8 March, Habyarimana took off to meet with the leaders of the neighboring countries in an attempt to gain support for his and the other parties, and angered the RPF, who rightly saw him as trying to hijack the negotiations. His trip seemed predictable and mostly fruitless: Museveni would not give any assurance that Uganda will stop its support of the RPF, while Tanzania’s Mwinyi, who had given much of his time facilitating the Accords, was losing tolerance with their not having been initiated. When he asked Habyarimana when the government and the National Assembly of the grand transition would be put in place, the president replied (with some trepidation, one would hope), “I am not in a position to give a specific date but we hope, we are confident that it is not a long way off”.87 Mobutu, the grand prevaricator, remained a staunch ally, but Burundi’s Ntaryamira had just been installed in office since the beginning of February and was a relative unknown. At home in Rwanda, the MRND was unhappy with Habyarimana for meeting Museveni without their approval. They weren’t the only ones unhappy. Belgium’s minister of foreign affairs, Claes, on a visit to Rwanda at the time, gave a strong indication of his country’s being fed up with Habyarimana’s unwarranted foot-dragging by pronouncing “It is five to twelve”.88 This is a turnaround for the Belgians. As Kuperman points out, at first

87 Radio Rwanda, 1994a, March 11.
President Habyarimana was seen as a relative moderate who would contain the extreme elements of his inner circle. In five Belgian cables from January 31 to March 18, 1994, Habyarimana was portrayed as making good-faith efforts to implement the Arusha accords, in contrast to other politicians.  

As Col. Vincent, who was in charge of military cooperation with FAR from 1991 to 1994, recalled, “Habyarimana was respected and had control of the system, which enabled him to limit the earlier massacres. . . . Nobody foresaw the assassination of the president.” Yet Vincent’s assessment does not jibe with the several testimonies which clearly state that Habyarimana had lost control of the situation early in the year. The U.S. position at the time, and Ambassador Rawson’s thumbnail assessment of Habyarimana, can be seen in the following memorandum.

---

89 Kuperman, 2001: 105.
90 Ibid.
91 Memorandum from David Rawson to Deputy Assistant Secretary Irvin, 18 March 1994.
As March wore on, the threats and violence carried on unabated. On the 19th, Capt. Simbikangwa called Supreme Court justice, Kavaruganda, an *Inyenzi*, and said that the men to kill him were already chosen. On 23 March, an *Interahamwe*, Kayonde, repeated...
the threat, so Kavuruganda informed President Habyarimana, asking for protection, but to no effect—he was killed the first day of the genocide\(^{92}\) along with many other moderates and supporters of the Accords.

**The Failure to Install the Transition Government**

On 24 March, Habyarimana informed Deputy Assistant Secretary Irvin that his government was ready to set up the BBTG, but Ambassador Rawson wanted to make certain all issues had been solved. He was told that the CDR’s exclusion was still a sore point, and Rawson agreed that the CDR should be included but that U.S. efforts to convince the RPF had had not gained any ground. Habyarimana’s response that he had not yet seen the lists from all the parties was troubling, even though he promised that he would attend the installation ceremonies at the National Assembly Building (CND). When Rawson did receive the parties’ lists, there were different candidates for the MDR and the PDI, and a CDR deputy was added. The ambassador tried to bring the list into line with what would be acceptable to all parties, including the RPF, but failed. The next morning, at the Assembly Building, Prime Minister Uwilingiyimana conferred privately with the RPF’s Mazimpaka and Karemera, and President’s director of cabinet, Ruhigira, in an antechamber, where they solved the PDI and MDR problem, but the RPF\(^{93}\) was immovable

---

\(^{92}\) In Stanton, 2002: n.p.

\(^{93}\) It is particularly revealing that on March 22nd, Mrs. Habyarimana telephoned Arlene Render, Director of U.S. State Dept. Office of Central African Affairs, who was visiting Rwanda with Prudence Bushnell, “pleading that the country was going over to the patriotic front. The president needed people on his side” (Nshimiyimana, 1995: 91-98). Mme. Habyarimana has consistently claimed that she never met her husband’s friends nor did she ever talk politics with her husband, patently absurd notions in a small country like Rwanda, and in her position as First Lady. That she had Render’s phone number, and took the initiative to intervene in the peace process, shows that she had the privileged knowledge that Render and Bushnell were both arguing aggressively for a stronger mandate and troop increase for UNAMIR. Her interview with Nshimiyimana in 1995, as well, shows the reach of her understanding of political events and actors (see Booh-Booh, op. cit.: 131, where he describes Mme. Habyarimana joining him, the president, and co-workers over a lunch where serious political matters were discussed). An even more extreme
on the CDR’s immediate inclusion in the assembly, but agreed that its case would be “judged by the National Assembly on a three-fifths vote at the appropriate time”, and that they “would meet with the CDR under UN auspices and further discuss the issue on the afternoon of March 25th”. Uwilingiyimana was to announce the installation ceremony for the next day, but it is postponed until the 28th.

The 28 March installation ceremony—seven months after the signing of the Accords—was boycotted by Habyarimana because the CDR was refused inclusion, and “he was determined to have the CDR seated because it could provide him with the final vote necessary to block any effort to impeach him”. It is a significant date, because it would turn out to have been the last chance for the implementation of the Accords before the genocide unfolded. Here is Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s impression of Habyarimana as written in a letter he asked Booh-Booh to send the president:

After a serious investigation and on the basis of the reports of five different sources General Secretary of which Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belgium can assert that president Habyarimana did not make every effort to realize the national reconciliation. The implementation of the institutions of the transition has two months of delay! "We intend to remove all our troops of RWANDA and to close the file. . . . I did the impossible to help you and you did not make every effort to help us. The withdrawal of troops can be made in 15 days or in one month. It is what happened in Angola, in Afghanistan, in Lebanon, and recently in Somalia. These two months of delay cost several million dollars to the UN. This situation cannot last any longer. You do not want peace, you have a dialectic of confrontation on both sides; the organization has other priorities in the world. You do not want to help us, we are going to leave you.” . . . [and after telephoning Habyarimana four times] You continue your politicking and it is the Rwandan

---

94 Bushnell arrived on the 25th, and said to Booh-Booh that UNAMIR’s mandate would likely not be renewed if the BBTG continued in stalemate.
96 HRW, op. cit.
people who suffer. We are going to withdraw; it will take place discreetly. . . . You do not deserve the help which we gave you. You gave nothing to us in exchange.  

The UN Secretary General’s message was unmistakable, frank, and frustrated; he was fed up with Habyarimana’s stalling, and giving him a final ultimatum—act immediately or we throw you to the wolves of your own making. This, coming from the Secretary General, had to have galvanized the president into signing the Accords, and without any further delay. Even if Habyarimana felt he could eventually bring aboard enough supporters from the other parties to give him and the MRND veto control in the National Assembly, any hopes of slowly eating away at the RPF’s demands in the protocols had by now evaporated. The Accords had turned into a zero-sum, winner-take-all game, and a deadly one; the RPF was not giving up anything to Habyarimana. As Booh-Booh points out in his book:

The FPR was also at the origin of the collapse of the negotiations when Habyarimana, on February 25th and 27th, 1994, managed to agree with all the member parties of the coalition which signed the Arusha agreement. Also, the FPR, having negotiated unsuccessfully with the CDR, turned against the special representative, the political parties and the accredited ambassadors in Kigali, as soon as it noticed that finally it was isolated and that everybody was favorable to the inclusion of the CDR in the peace process which it had just accepted. . . .The FPR finally seemed to dread the democratic outcome of the peace process. Since 1960, the vote in Rwanda was married to ethnicity. Serge Cordelier, who evokes this hypothesis, writes:

“Leaders of the rebellion, in particular Paul Kagame, who represents an ultra-minority group, could not imagine winning democratic elections during the period of transition instituted by the Arusha agreements.”  

In other words, it can be assumed that, even before the first day of the invasion, the RPF leadership’s intentions were to capture Kigali quickly, by easily and quickly overwhelming

---

98 Ibid: 117.
the poorly disciplined FAR troops, and to take control of the government. They apparently weren’t prepared for a drawn-out conflict, and certainly not primed for sitting down at the negotiation table to work out a cease-fire and peace. It must be handed to them, however, that they were enough of a disciplined and intelligently led organization to push forward a set of one-sided demands, knowing that the government was divided among itself as a result of the newly promulgated multiparty system, and had few bargaining chips in the face of the RPF’s superior military power. The RPF, then, held all the cards: they could make the outrageous demands at Arusha that they did or take the country by armed force. Negotiations, at the beginning as they regrouped, offered them the appearance of being interested in peace, in alleviating the refugee problem, and in taking part in a new, democratic government (the BBTG), and thus gained them the moral high ground and a semblance of respect from the international community. It is doubtful, however, that—after some time ruminating over the difficulty they would face as a minority in the BBTG (as Cordelier posits above)—they sincerely planned on that eventuality. Once they got their troops installed in the CND building in the center of Kigali, and started to surreptitiously slip quantities of arms in, there was no reason for them to be bound by the Accords.\textsuperscript{99} It highly probable that, whether Habyarimana was assassinated or not, the powder keg that was composed of the Hutu extremists on one side and the RPF on the other, was ready to ignite, and it wouldn’t have needed something as dramatically serious

\textsuperscript{99} Kuperman (2003: 3) believes that “There are four potential explanations for the RPF pursuing a violent challenge that provoked such tragic consequences. . . . The evidence detailed in this study supports only the last explanation. . . . that the RPF rebels expected their challenge to provoke genocidal retaliation but viewed this as an acceptable cost of achieving their goal of attaining power in Rwanda. . . . the findings do suggest that the genocide was foreseeable—and avoidable if the RPF had been willing to compromise either its aspirations or means of pursuing them. The evidence also demonstrates that the international community, by supporting the rebels’ intransigence, inadvertently helped trigger the genocidal backlash

539
as the president’s death. Regarding the RPF’s intentions, Mme. Habyarimana has stated that at a gathering at the Habyarimana home on April 2nd, Booh-Booh told the president that “Mr. Paul Kagame asked me to inform you that he is going to try everything in his power to kill you”.\(^{100}\)

Certainly, Habyarimana’s troubles with Uwilingiyimana gave him no rest. The extremist radio station RTLM announced on April 2 that the prime minister had met with military officers in order to prepare a coup against the president. Des Forges considers it “inconceivable that this group believed it had the remotest chance of overthrowing the President. After all, the prime minister was unable even to have a meeting without its being reported on the Hutu Power radio station”.\(^{101}\) It seems likely that RTLM was trying to foment hatred against, and to isolate, the prime minister, but there is no doubt that there were members of the military that wanted to see Habyarimana gone,\(^{102}\) and Uwilingiyimana’s utter dislike of the president was well known and displayed. RTLM promised to curb the tone of the broadcasts, but didn’t follow through. “When diplomats protested to Habyarimana and other officials about the broadcasts, they claimed that the radio station was a private enterprise, merely exercising its right to free speech”.\(^{103}\) Though

\(^{100}\) Nshimiyimana, 1995: 94. “Before the genocide, a small group of Presidential Guards protected the home in Buye of Dr. Séraphin Bararengana, a physician who was President Habyarimana’s brother” (HRW, op. cit.).

\(^{101}\) OAU, 2000a: Chap. 9.13, April 2, n 11. Interview with Alison Des Forges. C.f. Valérie Bemeriki (ICTR, 3 April 1993b) stated in testimony to the ICTR, “That is how the RPF and its supporters, some of the parties which support it, the few parties which support it, and Rukokoma’s MDR, tried to call a meeting of the armed forces high-ranking officers exclusively from the same region, the south. The meeting was held at Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana’s home during the night of 1 to 2 April 1994, in order to discuss ways and means to overthow, and even, assassinate His Excellency the President, Juvénal Habyarimana.

\(^{102}\) “Dozens of witnesses report that the superior FAR officers who directed the elite units, namely the Para-commando, Presidential Guard, Intelligence and Anti-aircraft battalions, vigorously disputed the negotiations and the Arusha Accords, and asked the soldiers placed under their orders to prepare for war rather than integrating elements of the RPA into the Rwandan army. . . . Lieutenant Colonel Anatole Nsengiyumva clearly threatened to eliminate President Habyarimana if he ever implemented the Arusha Accords” (, 2009: 169).

\(^{103}\) Des Forges, 2007: 47.
the attorney general registered civil complaints, Habyarimana put pressure on him not to act. A disgruntled employee of Radio Rwanda (the government organ), who resigned on 6 April, has said that “Radio Rwanda was in effect the voice of President Habyarimana”, and bemoaned the fact that “It was difficult to do truly professional work as we were constantly faced with demands from the authorities on the manner in which we should work, right down to the formulation of a phrase”.¹⁰⁴

It was in this atmosphere—with the main body of the RPF army camped hardly hours away from the capital, a contingency of its troops stationed in the center of Kigali and being secretly armed (under the peace agreement they weren’t supposed to be armed), and the city and parts of the country racked by violence (which had only momentarily lessened a bit because of the anticipation of a successful BBTG inauguration¹⁰⁵), the opposition parties divided and in some disarray, and the donor nations counting on the government’s near-bankruptcy forcing cooperation—that Habyarimana revealed to Prudence Bushnell a hint of failure. In Bushnell’s remembrance:

He talked about the extent of mistrust within the country, and he really underscored there was a great deal of mistrust, that we need to overcome this mistrust in order to put things in place. He was still optimistic that things would be put in place. He, in fact, said that he would try and sort of overcome the last obstacle before I left Rwanda. I was in Rwanda and was going to Burundi next. He said, ‘Before you leave, I promise I will do this.’ As I was leaving, it didn’t happen. I got a message from him saying, ‘I’m very sorry that this couldn’t take place.’ And do you know, after we evacuated Americans during what then turned out to be the genocide, I received a letter from President Habyarimana saying, ‘I’m really sorry I didn’t implement the peace accords, but I’m going to do it.’¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ There was a widespread feeling that if the Accords weren’t initiated then terrible massacres would break out.
¹⁰⁶ Frontline, 2003b.
In addition, Habyarimana felt dogged by two developed countries and traveled to Gbadolite on 4 April to seek guidance from his long-time friend and ally, President Mobutu, on how to foil them. Honoré Ngbanda, a witness of the last meeting between Habyarimana and Mobutu, describes an unrecognizable and powerless man, who was seeing his situation worsening and death approaching. Regarding the pressure which was eating away at Habyarimana, Ngbanda writes:

The President of Rwanda was scandalized, exasperated, and revolted by what he considered to be the “injustice of Belgians and Americans”. Usually phlegmatic, the man had completely lost his temper. “They ask me every day to give up in favour of Kagame but require absolutely nothing from him in return!” he said, with a broken voice betraying his fury.107

Habyarimana mentioned to Mobutu that he had dependable information reporting a plot to kill him. Mobutu urged him not to attend the summit. By the time Habyarimana travelled to Tanzania in early April to meet with the leaders of neighbouring countries, he was reportedly severely depressed. But, before he left for Dar es Salaam he ordered Enoch Ruhigira, his head of cabinet, to prepare a statement to the effect that “an oath would be taken by members of the transitional government and parliament on 8 April 1994, the day after his return”,108 and for him to meet with the prime minister on 6 April in order to find a way to include the CDR in the BBTG. He also would announce at the 6 April summit in Dar es Salaam that he would install the BBTG when he returned home. These plans would appear to be evidence that the president clearly intended to install the BBTG on the 8th.

107 Ngbanda, quoted in Onana, 2005: 22.
108 Republic of Rwanda, ibid.
The Dar es Salaam Summit and Habyarimana’s Assassination

The Dar es Salaam\textsuperscript{109} summit was an odd and controversial gathering.\textsuperscript{110} Tanzania’s president, Mwinyi, had invited Habyarimana, Museveni, Burundi’s president Ntaryamira, the vice-president of Kenya, Saitoti, and the secretary general of the OAU, Dr. Salim, to “find ways of helping Burundi and Rwanda resolve their political and security problems”.\textsuperscript{111} Mobutu had also been invited, but sent in his place his ambassador to Tanzania, who wasn’t able to explain to President Habyarimana why Mobutu had not come to supply moral support. “Habyarimana reportedly kept looking at his watch all the time, hoping that Mobutu would show up”.\textsuperscript{112} In fact, Mobutu had been forewarned by the French that something bad was going to happen. Mobutu had tried to get in touch with Habyarimana, but when he called Kigali, the president’s wife had answered. For some reason, she never gave Mobutu’s message to her husband. The original arrangement was for Mobutu’s presidential jet to fly Habyarimana and his aides back to Kigali so that Habyarimana’s plane could take the Burundian president back to Bujumbura. But since Mobutu didn’t attend, Habyarimana had been responsible for bringing Ntaryamira with him.\textsuperscript{113}

\par
\textsuperscript{109} Dar es Salaam = “Haven of Peace”
\textsuperscript{110} Madsen (2005: 127-28) contends that “it was the State Department's Africa team that had pressured President Museveni into organizing the Dar es Salaam conference . . . including Habyarimana, Moi, and Mobutu, all of whom were to be assassinated)“. 
\textsuperscript{111} “Communiqué Issued at the End of a Regional Summit Meeting in Dar es Salaam on 6th April 1994 on the Situation Prevailing in Burundi and Rwanda.”
\textsuperscript{112} Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2002: 222-223.
\textsuperscript{113} Ibid.
Habyarimana began the meeting by telling his peers that he was implementing Arusha two days later, then the rest of the day was spent discussing Burundi's political crisis.114

The Dar es Salaam summit, slated to start at 10:30 a.m., didn’t start until 2:00 p.m. because Museveni was late. . . . he led the proceedings of the summit without rigor or any attempt at coherence; . . . concerning the conduct of the debate, an advisor, Juvenal Renzaho, said: ‘I didn’t know if we were going to get through this, but Museveni falls asleep, then when he wakes up, he takes the floor and starts talking from right where he’s been dozing and says nothing at all. He doesn’t care about what’s going on.’115

The summit, slated to focus on Burundi’s problems, ended up spending more time discussing Rwanda. Museveni kept prevaricating, even saying late in the day that the gathering had not sorted out Rwanda’s ethnic problems, to which a disgruntled Habyarimana replied that he had done as much as he could do, having announced at the beginning of the meeting that he was going to initiate the Accords as soon as he returned,116 and retorted, “We are not here to write the history of Rwanda”.117 The meeting ended at 4 pm and was followed by a dinner that went on until 6:30, by which time night had fallen. Habyarimana signed the summit’s final communiqué, which was very brief and contained only a short paragraph about Rwanda:

Para 7. On Rwanda, the leaders noted with concern that all transitional institutions which were supposed to be formed following the signing of the Arusha peace agreement on 4th August, 1993 are not yet fully in place. In this connection, they urged all parties concerned to abide by the letter and spirit of the Arusha peace agreement.

---

114 Caplan, 2010.
115 Cirqueminime. 2007.
116 Braeckman (1994:169-71) clearly shows that under intense pressure to implement the Arusha Accords and to accept its power-sharing arrangement, Habyarimana had resolved to announce major concessions in a national radio broadcast upon returning from Dar es Salaam (Martin, 2002: 26).
117 Ibid.
agreement and especially to establish without further delay all the remaining transitional institutions.\textsuperscript{118}

Habyarimana asked to stay the night, because it was risky to fly back in the dark, but his Tanzanian host replied that no arrangements had been made to take care of guests overnight, so Habyarimana had no choice but to leave, taking with him President Ntaryamira. As they approached Kigali airport, the plane was shot down by ground to air rockets and everyone on board perished. The genocide started only hours later.

Strizek considers that

there are now sound reasons for historians to assume that President Habyarimana did not personally pursue a policy designed to promote ethnic hatred, but that he made a series of political errors, which made such accusations possible. The constant impression he gave was of a man driven, who only succeeded in distancing himself from the expectations of his extended family at the very last minute. His attitude and his many documented warnings to his staff not to fall into the deliberately laid trap of ethnic conflict confirm this. It was not until after his death and the immediate subsequent aggression of the FPR breaching all the ceasefire agreements that the dams burst and the apocalypse became reality.\textsuperscript{119}

Strizek has Habyarimana as a man ‘driven’, and several men near the seat of power have testified that the president was losing or was no longer in control. The question of whether Habyarimana had reached a certain level of incompetence or, in fact, had never really had competence as a president has, strangely enough, not been advanced. Yet, when surveying his twenty years in office, there is little to recommend that he was very successful at the helm. There was no significant improvement of the vast majority of people’s lives, in fact the miniscule elite gained power and incomes far beyond their input to society, creating

\textsuperscript{118} “Even before the meeting of 6 April in Dar es Salaam, president Habyarimana was already preparing to establish the transition institutions, probably within the three days of the summit. According to the Minister for the Interior Munyazesa, the Minister for Commerce, Mugenzi, was going to be released by the President in order to unfreeze the situation, and a few ministries were going to remain initially without holders” (Embassy Kigali to State Dept. Communiqué, 24 May 94, “C. Swinnen mission, interview with former MINAFET of Rwanda, A. Gasana”).

\textsuperscript{119} Strizek, 2003: 24.
and exacerbating a rural and urban divide, the economy was not fully-functioning, having to depend on foreign aid to survive, the one-state government was a disaster, and ignoring the refugee demands as they turned into a threatening organization on the border of the country was a monumental mistake. As a general of the army, he completely failed to recognize the threat of the RPF mobilizing on the border, bungled the chance to secure a reasonable set of terms in the Arusha Accords, and rather than making favorable compromises with the opposition parties so as to combat the RPF through a united front, he persisted in trying to squeeze out as much power for the MRND a possible.

On top of all these failings is the violence his party, its youth militia, and the CDR perpetrated, and the corruption that he was involved in (or at the very least, turned a blind eye toward), especially in conjunction with the akazu. In several ways that we’ve shown, he was caught in a “rhizomic” matrix of personal networks that assures the centralisation of power through the agencies of family, alliance and friendship, in the manner of ancient kingdoms”, as most sub-Saharan new heads of state have been, so is not to be seen as an anomaly on the continent. If not for the 1990 invasion, would he have led the government into a workable, multiparty entity that better served the people? The country faced demographic and economic problems that probably proved intractable, and even a multiparty government is no guarantee that the elite stop siphoning off too much of the profits and international aid—monies crucial for the country’s development—without being productive members of society. Twenty years after the genocide, Rwanda is still dependent on foreign aid for its survival, and it is highly questionable whether

---

120 “According to the African Union, during the nineteen-nineties a quarter of Africa’s gross domestic product was siphoned off by graft” (The New Yorker, 19 January 2015: 31).
121 Bayart, 2009: 261,
Habyarimana could have significantly altered this outcome. Most likely, the other parties’ representatives would still be jockeying and fighting for positions in the government, concerned for their own well-being over that of the populace, as has happened in most other sub-Saharan States.

This paper has not been concerned with the agents who clearly had something to do with orchestrating the genocide; the ICTR and other writers have done much of that work. The concern, rather, has been with trying to build up a workable, but not by any means complete, profile of the first two presidents of a new country. There are elements of both presidencies, but especially of Habyarimana’s, that have received considerable attention in the massive amount of writing expended on Rwanda—the history of the Tutsi-Hutu relationship, and all manner of research in fields that have examined the genocide and its possible roots (demographic pressures and food shortages leading to violence, the disruptive influence of donor aid, etc.)—so there has been no reason to regurgitate those findings, especially since most of the writing on Rwanda has focused on the genocide, barely touching the two presidents. I have been interested in attempting to initiate a ‘filling-in’ of that gap with this paper, but not to completely fill it, because time, money constraints and certain research difficulties have not allowed it.

Also, as a last comment, no examination of a life is ever ‘complete’, humans are simply too complex and, as Durrell’s *Alexandria Quartet* masterfully shows, each individual perceives their own reality, so to say that a work by one writer is a true portrait of the subject is obviously open to contestation. Many things about these two presidents are unknown and will mostly remain so, because so little primary and secondary text is
available, with only small bits of information being added here and there in the future, as some documents turn up and the people still alive who knew the two men come forth with their stories, to add to what we know. Still, an incomplete record is better than a missing one.
APPENDIX A:

“KAYIBANDA’S PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS (EXCERPT) 1961”

“Rwandans, On behalf of the Republic of Rwanda, I the President of the Republic, in order to
- save completely the people of Rwanda and give a true democracy to our country;
- bring peace among citizens and allow them to collaborate in order to safeguard justice and respect for everybody in the new republic;
- protect everybody from the colonization and clientele (ubuhake) (…) in conjunction with the whole population of Rwanda, represented by distinguished persons in this congress held on our wish here in Gitarama on January 28 of New Year 1961, we proclaim this law creating the Republic of Rwanda (…).

All Rwandans are equal before the law without considering “ethnic groups”, family, color or religion.

All Rwandans have same rights according to the bill of human rights, with the exception of some according to the law.

Every Rwandan can go to school. Schools which will not follow directives regarding quotas according to the number of individuals of each ethnic group will be closed or given to other owners.”

122 In Mbonyumutwa D., “Disikuru ya Prezida wa Republika kuwa 28/1/1961”, Kinyamateka (Translated from Kinyarwanda):
APPENDIX B:

THE 1962 RWANDAN CONSTITUTION

This original document can be downloaded at http://www.wdl.org/en/item/2559/
APPENDIX C:

KAYIBANDA’S ADDRESS TO THE COUNTRY, 10 APRIL 1964:
“DEMOCRACY IS INCOMPATIBLE WITH VIOLENCE.”

Fellow Rwandans,
Inhabitants of Rwanda,

On 28 January, I informed you that the fundamental objectives of our Republic include, inter alia, peace among the population at all levels and in all administrative organs. I told you that the peace we have enjoyed for one and a half years, particularly, since independence, has been disrupted by refugees that have transformed themselves into the Inyenzi, attacked the government, which protects you all and, above all, prohibits any unqualified person from interfering in the search for offences.

We congratulate the people who have followed our password, which has enabled the Hutus to continue to pursue peace.

We congratulate State employees investigating crimes, policemen and soldiers, for striving to accomplish the mission that the country has entrusted to them. We congratulate the citizen of this country who did not take advantage of the Inyenzi provocation to acquire the bad habits of violence. On 28 January, I reminded you that democracy is incompatible with violence. I urge all of you to continue in the good path that protects our democracy, indeed, democracy without violence. Power exists: the legislative, executive, judiciary and State employees whose responsibility is to offer assistance to all advocates of democracy.

Democracy is incompatible with violence: I am speaking to all categories of State employees.

Democracy is incompatible with violence: I am speaking to all authorities entrusted with the power to ensure security and lead the population to develop the country, the communes and their homes. Democracy is incompatible with democracy even though this democracy would be concealed by treachery comparable to that of time past. Violence is incompatible with violence: that explains why every citizen, no matter how small, victim of violence, must have recourse to the nearest administrative or judicial officer of law and order. All the authorities must maintain peace and abolish violence by adhering to the law and the usual good habits. Democracy is incompatible with violence: given that violence and chaos undermine work and impede the development of your homes, they bode ill for all countries, irrespective of the perpetrator, even when concealed by lies. You witnessed the situation of the perpetrators of the 1959 chaos and violence: they had hoped to win by violence, chaos and deceit but they found all of us vigilant, since we say no to violence.

Democracy is incompatible with violence: I am speaking to militants of all political parties of this country. They should have peace, each one within his party; otherwise, the country and the government of the Republic would not recognize them as a true political party. Democracy is incompatible with violence: I recall these words at all meetings, irrespective of whether they are party meetings, meetings organized by the authorities for the population, meetings of the Parliament or government council. Meetings advocating peace should be propagated during others. Democracy is incompatible with violence: in
opulence and poverty, particularly, for a country like ours, which is in search of anything that can develop it. Democracy is incompatible with violence: any peace-loving person should respect it; any person who commits violent offences and anyone who causes chaos must know that they are supporting the Inyenzi, or that they are accomplices. They must know that they are being used as accomplices and the passageway for the Inyenzi. Democracy is incompatible with violence: any person who commits violent offences and anyone who causes chaos must be denounced to the authorities that are expected to examine the issue and punish those guilty in accordance with the applicable law.

Democracy is incompatible with violence: Anyone who hesitates to lodge his complaint with the authorities has not yet embraced democracy. There do exist frivolous complaints: false allegations or those that arouse jealousy or hatred. Democracy is incompatible with violence: Each time that a citizen arouses jealousy and hatred, he wastes time that should be used to work for his country, for his home, to establish democracy in the Republic. He becomes an accomplice of the Inyenzi, the enemies of Rwanda. No one should call anybody Inyenzi, since this is an insult. If he suspects him to be an Inyenzi, then he has the duty to inform the appropriate authorities and thereafter go about his business. Democracy is incompatible with violence: You have all understood that the Inyenzi use their attacks to pursue this objective. Violence and chaos encroach on time that should be devoted to the development of the country and its citizens.

Fellow Rwandans, I am reminding you of this idea, for in democracy, peace for the entire population is a development factor that should be taken into consideration. Avoiding violence and chaos should be the watchword for every citizen, be he big or small, an authority or not. You have constantly requested magistrates to be rigorous particularly on this important point of maintaining peace among the population. The Government has forced nobody to belong to any party: it is important for all to be tolerant, acknowledge and respect the law. Whoever denounces injustice, pursues the democratic program but does not love peace must be punished independently of his party, for the law requires every citizen to avoid violence and chaos.

We extend special congratulations to all the authorities and the entire population, determined to fight the violence imposed on the country by the Inyenzi attacks. We congratulate all militants who love peace, without violence or chaos, and respect the law governing the country. Whoever commits violent offences and whoever causes chaos, unconsciously supports Inyenzi violence and treachery. Support the development of the Republic and your homes and may the peace of the Lord be always with you.

Kigali, 10 April 1964
G. Kayibanda
President of the Republic
APPENDIX D:

“MESSAGE TO THE NATION FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR PEACE AND NATIONAL UNITY ON THE OCCASION OF THE JULY 1973 COUP D’ÉTAT.”

Yesterday you became aware of important decisions taken by the command of the National Police to save the country from the disorder which was going to degenerate into panic. The National Police, which has always protected you, kept its sacred duty to protect the peace and national unity.

The politicians in this country had stopped being concerned about peace. Uncivil elements took advantage of the weariness of the person that the Nation had chosen to manage it and drove him to forget his sense of national unity. But fortunately for our country, this clique of criminals is small. I ask all you citizens to denounce these conspirators.

The National police intervened as the country was falling into the abyss, and has just saved the peace, this peace which we want to be long-lasting and sustaining the progress of national development. You all have the duty to work for restoring peace and national unity; it is for your interest and the good of your families. It is for the prosperity of the whole nation. Love your fellow countrymen without distinction of ethnic or regional origin. Reject any propaganda of a regionalist character. Indicate to the authorities anybody who urges you to work against national unity.

Follow the advice and the instructions which the Committee gives you for peace and national unity. It is particularly grateful to you for the peace which you secured within the first hours of the new orientation of our country. This peace is a new proof of confidence and support of your National Police. Every morning, during the raising of the national colors, the National Police will greet your wisdom.

Municipal authorities, collaborate closely with the new prefectural authorities. Be wary of those who will try to lead you to compromise. State employees and officials, resume your responsibilities with dedication. The country needs you. Work in peace for your families and for your country.

As for the politicians who have just been deposed by our necessary action, we repeat that they have nothing to worry about, as they obey our instructions to stop political activities for the time being and dedicate themselves completely to the development of our country following the new orientation which we show them.

All willing foreigners, stay peacefully in your occupations. We ask you to help in the development of the country.
As already indicated in our communiqué, we shall maintain good relations with all the nearby countries, the member countries of the OUA, and finally with all the countries which work for freedom and international peace, especially those with whom the people decided to enter into diplomatic relationships. We thank especially the countries which already showed us their support further to the decision which we took. We respect all agreements and treaties concluded with foreign countries and international bodies.

As for you particularly, member citizens of the National Police, the nation is proud of you. You have once again just saved it from destruction. Separatist elements tried in vain to divide you. You repelled them, because your role is not to create splits in the country. You are the national unity. The act which we have together just done proves it. We have the full hope that the whole Rwandan people will follow this example of cohesion. You are those among the best children of our dear homeland. Be proud of being in the unity. To these rare individuals who preach division, answer "no", as always. In whose interest is it to divide our country? Is it not thanks to your unity that you are always the pride and the hope of the Nation?

Redouble your attachment to your country, to your bosses and to all your fellow countrymen without exception. Continue to watch over the tranquility of your fellow countrymen. Collaborate with them against all which can strike a blow at peace and national unity.

Your country which you like so much will be grateful to you there.

Long live the Rwandan Republic, lives the Rwandan People!
APPENDIX E:

“COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUED AT THE END OF A REGIONAL SUMMIT MEETING IN DAR ES SALAAM ON 6TH APRIL 1994 ON THE SITUATION PREVAILING IN BURUNDI AND RWANDA,”
AS REPORTED IN A U.S. SATE DEPT. COMMUNIQUÉ, FROM EMBASSY IN DAR ES SALAAM, APRIL 1994

1. At the invitation of Ali Hassan Mwinyi, president of the united republic of Tanzania, a regional summit meeting was held in Dar es Salaam on 6th April, 1994.

2. Participating in the summit in addition to Tanzania’s head of state were Major General Habyarimana Juvénal, president of Rwanda, Yoweri Museveni, president of Uganda, Ntaryamira Cyprien (sic), president of the republic of Burundi, Prof. George Saitoti, vice president of the republic of Kenya and Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, secretary general of the Organization of African Unity.

3. The meeting was convened in order to find ways of helping Burundi and Rwanda resolve their political problems, in their countries.

4. On Burundi, the leaders noted with deep concern that despite the dawn of a new era of peace, stability and cooperation established after successful democratic elections in June, 1993 and a broadly based government and, recently the government of consensus, Burundi has been plunged again in ethnically motivated political turmoil.

5. The leaders resolved to:
   A) support the government of national consensus now in place and calls on all political and security forces to cooperate fully.
   B) re-affirm the role of the OAU including the emplacement of the military component of the OAU to assist in the restoration of confidence and the smooth functioning of the state institutions and encourage the OAU in this role and call on it to examine how this mission can be strengthened to carry out its task.
   C) call for an urgent programme of reforms in the army and other security services.
   D) demand the full support and cooperation from the political and security forces for unimpeded functioning of the institutions of government and warn that any obstruction to the implementation would have far-reaching consequences.

6. The leaders decided to meet again at an appropriate time to review the situation.

7. On Rwanda, the leaders noted with concern that all transitional institutions which were supposed to be formed following the signing of the Arusha peace agreement on 4th august, 1993 are not yet fully in place. In this connection, they urged all parties concerned to abide by the letter and spirit of the Arusha peace agreement and especially to establish Without further delay all the remaining transitional institutions.
Finally, leaders participating in the Dar es Salaam summit meeting expressed their gratitude to Ali Hassan Mwinyi, president of the united republic of Tanzania, to the government and the people of Tanzania for the warm and brotherly hospitality extended to them as well as to their delegations since their arrival in Tanzania.
 APPENDIX F:

HABYARIMANA THROUGH THE EYES OF HIS WIFE, AGATHE KANZIGA.

Marriage and Family Life:
My husband always used Kinyarwanda language at home. French was used only when necessary. Please note that Kinyarwanda was Rwanda’s first language, and French the second. After becoming the Minister of Defense of Rwanda in 1965, my husband and I decided to get me some occupation that would keep me busy in my free time. That is when we bought our small farmland in Kanombe near Kigali. I started practicing small scale mixed farming whereby I kept pigs, poultry, and could grow all crops in their seasons including beans, maize, pumpkins, and several fruits. We planted a sizeable banana plantation which saved us much on market shopping on these fresh items. This farming was mine, but my husband used to appreciate it to the point that he would make it a point to tour and visit my farming very occasionally. So I do not know if my husband would have taken up full time farming if he was not involved in politics. Otherwise, his training was in Medical and Military.

After becoming president, my husband became a very busy man, which affected our family life. However, he maintained our weekend family reunions. He kept me out of country politics and that is what I was comfortable with because I wanted to dedicate my life to bringing our young family up. I produced eight children who really needed my undivided attention, especially now that my husband had become extremely busy. As a family we used to visit both our elderly parents’ homes in our home village of Rambura Karago during the weekends. My husband’s private life was not greatly affected by his becoming The President. He was always there as a parent and father to each and every child.

My life as a president’s life was as simple as any other Rwandese Woman. Before the Rwanda invasion from Uganda in 1990, I used to move around our country, in town, doing my own shopping in supermarkets and other local markets with no body guards whatsoever except my one driver. I would interact with all the local population with ease. All this stopped with the hatred and lies this war from Uganda came spreading. Local and other print media never followed me wherever I went, nor did they publish harassing news about me.

The President’s Personality:
My husband used to love sports. He used to play Volley ball, Tennis, Chess and Swimming. He used to like Classic Music, Zairois Lingala Rumba Franco, Mbilila Bel, Kinyarwanda Impala songs, Masabo, Joe Darrin French Mosaic, Aida Kone, West African Music, and South African Mirriam Makeba. My husband liked to eat fish, game meat, and corned beef/rice—due to his Army upbringing. He used to eat Irish potatoes at almost

123 Mrs. Habyarimana’s responses to questions from the author.
every meal, considering that this is our main food, as we all were born to Irish potato
growers in Rwanda.

He used to read a lot but I cannot pin point on what literature he used to read. My
husband used to wake up very early at around 6.00 am. And would always be in his office
at around 7.00am. He would always come home for lunch at 12.00 noon. He would then
have his one hour siesta before going back to work at 3.00pm. He would then return home
after work at 6.00 pm. He never used to cook his meals because I had happily decided to
cook all my husband’s meals for him.

My husband used to wake up very early at around 6.00 am. And would always be
in his office at around 7.00am. He would always come home for lunch at 12.00 noon. He
would then have his one hour siesta before going back to work at 3.00pm. He would then
return home after work at 6.00 pm. He never used to cook his meals because I had happily
decided to cook all my husband’s meals for him.

My husband always insisted on honesty and truth. He never tolerated deceit and
detested liars. These were the major factors that shaped and influenced his life and
governance. My husband run a strictly zero corruption in government, and could not
hesitate to cause vigorous prosecution to anyone in his government. This definitely earned
him some enemies from within. My late husband wanted his legacy to be open governance,
thruthful and sincere decision taking, and justice for all. My husband became a leader
because of what was happening in our country Rwanda at the time. He never saw himself
as a born leader. [To the question of whether Habyarimana had ever confessed to her that
he might be tired of politics and perhaps wanted to just relax and be a farmer, or travel or
do something else, she said “No”].

Politics:

His enemies were always the people who were on the wrong side of the law,
perpetuators of corruption because he never used to protect them. He used to openly fight
them and always upheld the rule of law.

My husband always advocated for peace, harmony, unity among all the three tribes
of Rwandaise people. I am sure, until the 1990 invasion of Rwanda from Uganda, the
Rwandaise people were living in relative harmony and peace. This was a great change
since all the previous governments in Rwanda, both before and after independence. I really
cannot claim to be an authority on the role my husband played in our country’s
independence movement, but I remember he was the Rwandan Army Officer who was
entrusted to carry the Rwandan Flag on Independence Day.

After the 1990 Rwanda invasion from Uganda, the introduction of multiparty
politics, and the turmoil caused by this war, my husband confessed to me that his main
objective was to bring back peace to the Rwanda people and retire from active politics.
He believed that after peace and party politics took root, he was ready to give democratic
processes and power succession a clear chance.

To the question of whether Habyarimana wanted to get rid of the quota system and ID
cards, but was prevented by certain elements in the MRND, Mrs. Habyarimana said,
Concerning myself, I have never come across such information. However, about
this Hutu/Tutsi identity card issues, this was an order that started way far before the 1959
revolution when the Tutsi Kings were so particular about this divisive identification. I remember I was asked to produce my identity card to prove that I was either a Hutu or Tutsi before I was admitted into École Sociale School de Karubanda. I can recall the Tutsi King’s Queen Gicanda used to visit our school.

I really did not know the politics behind the one-party state, but I can confirm that my husband formed the MRND, which was a party of peace, unity, and development. Otherwise, politics was not my domain of deep interest. I was not involved in any government business apart from escorting my husband sometimes to meet some foreign dignitaries. My husband never ever discussed delicate political or country secrets with me. He had categorically told me never to indulge or ever meddle in his career as Head of State, as I had little knowledge of it.

To the question of who were Habyarimana’s closest advisors and most trusted friends, Mrs. Habyarimana replied,

To the best of my knowledge, apart from family members and friends who used to visit our home, I didn’t know either my husband’s friends or his close advisors. . . . I really do not know how my husband first came to be friends with President Mobutu. . . . My husband’s relationship with Kayibanda was really good in my opinion. As far as I know, my husband never used to argue with Kayibanda at all. . . . I really cannot know or recall when my husband disagreed with Kayibanda at all. They had many things in common. Kayibanda liked my husband. Yes I think Kayibanda trusted my husband. I can recall at one time Kayibanda remarked to my husband that he (Habyarimana) was too straight forward and thought that everyone was as upright as he was in the Rwandan society at the time. I am sure Kayibanda promoted my husband to the highest rank because he trusted him and he was a well known hard working man. I know my husband thought of Kayibanda as being a good man, but was surrounded by some evil people who unfortunately had a strong influence on his life and work. I do not have much to say about The First Republic of Rwanda and President Kayibanda,. Kayibanda’s family used to visit us regularly and we would also do the same. Kayibanda and his wife even were the God Parents of one of our sons, Bernard Rugwiro in 1972.”

People He Respected, and the Church:

President Habyarimana used to respect Presidents like Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, Thomas Sankara, Daniel Arap Moi, Mobutu Sese Seko, Omar Bongo, and Francois Mitterrand. He also had a lot of respect for Jimmy Carter, Giscard d’Estaing, Nyansimbe Eyadema, Singor, Houphet Boigny, King Boudin of Belgium, Musa Traulin. My husband also had much respect for Church Leaders: Pope Jean Paul XXIII, Pope Jean Paul VI and all Popes. My husband used to respect Church views as much as possible, but as far as favoritism of Church views and political views, it never occurred to me that he was ever swayed by Church opinions only.

Mrs. Habyarimana’s closest friends:

I had many friends as I was growing up. I can name people like Aloys Nsekaliye’s sister, Hannah, Col. Nsabimana’s sister, Bonna, Mrs. Martha Katabalwa, Catherine
Mukandutiye, Judith Hitayezu, and Scholastique Mukamugenzi. As for when we were in the presidency, I had very many friends.
APPENDIX G:

A COMMENT ON THE 1962 CONSTITUTION BY ROBERT TURYAHEBWA\textsuperscript{124}

The first but largely ineffective constitution of Rwanda was known as the “Constitution of Gitarama”. In the aftermath of the mysterious death of king Rudahigwa in Bujumbura, a group of elite Hutu led by one of the few Hutu sub-chiefs, Mbonyumutwa conducted the country to violent end of Tutsi rule in 1959 and the establishment of the first autonomous government, on October 26, 1960 under the direction of Grégoire Kayibanda.

That month, Belgium proposed a provisional constitution and agreed to organise local elections, scheduled for January, 1961, but this move was blocked by the United Nations General Assembly which proposed a national referendum on the future of the monarchy (GA Res. 1580 XV). Belgium agreed to cancel the elections, but Rwandan new political leaders decided to meet anyway, on the date fixed for the elections, in the town of Gitarama, where they adopted a constitution.

The meeting of all Bourgoumestres and Conseillers communaux which adopted the constitution was held at Gitarama on 28 January 1961. The main objective of the meeting was to abolish the monarchy and install a republic. This resulting instrument, which was neither published in the Bulletin Officiel du Ruanda nor in the Journal Officiel du Rwanda –was considered invalid by the monarchists and more significantly by the trusteeship authorities, i.e., Belgium. The Belgian authorities declared that the document had no legal forecast, it was not legalized by any legislative act, and it was not formally endorsed by the Rwandan people. It is worthy to mention that in adopting the considered legitimate constitution of 1962, no reference to that of Gitarama was made.

Later in the year, general elections held under the supervision of the United Nations confirmed the end of the monarchy and established the republic. The United Nations established a commission on the Rwandan question, which met in early 1962 in Addis Ababa. The commission concluded that Rwanda and Burundi should acquire independence separately, and this was affirmed in a GA Res. 1746 XVI. As a result unlike many other African countries which gained independence having their own constitutions,

\textsuperscript{124} Robert Turyahebwa, personal communication (2012) to Edith Kibalama of the Kituo Cha Katiba organization.
Rwanda had no constitution at the time of independence on 1 July 1962. The Constitution of Gitarama that was supposed to replace that of the colonial regime was in fact null and void on the day Rwanda gained its independence.

1.1- The 1962 Constitution

The constitution of 24 November 1962 became the first constitution of the Republic of Rwanda. The draft of this constitution was presented by the parliamentarians of the PARMEHUTU and APROSOMA. It was inspired by the constitutions of France, the Republic of Guinea-Conakry, Senegal Madagascar and the Haute-Volta (Burkina Faso). It was however, the constitutions of France and Senegal which most significantly influenced the first Rwandan Constitution. For instance, literally this constitution repeated the provisions of the constitution of Senegal on civil rights.

Article 1 of the 1962 Constitution declared Rwanda a democratic, social and sovereign republic while Article 2 abolished the monarchy and stipulates that it could never be reinstituted.

The constitution of 1962 has been praised for having embodied a complete list of human rights such as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including rights that are traditionally considered difficult to implement, such as economic rights. In Article 3, the Constitution obliged the Republic of Rwanda to ensure equality of all citizens without any distinction on grounds of race, origin, sex, or religion. It declared the abolition of all caste privileges and of slavery. Many other provisions emphasized the equal protection such as Article 16 declaring that all citizens were equal before law without any distinction based on race, clan, colour, sex or religion. In the section dealing with the family and civil society, the constitution proclaimed the equality between men and women, but added that the man is the natural head of the family. Although freedom of religion and expression were recognised, a specific provision of the constitution prohibited communist activities and propaganda.

The 1962 constitution set up three constitutional organs of government, the President, the National Assembly and the Judiciary. Even though the constitution envisaged a pluralist regime, president Kayibanda quickly established a single party
system under the Democratic Republican Movement (Mouvement Démocratique Republicain, MDR).

In August 1963, the first general elections since the independence were held for local government positions. It was a landslide victory for the Parmehutu, which took 139 of 140 communes. President Kayibanda was elected in 1965 with 98% of all votes, and again in 1969, with more than 99% of the votes cast. All seats in the National assembly were won by Parmehutu, which was the only party to present candidates.

The adoption of a constitution in 1962 did not bring about any fundamental changes in the relationship between the citizens and political authorities and in particular in the relationship between the citizens themselves. Article 15 of the constitution obliged every citizen to know the law. The question remained, however, how could this be effective in a country where ironically, close to 90% of the populace was illiterate? This has been a most challenging obstacle to the realization of progressive constitutionalism in Rwanda since independence. On the other hand, and despite the overwhelming support given to the constitution, it was argued that, in reality the new political system simply replaced one set of Tutsi-dominated institutions with another set of Hutu-dominated ones. In other words, it was the reversal of Tutsi hierarchy with a Hutu one, where ethnic identities served as the basis for systematic discrimination against Tutsi in education, the civil service and the armed forces.

The discriminatory regime increased the departure of Tutsi to neighboring countries from where Tutsi exiles made incursions into Rwanda. Exiled Tutsi became an early example of a new reality that later would convulse the entire Great Lakes Region and many of its neighboring countries. Conflicts that generate refugees can easily lead to conflicts generated by refugees.

The dissensions that soon surfaced among the ruling Hutu led the regime to strengthen the authority of President Kayibanda as well as the influence of his entourage, most of whom came from the same region most especially Gitarama region.

An amendment to the constitution, voted on May 18, 1973, allowed the President to be re-elected for an indefinite term. It also abolished the position of Vice-president, extended the term of deputies of the National Assembly, and oriented the Rwandan
economy towards the principles of democratic socialism. The cleavage of ethnic and regional power became obvious. A division took root within the Hutu political establishment, between its key figures from the Center (Gitarama) and those from the North and South who showed great frustration. Increasingly isolated, the President Kayibanda could not control the ethnic and regional dissensions. The disagreements within the regime resulted into anarchy, which enabled General Juvenal Habyarimana, minister of defence and army chief of staff, to seize power through a bloodless coup d'état on 5 July 1973, thus ending the first republic.
References


Economics Research, Finland, Helsinki Development Conference—Making Peace Work, 4-5 June.


566


Caplan, Gerald. 2010 “Who killed the president of Rwanda?” Pambazuka News 466, Jan 21.


Carver, R. 2000. 'Broadcasting and political transition: Rwanda and beyond'. In R. Fardon and G. Furniss (Eds.), African Broadcast Cultures: Radio in Transition, Capetown; South Africa: David Philip..


Habyarimana, Juvénal. 1993c. “Speech of Major General Habyarimana Juvenal, President of the Republic of Rwanda, at the Francophonie Summit, Port Louis, Mauritius, 16-18 October 1993.”


Habyarimana, Juvénal. 1990d. Quoted by Ambassador Spearman (Kigali) in Communiqué to State Dept., October 26. n.d.


Habyarimana, Juvénal. 1985b. Interview in Sylvio Sindambiwe, “Interview of General Habyarimana regarding human rights, especially in the cases of Ms I. Mukamugema and Mr. Donat Murego.” *Kinyamateka*, no. 1204, August 1.


Habyarimana, Juvenal. 1973. “Message to the nation from the President of the Committee For Peace And National Unity on the occasion of the July 1973 coup d’état.”


Hirondelle News Agency. 2004a. “Akazu' was more powerful than President Juvenal Habyarimana, witness claims.” Author, June 11.


Hirondelle News Agency. 2002b. “President Habyarimana was aware of arms plan says witness.” Author, September 25.


Kanyadudi, Cosmas J. O. 2010. From the Wings to the Mainstream; The role of political parties youth leagues in democratization and regional integration in East Africa. Nairobi: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.


Newbury, Catherine and David Newbury. 1994. “Rwanda in the 1990s: democratization and disintegration.” In *The Democratic Challenge in Africa; Discussion Papers*


Pottier, Johan P. 1989. “‘Three’s a crowd’: knowledge, ignorance and power in the context of urban agriculture in Rwanda.” Africa 59: 461-77.
Reyntjens, Filip. 2004a. “‘Being a member of the akazu is not a crime,’ says Reyntjens.” Hirondelle News Agency, September 16.
*Hirondelle*, June 12.

Ruhara, Christophe, Chrysologue Rwamasirabo and Gratien Sendanyoye. 1947. “Le 
buhake: Une coutume essentiellement munyarwanda.” *Bulletin de Jurisprudence 

Paris: L'Harmattan.

army.” *The New Times* (Kigali), November 19.


nord-ouest du Rwanda sous un double colonisation, 1894-1916.” PhD dissertation, 
Université Catholique de Louvain.

*Dialogue* 189 (Nov.): 29-38.

*Cahiers Lumière et Société* 16 (Dec.): 54.

politique au Rwanda de 1952 à 1960.” Ph.D. dissertation, Universite de Montreal, 
Canada.

Ruzirabwoba, Pierre Rwanyindo. 2006. “Histoire et conflits au Rwanda.” Institute of 
Research and Dialogue for Peace, Kigali, Rwanda.


Sato, Yuki. 1980. “Interview with President J. Habyarimana, July 12, 1980.” In *Discours,
Messages et Entretiens de Son Excellence le Général-Major Habyarimana Juvénal, 


Canada, Les Editions Yvon Blais Inc.


Institut-Anthropos. Microfilm.


Sellström, Tor and Lennart Wohlgemuth. 1996. “Study 1: Historical perspective: Some 
explanatory Factors.” In *The International Response to Conflict and Genocide:*

589


Stanton, Gregory H.  2002. “Could the Rwandan genocide have been prevented?” Journal of Genocide Research 6, no. 2 (June): 211-228.


Steiner, Philippe. 1998. La Sience Nouvelle de l'Economie Politique. Paris, PUF.


Van Binsbergen, W. 2003. “The dynamics of power and the rule of law in Africa and beyond: Theoretical perspectives on chiefs, the state, agency, customary law, and


VITA

Stephen Childress grew up on a farm in central Indiana. He graduated from Herron School of Art, Indiana University, with an emphasis in sculpture, and has worked as a professional artist (painting, sculpture, filmmaking, theatre/performance) for thirty years, living and working in Europe and Asia. He entered Manchester University’s linguistics’ degree program for practicing teachers, while in Japan, before going on a sabbatical in India to write, and was artist in residence at Arts Acre in Kalikut before returning to the States to enroll in the MA playwriting program at UMKC. He has visited over fifty countries, most recently Rwanda, where he was doing research for his dissertation on the first two presidents of that country.

He has received numerous fellowships, scholarships, grants, and awards at UMKC and in the arts. He entered the Interdisciplinary PhD program as a way to do broad-based research across various fields of study, especially regarding the understanding of the multi-faceted problems concerning genocide. He is a member and past member of many organizations, including the Golden Key International Honor Society, Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars, Omicron Delta Kappa, the National Leadership Honor Society, is a past president of UMKC’s Doctoral Students Association, past board member of the United Nations Association of the U.S., and past member of Amnesty International, and U.S. Committee for Refugees.

His published work includes poems and short stories in various small publications, a journal article on critical realism and documentary film, and a Directory of Asset Development Providers in Missouri. He hopes to publish his dissertation in book form, and will be pursuing teaching opportunities related to genocide as well as African history. He is also working on a book whose subject is the origins of art, and on a children’s book set in India. He is currently residing in Boston.