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**'The Social-Revolutionary Process as a Cause of Genocide in
Rwanda'**

A Critical Interpretation on the Causes of Rwanda's 1994 Genocide

By

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Declaration

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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Date

12/02/2004

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Abstract

In Rwanda, between April and July 1994, up to one million people were killed in a planned public and political campaign. This slaughter was on a scale not seen since the Nazi extermination program of the Jews. The perpetrators and organisers of this genocide included the institutions and officials of the former government of Rwanda, and close to one million Rwandan mainly Hutu citizens. The victims were all Tutsi, and Hutu thought to be Tutsi collaborators. This mini dissertation is concerned with the causes of this type of genocide, in which close to one million Hutu citizens joined their government and committed genocide against their fellow Rwandan citizens.

The objective of the dissertation is to provide a comprehensive and critical interpretation on the causes of the violence of the genocide. In so doing, the study will provide an alternative analytical approach and interpretation to the causes of genocide in Rwanda. In providing this comprehensive, critical, and alternative interpretation to explain the causes of Rwanda's 1994 genocide, the dissertation will use the analytical framework developed by Theda Skocpol in her book *States and Social Revolutions*. The study will argue that the 1994 genocide was the *outcome of, and caused by, two interrelated social-revolutionary processes* in Rwanda – the 1959 revolutionary process created by decolonisation and the revolutionary process provided by the civil war. These social-revolutionary processes involved the politicisation of the Hutu and Tutsi difference and the consequent emergence of Hutu and Tutsi as bipolar and adversarial race identities involved in zero-sum political competition. The study will show that the *social-revolutionary process* is the cause of genocide in Rwanda. Therefore, the objective of the study is not to reveal or present new evidence. Rather, the objective is to see the problem of the causes of the genocide in a new light, and this argument will be developed by a synthesis of the existing primary and secondary literature explaining Rwanda's political history, and the 1994 genocide.

In presenting this argument, the dissertation is divided into five chapters. The first chapter provides an analysis on Theda Skocpol's analytical framework. This chapter will discuss how she defines social revolutions, explains the causes of social revolutions, and how in her case studies of France, Russia, and China, she explains the nature and functions of political violence in the social-revolutionary process. The second chapter provides an analysis on the causes of the 1959 revolutionary process in Rwanda, and in so doing, uses Skocpol's analytical framework. This chapter first discusses the origins, and racialisation, of the Hutu and Tutsi difference. The chapter

then discusses the decolonisation process, in which the Hutu and Tutsi difference became the basis of political competition. The chapter then discusses the ensuing social-revolutionary crisis involving a widespread, and violent, peasant uprising. The third chapter provides an analysis on the role of political violence in the 1959 revolutionary process, and in so doing, uses Skocpol's analytical framework. This chapter will show that the 1964 genocide that emerged was the outcome, and caused, by the social-revolutionary process. The implication was that the revolutionary process was incomplete, laying the foundations for the emergence of a second revolutionary crisis.

The fourth chapter provides an analysis of this second revolutionary crisis, which came in the form of a civil war. Using Skocpol's framework, the chapter will show how this revolutionary crisis bears striking similarities to the 1959 revolutionary crisis. The final chapter provides an analysis on the 1994 genocide, and will use Skocpol's framework. The chapter will show how the 1994 genocide was the outcome of the revolutionary process created by the civil war. Therefore, the causes of this 1994 genocide were the socio-political dynamics of social-revolutionary transformation in Rwanda – the two interrelated social-revolutionary processes. Therefore, the social-revolutionary process was the cause of genocide in Rwanda.

Thus, the study uses the 'theoretical case-study method' in providing an analysis on the causes of genocide in Rwanda. The study will discuss the case of the Rwandan genocide by linking it with Theda Skocpol's frame of reference for analysing social-revolutionary transformations in modern world history. The virtue of this linkage, in highlighting this particular theoretical issue, is that the problem of the genocide will be approached from a more comprehensive and critical perspective. Thus, the study will show that Skocpol's perspective provides for a comprehensive, effective, and best, interpretation in answering why hundreds of thousands of Rwandans participated in the genocide.

Introduction

"When I came out there were no birds. There was sunshine and the stench of death."

A young Rwandan genocide survivor.

The Rwandan genocide – in which close to 1,000,000 Tutsi and fellow Hutu thought to be Tutsi collaborators were killed from April to July 1994 – will be remembered as one of the seminal events of the late twentieth century. This Central African holocaust demonstrated that genocide is still possible five decades after Nuremberg. These mass killings, and the subsequent destabilisation of the entire Great Lakes region, have understandably attracted enormous attention.¹ Indeed, due to the works of scholars, investigative journalists, and international commissions sponsored by several western governments and the United Nations, we now know with some certainty who planned the genocide, how it was executed, what the consequences were, and until what point international intervention could have stopped the killings.²

However, despite the thousands upon thousands of pages devoted to understanding the Rwandan genocide, we still do not have a good answer to one difficult and troubling question: *Why? Why did hundreds of thousands of Hutu citizens join their government and participate in the genocide of their fellow Tutsi, and the mass killings of Hutu thought to be Tutsi collaborators?* For unlike the Nazi Holocaust, the genocide in Rwanda was not initiated from a distance, in remote concentration and industrial killing camps operated by agents. Rather, the genocide was executed with the slash of machetes rather than the drop of crystals into gas chambers, "with all the gruesome detail of a street murder rather than the bureaucratic efficiency of mass extermination."³ This technological difference indicates a more significant social difference. Whereas the technology of the Nazi Holocaust allowed a few to kill many, the machete was wielded by a single pair of hands requiring many hacks of a machete to kill one person. Thus, killing with a machete "often required several killers for every victim," making the genocide "an intimate affair" carried out by hundreds of thousands, perhaps even more, and witnessed by

¹ Jeffrey Herbst, "The Unanswered Question: Attempting to Explain the Rwandan Genocide," *Foreign Affairs*, 80, 3 (2001): 123

² Linda Melvern, *A People Betrayed: The Role of the West in Rwanda's Genocide* (London: Zed Books, 2000)

³ Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Oxford: James Currey Ltd, 2001), 5.

millions.⁴ The troubling question then, is *what caused this type of genocide*, with over 1,000,000 perpetrators and victims?

This mini dissertation has been written in order to provide an in depth analysis, and comprehensive answer, to this troubling question on the causes of this type of genocide. Developed by a synthesis of the existing primary and secondary literature explaining the genocide in Rwanda, and using the theoretical case-study method, the dissertation will provide a *comprehensive and critical interpretation* on the *causes of the violence of the genocide*. In so doing, the study will apply an alternative analytical approach on the causes of genocide in Rwanda. Before discussing the analytical perspective of this study, however, it is important to discuss the existing perspectives that explain the causes of genocide in Rwanda, and show their fundamental limitations.

Paradigms in Explaining the Genocide in Rwanda⁵

From the existing literature, there are three distinct paradigms commonly used to explain the causes of the genocide. Although many variations exist within each, with authors such as Gérard Prunier playing on more than one, there is value in presenting them separately. These paradigms explain the genocide by *elite manipulation*, focusing on political leaders and macro-level trends, *ecological resource scarcity*, focusing on macro-level ecological and demographic trends, and by the *socio-psychological features of perpetrators*, focusing on macro-level socio-psychological features of Rwandan society.

Elite Manipulation

The elite manipulation paradigm is undoubtedly the most widely used explanation. The argument usually presented is that the reason for the genocide was the desire of Rwanda's Bushiru Hutu elite, known as the *Akazu*, to stay in power. Such explanations point to a series of political and economic factors. These include the economic crisis, followed by the structural adjustment programs in the late 1980s; the Rwandan Patriotic Front invasion in 1990, and the subsequent civil war; and the failed internationally sponsored peace negotiations that led to power-sharing

⁴ Ibid., 6.

⁵ For an in depth critical analysis on these paradigms, see Peter Uvin, "Reading the Rwandan Genocide," *International Studies Review*, 3, 3 (2001): 75-99.

and democratisation agreements.⁶ Taken together, these factors threatened the power and privileges of Rwanda's elite. Consequently, the small group of powerful people around President Juvénal Habyarimana used all means at their disposal, including genocide, to fend off threats to their survival and privileges.

Although this can be seen as a 'traditional' political science analysis, serious divisions exist within this paradigm. Gérard Prunier, for example, favours factors that are more *political*. He argues that "the killings were one of the means used in a broad spectrum of political tools which included war, bribery, foreign diplomacy, constitutional manipulations and propaganda, in attempts at political survival."⁷ Michel Chossudovsky highlights *economic* factors. He emphasises the "collapse of the international coffee market and the imposition of sweeping macroeconomic reforms by the Bretton Woods institutions, exacerbating simmering Hutu-Tutsi tensions, and accelerating the process of political collapse."⁸ And Alison Des Forges highlights *ideological* factors, focusing on the role of the racist and genocidal ideology, articulated by the Hutu elite, in mobilising and organising hundreds of thousands of Rwandans to slaughter their fellow country people.⁹

This perspective is undoubtedly important, as most genocides are legitimised and organised by the state. Moreover, explanations of genocide in Rwanda must include the role of local state officials in the micro-management of genocide.¹⁰ This perspective, however, is inadequate, and there are two main reasons why. Firstly, because the explanation is limited by an exclusive focus on the workings, and political thinking, of a small group of people, and even though it acknowledges macro political and economic trends, it fails to take into account the social structural and historical basis upon which such violent processes rest. These explanations tend to limit themselves to the planning of the genocide, and the agenda imposed 'from above', arriving at *exclusively* state-centred explanations. They conveniently exclude the significant role of the large numbers of people who perpetrate the violence, why society is so easily manipulated, and the social structures, and historical patterns, which allow such processes to be set into motion.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 79.

⁷ Gérard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide* (London: Hurst & Co., 1995), 141.

⁸ Michel Chossudovsky, *The Globalisation of Poverty: Impacts of IMF and World Bank Reforms* (London: Zed Books, 1997), 111.

⁹ Alison Des Forges, "The Ideology of Genocide," *Issue: A Journal of Opinion*, 23, 2 (1995): 44-47.

¹⁰ Timothy Longman, "Genocide and Socio-Political Change: Massacres in Two Rwandan Villages," *Issue: A Journal of Opinion*, 23, 2 (1995): 18-21.

Any adequate explanation of the genocide must include both *state* and *society*-centred explanations, and must explain the *mass participation*, which was the key feature of the Rwandan genocide. This is because the conspiracy of the Hutu elite could not have succeeded had it not found resonance and willingness 'from below', and similarly, the violence 'from below' could not have spread so widely without cultivation and direction 'from above.' A complete approach that incorporates the role of *state* and *society* is needed.

Secondly, Rwanda's genocide *has a history*, and the 1994 genocide was a recurrent episode of genocide. These explanations do not take into account the significance of the first episode of the genocide, the 1959 'social-revolutionary' process. The significance of this revolutionary process was that it was the *first episode of violent group conflict* in the history of Rwanda where battle lines were drawn between one group identified as *Hutu*, and the other as *Tutsi*.¹¹ No other such episode occurred in Rwandan history. As for acknowledging the significance of the revolution, Prunier merely shakes it off with a cynical shrug: "What would later turn out to be a 'social revolution' resembled more of an ethnic transfer of power."¹² A complete approach needs a historical perspective and must acknowledge the significance of the 1959 revolutionary process.

Ecological Resource Scarcity

This paradigm is popular among specialists in agriculture and the environment, as well as part of the general press. The broad argument is that "Rwanda's scarcity of ecological resources – with the highest population density in Africa for an almost entirely rural country, coupled with one of Africa's highest population growth rates – constitutes the root cause of the genocide."¹³

There are two types of arguments concerning the relationship between social conflict and ecological resource scarcity in Rwanda.¹⁴ The first is known as the 'hard' Malthusian argument and basically holds that "overpopulation and land scarcity unavoidably lead to social conflict and communal violence." When countries exceed their 'carrying capacity', there is no other possible

¹¹ Mahmood Mamdani, "Making Sense of Non-Revolutionary Violence: Some Lessons from the Rwandan Genocide," Text of talk given at the University of Cape Town, August 2001: 12.

¹² Prunier, 50.

¹³ Uvin, "Reading the Rwandan Genocide," 81.

¹⁴ Valerie Percival and Thomas Homer-Dixon, however, incorporate both these arguments in their study of Rwanda. See Valerie Percival and Thomas Homer-Dixon, *Environmental Scarcity and Violent Conflict: The Case of Rwanda* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1995).

outcome than famine and/or conflict “allowing nature to restore ecological equilibrium.”¹⁵ Rwanda is considered an example of this hard Malthusian argument, and the genocide according to the argument, is the unavoidable outcome of overpopulation and environmental limitations. Therefore, the millions of Rwandan refugees who fled into the former Zaire after the genocide qualify as “environmental refugees” and the whole conflict is characterised as due to “demographic entrapment.”¹⁶

The ‘soft’ Malthusian argument argues that although conditions of severe ecological resource scarcity generate severe social tension, “other variables, such as the nature of the state, the existence of conflict resolution mechanisms, and broader economic and social dynamics, determine final outcomes.”¹⁷ This ‘softer’ explanation is used by authors who subscribe to the *elite manipulation* thesis in an attempt to ‘fill in’ for the inadequacies in explaining the broader dynamics of the genocide. Prunier for example writes that “the genocide violence of the spring of 1994 can be partly attributed to the population density. The decision to kill was *of course made by politicians, for political reasons.*”¹⁸ Similarly, in explaining the significance of poverty stricken youth in the formation of the armed militia, David Newbury argues that “the ecological demographic crisis was critically important in *creating this context* of collective anger, leading to thousands of youth joining death squads.”¹⁹

However, both the ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ Malthusian arguments are inadequate. No matter how depressing a picture they may point of Rwanda, “there is no *necessary* connection between a drastic reduction in resources and deadly human conflict.” As Mamdani points out, in the social history of natural disasters, be they floods, drought, or hurricanes, countries have suffered a worse resource crunch than Rwanda during the civil war, “without the population turning on itself, with one part devouring the other.”²⁰ Therefore, the connection between “the constraints under which we live and the choices we do make is mediated through how we *understand* and *explain* these constraints, and the resources that we must muster to change them.” Thus, as always, “humans shape

¹⁵ Uvin, “Reading the Rwandan Genocide”, 82. The only way of avoiding this is through major progress in containing population growth.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 83.

¹⁸ Prunier, 4. Prunier, however, briefly introduces it as a variable making no analytical attempt to provide a further explanation.

¹⁹ David Newbury, “Ecology and the Politics of Genocide: Rwanda 1994,” *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, 22, 4 (1999): 4. Emphasis added.

²⁰ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 198.

their world based on human consciousness and human capacities.”²¹ What is needed is an explanation on how Rwandans understood and explained the resource crunch that came with the civil war, and given these constraints, why they responded the way they did. The political choices to commit genocide, and those who made those choices, were not merely outcomes of a natural disaster. Such choices to *commit genocide* are informed by broader social, political, and historical processes. Clearly, what is needed is a historical perspective, and one that takes into account the consequences of the 1959 revolutionary process i.e. the first genocide, and its relationship to the civil war that brought about the resource crunch.

Socio-psychological Features of the Perpetrators

The common argument in this paradigm is that the ‘unquestioning’, ‘obedient’ or ‘conformist’ nature of the Rwandan ‘traditional’ mentality made Rwandans to follow orders from above, including orders to massacre Tutsi.²² The assumption is that Rwandans “crave the sense of order and security that strict vertical structures of authority have always provided,” and for that reason, “they killed when told to do so.”²³ Prunier’s work, once again, is also a good example of this. In answering how peasants ‘allow themselves to be manipulated’, he argues that “Rwandese political tradition is one of systematic, centralised, and unconditional obedience to authority.” He further writes that “most people were illiterate” and that “given their authoritarian tradition, they tended to believe what the authorities told them.”²⁴

This paradigm is problematic for two main reasons. Firstly, it conforms to the *elite manipulation* model as the fundamental assumption is that Rwandans, because they are ‘obedient to authority’, are easily ‘manipulated’ by the political leadership into committing mass murder. Consequently, the paradigm falls prey to the problems of the *elite manipulation model* and also fails to take into account the social structural and historical basis upon which violent processes and patterns in Rwanda rest. Undoubtedly, a societal and historical perspective would compliment this paradigm as previous episodes of violence do leave persistent residues in people’s collective memories and attitudes.²⁵ Moreover, although it acknowledges the role of society, i.e. that it is obedient and

²¹ Ibid.

²² Uvin, “Reading the Rwandan Genocide,” 84.

²³ Helen Hintjens, “Explaining the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda,” *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 37, 2 (1999): 270-272.

²⁴ Prunier, 141-142.

²⁵ Ted Gurr, *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts* (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1993), 126-127.

manipulated, it is nevertheless merely a state-centred explanation as the causes of violence are located within the authorities that manipulate society.

Secondly, as Uvin argues, the explanation “treats obedience as a fixed property of Rwandan culture, if not Rwandans psychological predisposition’s.”²⁶ There is “an almost robotic quality to it, as if something traditional is programmed deeply in Rwandans brain circuits, and when activated, they respond and kill their neighbours.”²⁷ Violence is reduced to some ancient primordial twitch come to life.

Therefore, an alternative perspective must take into account the fundamental limitations of these existing perspectives and provide a *historical perspective*, explain *mass participation* i.e. incorporate a *society-centred explanation* in addition to the state-centred explanation, and acknowledge the significance of the *1959 social-revolutionary process*.

Concerning the significance of a *historical perspective*, the 1994 genocide in Rwanda has a history and a precedent, and it is important to acknowledge the significance of the historical precedent of genocide, showing its relationship to the 1994 genocide. Although the 1994 genocide is the best known, and indeed the most shocking, it is not the first experience of mass killing and genocide in Rwanda. Apart from the 1994 genocide, Rwanda experienced three processes of mass killings and genocide against the Tutsi in its political history. These include the killings in 1959 involving a Hutu peasant rebellion, the mass killings and genocide between 1960 and 1964, and the organised massacres during the civil war between 1990-1993. All these incidences of mass killings are strikingly similar – they all occurred during a social-revolutionary crisis in Rwanda, which involved political and group competition between Hutu and Tutsi. To properly understand the 1994 genocide, it is important to contextualise it within these socio-political patterns and processes of mass killings.

Concerning the significance of *mass participation*, the violence of the genocide was not only the result of planning ‘from above’ as suggested by the *elite manipulation* and *socio-psychological* paradigms. It was also the result of participation ‘from below’, as the agenda imposed ‘from above’ only became a gruesome reality to the extent that it resonated with perspectives ‘from

²⁶ Peter Uvin, *Aiding Violence: The Development Enterprise in Rwanda* (West Hartford: Kumarian Press, 1998), 67.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

below'.²⁸ Rather than accent one or the other side of this state and society relationship, what is needed is a complete picture of the genocide that takes into account both state-centred *and* society-centred explanations. The genocide was neither a mere conspiracy from above that needed enough time and suitable circumstances to mature, nor was it an uncoordinated popular revolt. The violence from below could only have spread with cultivation and direction from above, and similarly, the conspiracy of the tiny Hutu elite could not have succeeded had it not found resonance and willingness from below.²⁹ The alternative paradigm needs to show the interrelation between state and society in explaining the genocide, showing the significance of the initiative from below.

Finally, concerning the significance of the 1959 revolutionary process, the patterns of mass killings and genocide in Rwanda resemble the type of violence found in *social-revolutionary crises*. The alternative approach needs to acknowledge the significance, and the limitations, of the 1959 revolutionary process, together with its relationship to the violence of the 1994 genocide. The 1959 Revolution ushered in the violent landscape called postcolonial Rwanda. Before the Revolution, in both the pre-colonial and colonial era, there was not a single episode of violent group conflict where battle lines were drawn between one group identified as 'Hutu', and the other as 'Tutsi'.³⁰ The 1959 Revolution was the first significant episode in Rwanda that violently pit 'Hutu' against 'Tutsi', and consequently, Hutu and Tutsi became a bipolar political adversary.³¹ This revolutionary process, out of which emerged the first genocide, reinforced the Hutu and Tutsi as race identities created by colonialism, transforming them into antagonistic identities locked in a zero-sum political game.

Thus, an alternative perspective needs to take into account the historical perspective and patterns of violence in postcolonial Rwanda, the problematic issue of mass participation and incorporate a societal explanation, and acknowledge the significance, and limitations, of the 1959 Revolution. A perspective that provides for a comprehensive and complete explanation on the causes of this type of violence of the genocide is needed.

²⁸ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 7.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ For more of this see Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 41-72 and "Making Sense of Non-Revolutionary Violence," 12-13.

The Alternative Paradigm: Theda Skocpol's *States and Social Revolutions*

In providing a comprehensive, critical, and alternative interpretation to explain the causes of Rwanda's 1994 genocide, taking into account the historical perspective, mass participation in the genocide, and the 1959 Revolution, the study will use the analytical framework developed by Theda Skocpol in her book *States and Social Revolutions*. The study will show that using Skocpol's analytical framework in deciphering the causes of Rwanda's 1994 genocide provides for a comprehensive, effective, and the best, interpretation in answering *why hundreds of thousands of Rwandans participated in the genocide*. In so doing, the study will argue that the 1994 genocide was the *outcome of, and caused by, two interrelated social-revolutionary processes* in Rwanda – the revolutionary process created by decolonisation, and the revolutionary process created by the civil war. These social-revolutionary processes involved the politicisation of the Hutu and Tutsi difference, and the consequent emergence of Hutu and Tutsi as bipolar and adversarial race identities involved in zero-sum political competition. Therefore, the study will show that the *social-revolutionary process* is the cause of genocide in Rwanda.

Skocpol's *States and Social Revolutions* can be grouped with Charles and Louise Tilly's *The Rebellious Century 1830-1930*, and Barrington Moore's *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. *States and Social Revolutions* provides a frame of reference for analysing social-revolutionary transformations in modern history.³² It uses political sociology and comparative history to work out an explanation on the causes and outcomes of the French Revolution (1787-1800), the Russian Revolution (1917-1921), and the Chinese Revolution (1911-1949). The analytical framework shows how state structures, class relations, and international forces all combine to explain the origins and accomplishments of social-revolutionary transformation.

In explaining the contradictions that lead to revolutionary 'political crises', Skocpol focuses on the relationships of state rulers and their staffs to international competitors on the one hand, and to dominant classes on the other.³³ In addition, in explaining the structural conditions that lead to social-revolutionary crises, Skocpol focuses on the relationships between the peasantry and the dominant class. The social revolution is produced by the fundamental transformation of *state* and

³¹ Mahmood Mamdani, "When Does Reconciliation Turn into a Denial of Justice?" Text of a talk at the Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria, February 18, 1998.

³² Peter Manicas, review of *States and Social Revolutions*, by Theda Skocpol, *History and Theory* 20, 2 (1981)

class structures (i.e. both *state* and *society* change) and emerges via a class upheaval. To explain revolutionary outcomes, Skocpol highlights the ways in which revolutionary leaderships build new state organisations in the contexts of class conflict and counter-revolutionary military threats.

Skocpol's *States and Social Revolutions* is significant and useful as the analytical framework, when applied to Rwanda, takes into account the three main weaknesses of the existing paradigms that explain the causes of Rwanda's genocide. Firstly, Skocpol's framework takes into account the historical perspective. Her mode of political analysis is *structural* and is primarily concerned with embedded *patterns*. Since patterns take time to develop, her method of analysis is historical. She looks for the relationships between things in history such as how the state relates to the society, how one class relates to others, and how one society relates to others in the international arena. In applying this approach to the causes of genocide in Rwanda, the method of investigation will be historical and primarily concerned with identifying the significance of socio-political processes, in which patterns of violence, leading to genocide, occurred. The study will identify two such interrelated socio-political processes: the 1959 Revolution, and the 1990-1994 Civil War – arguing that genocide *was the outcome of, and caused by, these two socio-political processes*.

Secondly, Skocpol's framework successfully deals with the issue of mass participation in such socio-political processes, and consequently takes into account both the state and society-centred explanations. She explains social revolutions as involving the transformation of both state *and* society. Social revolutions are caused by the simultaneous development of two crises – a state crisis and crisis-from-below. These two crises serve as her independent variables. She explains social revolutions in a holistic sense, both from a state and from societal perspective. In applying this to the case of Rwanda, the study will provide a complete picture of the genocide, showing how it was the outcome of the political dynamics of both state and society during the social-revolutionary processes. The study will show how the agenda imposed from above resonated with the initiative from below, and vice versa, thus comprehensively dealing with the initiative from below that has plagued the existing paradigms.

Thirdly, Skocpol's study is one of 'social revolutions', and the important assumption in this study is that the violence of the genocide, together with previous patterns and processes of violence in

³³ Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979)

Rwanda, resemble that of a social revolution. To use Skocpol's conception of social revolution, and apply her framework to the case of Rwanda, is to contextualise the Rwandan genocide within social-revolutionary transformations, seeing it as an outcome and consequence of such socio-political processes. As mentioned, genocide in Rwanda has only occurred in two political processes: during the 1959 Revolution and the 1990-1994 Civil War. In both incidences, Rwanda experienced profound social-revolutionary crises. More importantly, in both these social-revolutionary crises, the social and political dynamics meet Skocpol's expectations, and definition, of social revolution, although not perfectly. Therefore, locating the explanation on the causes of Rwanda's genocide within Skocpol's analytical framework in *States and Social Revolutions* is of great value. As will be shown by the study, it provides for a complete and comprehensive answer to the troubling question concerning Rwanda's genocide: Why so many Hutu citizens joined their government and committed mass murder.

Organisation of the Study

The study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter provides an analysis on the analytical framework used in the study to explain the causes of the genocide – Skocpol's *States and Social Revolutions*. The second chapter provides an explanation on the causes of Rwanda's 1959 Revolution, and the third chapter provides an analysis on the role of political violence in the social-revolutionary process. The fourth chapter provides an explanation on Rwanda's second social-revolutionary crisis, which came in the form of a civil war. The fifth chapter provides an analysis on the 1994 genocide, and will show how it was the outcome of that second social-revolutionary process.

I

Analytical Framework

'States and Social Revolutions'

"The basic question of every Revolution is that of state power."

V.I. Lenin

The aim of this chapter is to provide an analysis of Skocpol's analytical framework in '*States and Social Revolutions*'. This chapter consists of four sections. The first section discusses Skocpol's definition of the 'social revolution'. The second section provides an analysis on the causes of social revolutions, and in so doing discusses Skocpol's two independent variables: the state crisis and crisis-from-below. The third section provides an analysis on the instrumental role of political violence in the social-revolutionary process, and in so doing, examines Skocpol's explanations of her case studies of France, Russia, and China. The concluding section briefly illustrates how this framework applies to the case of Rwanda.

1.1. Defining Social Revolutions

In modern world history, social revolutions have been rare and momentous occurrences and have fundamentally transformed the state, class, and social structures of nations.¹ They have given birth to nations "whose power and autonomy markedly surpassed their own pre-revolutionary pasts and outstripped other countries in similar circumstances."² Revolutionary France, for example, became "a conquering power in Continental Europe, and the Russian Revolution generated an industrial and military superpower."³ In Mexico, the Revolution gave the country the political tools and strength to become one of the most industrialised postcolonial nations in the world. And the social revolutions of Cuba and Vietnam enabled these countries, for a while, to "break the chains of dependency."⁴

In other countries, however, social revolutions have not brought such fortunes and have led to tragic consequences. The 1975 social revolution in Cambodia is one such case. Described by

¹ Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 3

² Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, 3.

³ *Ibid.*

many political commentators and scholars as one of the fiercest and most consuming revolutions of the twentieth century, the social-revolutionary zeal spearheaded by Democratic Kampuchea resulted in over one million Cambodians dying from warfare, starvation, overwork and execution. Over half a million more were exiled in Thailand and other neighbouring countries.⁵ Democratic Kampuchea had ambitiously, and without mercy, pursued a utopian program of total and rapid social transformation that included abolishing money, evacuating cities and towns, prohibiting religious practices, suspending formal education, newspapers, and postal services, and collectivising eating.⁶ In addition, the revolutionary vanguards not only abolished class distinctions but also transformed the population into a labour army of unpaid agricultural workers, subsequently transforming Cambodia into a gigantic prison farm.⁷

Thus, social revolutions have, for better or for worse, led to the fundamental social and political structural transformation within the societies they have occurred and have had extraordinary significance for the histories of nations and the world. However, the significance of social revolutions in this dissertation lies not only within the context of their national or historic significance, but more importantly, in their *distinctive pattern* of socio-political change.

Theda Skocpol defines the 'social revolution' as the rapid and basic transformation of a society's state and class structures that is accompanied and in part carried through by class-based revolts from below.⁸ Skocpol points out that a social revolution is the coming together of two coincidences: "the coincidence of societal structural change with class upheaval; and the coincidence of political with social transformation."⁹ She distinguishes a social revolution from three types of conflicts and transformative processes: political revolutions, rebellions, and the processes of industrialisation. Political revolutions involve the transformation of *state* but not *social* structures. In addition, they are not accomplished through class conflict. Rebellions, although they involve the revolt of subordinate classes, "do not eventuate in structural change."¹⁰ By contrast, industrialisation is a process that can transform social structures "without necessarily

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ David Chandler, *The Tragedy of Cambodian History: Politics, War, and Revolution since 1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 1.

⁶ Chandler, 1

⁷ Ibid., 239.

⁸ Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, 4.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

bringing about, or resulting from, sudden political upheavals or basic political-structural changes.”¹¹

Therefore, what makes a social revolution such a unique and rare occurrence is that the basic and fundamental change in social and political structure occurs simultaneously through intensive socio-political conflict in which class struggle is an essential factor. In explaining social revolutions, Skocpol employs three mutually complementary principles of analysis: a structural perspective; attention to international contexts; and the notion of the state as an autonomous organisation.

The Structural Perspective

In explaining the causes and processes of social revolution, Skocpol adopts a structural perspective. This approach has two important assumptions. Firstly, concerning the causes of social revolutions, the assumption is that a revolutionary situation develops due to the emergence of a ‘state crisis’. The argument is that “no successful social revolution has ever been ‘made’ by a mass-mobilising avowedly revolutionary movement... Revolutions are not made, they come.”¹² Thus, revolutions emerge from the political crisis of state power.

Secondly, with regard to the processes and outcomes of social revolutions, the assumption is that the revolutionary process is shaped and limited by the prevailing socio-economic and international conditions, and its procession depends on how the revolutionary situation emerges. Any one class or group does not control the logic of the revolutionary conflict, and it can give rise to outcomes neither fully foreseen nor intended by any particular group involved.

In the light of these two assumptions, to explain a social revolution from a structural perspective, one must find problematic “the emergence (not ‘making’) of a revolutionary situation within an old regime.”¹³ Then one must be able to identify “objectively conditioned and complex intermeshing of the various actions of diversely situated groups – an intermeshing that shapes the revolutionary process and gives rise to the new regime.”¹⁴ The argument is that one can only begin to make sense of such complexity by “focusing simultaneously upon the institutionally

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., 17.

¹³ Ibid., 18.

¹⁴ Ibid.

determined situations and relations of groups within society and upon the interrelations of societies within world-historically developing international structures.”¹⁵ Such an impersonal and non-subjective viewpoint, emphasising patterns of relations among groups and societies, is a structural perspective.

The International Context

Since adopting a structural perspective implies focusing on relationships, international relations must also be included. This is because international relations and contexts “contribute to the emergence of social-revolutionary crises and invariably shape revolutionary struggles and outcomes.”¹⁶ What is of particular importance are developments in the international state system such as defeats in wars, threats of invasion and political struggles over colonial controls, as they directly contribute to virtually all outbreaks of revolutionary crises and their development.¹⁷ In Skocpol’s three cases of France, Russia and China, such international developments helped “undermine existing political authorities and state controls, opening the way for basic conflicts and structural transformations.”¹⁸ In addition, the outcomes of these revolutions were conditioned by international constraints and opportunities faced by the emergent regimes.

The Role of the State

According to Skocpol, the historical reality of social revolutions suggests the need to acknowledge the significant role of the state. She argues that the political crises, which caused the social revolutions, were direct expressions of the contradictions located in the structures of the old-regime states. Moreover, the political-conflict groups involved in the revolutionary struggles formed as interest groups within and fought about the forms of state structures.¹⁹ The class upheavals and socio-economic transformations that have characterised social revolutions “have been closely intertwined with the collapse of the state organisations of the old regimes and with

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid., 19.

¹⁷ Ibid., 23.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., 29.

the consolidation and functioning of the state organisations of the new regimes.”²⁰ For Skocpol, the major emphasis is reserved for the significant role of the state.²¹

Therefore, the state, according to Skocpol, is autonomous and ‘Janus-faced’, with an “intrinsically dual anchorage in class-divided socio-economic structures and an international system of states.”²² She focuses on the points of intersection between international conditions and pressures, on the one hand, and class-structured economies and politically organised interests, on the other hand. The political contradictions that launch social revolutions, and the political forces that shape the rebuilding of state organisations within social-revolutionary crises, are located within these points of intersection.²³

Thus, Skocpol defines social revolutions as “rapid, basic transformations of a society’s state and class structures... accompanied and in part carried through by class-based revolts from below.”²⁴ She points out that social revolutions are rare occurrences. Political revolutions, involving the change of state structures, are perhaps more common, but the fundamental and simultaneous structural transformation of state and society occurs very rarely. In explaining the causes of social revolutions, she employs three principles of analysis. She adopts a structural perspective, pays attention to international contexts, and processes, and approaches the state as a potentially autonomous organisation located at the interface of class structures and international situations.

1.2. The Causes of Social Revolutions

In the three cases Skocpol examines, both state and society are in a specific condition of structural inequality within and beyond the country. Within the country, the state is relatively bureaucratised and autonomous from the interests of the dominant classes. Society is predominantly agrarian and contains at least three important classes: rural landowners, the peasantry, and the middle class clustered around the towns. The state relies on the political support of the rural landowners, as well as the agrarian economic resources produced by the peasantry.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ See also Michael Richards, review of *States and Social Revolutions*, by Theda Skocpol, *Journal of Social History*, 14, 1 (1980) for an in-depth review of Skocpol’s approach on the state.

²² Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, 32.

²³ Ibid.

Beyond the country, in the international arena, other sets of structural inequality exist as the agrarian bureaucracy encounters international pressure. The pressure comes from countries that are more powerful in economic and military relations.²⁵ In this situation of structural inequality within and beyond the country, two crises develop – a *state crisis* and a *crisis-from-below*. Given that social revolutions involve the fundamental and simultaneous transformation of both state and society, the two crises effectively serve as Skocpol's independent variables in explaining the causes of social revolutions.

1.2.1. The State Crisis

The social-revolutionary crisis, according to Skocpol, emerges from a political crisis located in both the domestic structure and the international situation of the pre-revolution regime. The crisis develops when the pre-revolution regime fails to respond to the challenges it encounters in the international arena – the state is subject to security threatening international pressure. The failure to respond to such challenges is because the regime is constrained by its own internal institutional socio-political relationships: “the institutionalised relationships of the autocratic state organisations to the landed upper class and the agrarian economies.”²⁶ Caught in “cross-pressures” between constraining domestic social and political structures, and threatening international pressures, the regime and its armed forces breakdown “opening the way for social-revolutionary transformations spearheaded by revolts from below.”²⁷

In order to adequately understand the causes of the political crisis that launches the social revolution, it is important to understand the structures of the pre-revolution regime and the conflicts to which they are prone, before the revolution. This necessitates a brief analysis on the nature of the state, the dominant class relations, and the unsuccessful response to international pressure.

²⁴ Ibid., 4.

²⁵ This introduction is based on: Annette Seegers, “Theories of Revolution”, in *Politics: An Introduction for South African students*, eds. A. Venter and A. Johnson (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1991), 233-238.

²⁶ Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, 47.

The State

The pre-revolution state has two important features. Firstly, the state is bureaucratized and administered on an autocratic basis. In Skocpol's cases, pre-revolution France, Russia and China were countries held together by "autocratic monarchies."²⁸ Second, the state is relatively autonomous from society. In Skocpol's cases, "none was as fully centralised or powerful in society as a modern nation-state would be."²⁹ The state, therefore, is not in a position to directly control or organise local agrarian socio-economic relations. The state is limited to the functions it has been built up to perform. This includes "waging war abroad, supervising society at home to maintain some semblance of general order, and appropriating socio-economic resources through military recruitment, and through taxes on land, population, or trade."³⁰

Dominant Class Relations

The pre-revolution state stands astride an agrarian economy, which is structurally (and unequally) divided between a mass of peasant families, and a landed upper class. The most important dominant class is the landed upper class. The conflicting class relations relevant for the emergence of a state crisis are that between the autocratic state and the landed upper class.³¹

Despite the partnership that exists³² between the state and the landed upper class, they are also competitors in that they control the manpower of the peasantry and appropriate surpluses from the agrarian economy.³³ In the cases of France, Russia and China, the monarchs "were interested in appropriating increased resources from society and channelling them efficiently into military aggrandizement or state sponsored and centrally controlled economic development."³⁴ Thus, the economic interests of the landed upper class are obstacles to the state. The landed classes are interested "either in preventing increased state appropriations or in using state offices to siphon off revenues in ways that would reinforce the domestic socio-economic status quo."³⁵

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid., 48.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² In the sense that they are partners in controlling and exploiting the peasantry.

³³ Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, 49.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

Thus, to the extent that members of the landed upper class gain the capacity for “self-conscious collective organisation within higher levels of the existing state structures”, they might be in a position to become obstacles and thus obstruct state interests that run counter to their economic interests.³⁶ Such obstruction could “culminate in deliberate challenges to autocratic political authority – and, at the same time, it could have the quite unintended effect of destroying the administrative and military integrity of the state itself.”³⁷

From International Pressure to Revolutionary Crisis

Given that the landed upper class possesses such important advantage, one would expect that the monarchs of the autocratic state would never attempt to pursue policies fundamentally at variance with the economic interests of the dominant class. However, this changes significantly when the state is subject to threatening international pressure. This is because, international pressure, such as threats of war, war itself, or competition over economic goods, stretch to breakpoint the capacities of an agrarian bureaucracy. Success in meeting this external pressure depends upon the ability of the state to “mobilise extraordinary resources from the society and to implement in the process reforms requiring structural transformations.”³⁸ To improve international competitiveness, the state needs to increase production and the state’s share of this production. Moreover, the state, from self-interested standpoint, needs more resources to fight wars and protect global economic assets.³⁹

However, it faces an agrarian society unable to “deliver swift leaps in production.”⁴⁰ The state thus initiates a process of structural reforms: for example, “new methods of land cultivation are encouraged, previous patterns of land ownership are revised, and taxation increases the burden on both landowners and peasants.”⁴¹ The state may succeed in its reformist efforts; Skocpol cites the examples of Prussia and Japan where the state did mobilise to meet foreign competition in the nineteenth century.

The revolutionary crisis occurs when the state fails to implement sufficiently basic reforms or to promote rapid enough economic development to meet and weather the particular intensity of

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid., 50.

³⁹ Seegers, 234.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

military threats. Thus, it is “precisely because of the unsuccessful attempts to cope with foreign pressures.”⁴² Why do state’s fail in these efforts? Firstly, the economic reforms of the state could be (in financial terms) simply insufficient to improve the threatened international position.⁴³ Secondly, the landed upper classes are threatened by reforms, as these are policies at variance with their economic interests. The landed upper class has a “vested interest in preserving existing methods of cultivation, holding on to large tracts of land and paying as little tax as possible.”⁴⁴ Thus, the landed upper class resists the state’s reformist actions, blocks economic schemes, and expresses its opinion in more hostile political action.

The state crisis thus emerges from the insufficiency of financial resources, and the loss of existing political support, both consequences of the state’s reformist policies in the face of international pressure. Consequently, the autocratic state is “either dissolved through the impact of defeat in total war with more developed powers (Russia) or deposed at home through the reaction of politically powerful landed upper classes against monarchical attempts to mobilise resources or impose reforms (France and China).”⁴⁵ The result is the disintegration of the central administrative machine that had provided the sole unified bulwark of social and political order.⁴⁶ No longer reinforced by the prestige and coercive power of autocratic rule, the existing class relations become vulnerable to assaults from below. However, a social revolution sees the simultaneous development of a state crisis and a crisis-from-below.

1.2.2. The Crisis-From-Below

In the countryside, peasants are at the heart of the crisis-from-below. According to Skocpol, social-revolutionary transformation occurs because widespread peasant revolts coincide with, and take advantage of, the hiatus of governmental supervision and sanctions.⁴⁷ Thus, the peasant revolt ultimately provides “the dynamite to bring down the old building.”⁴⁸ In Skocpol’s cases, peasant revolts “destroyed the old agrarian class relations and undermined the political and military supports for liberalism or counterrevolution.”⁴⁹ Moreover, they “opened the way for

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 234-235.

⁴² Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, 50.

⁴³ Seegers, 235.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, 50.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 51

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 112

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

marginal political elites, perhaps supported by urban popular movements, to consolidate the Revolutions on the basis of centralised and mass-incorporating state organisations.”⁵⁰

The peasant revolt against the landowners (the landed upper class) is a crucial insurrectionary ingredient for a successful social revolution. The social-revolutionary impact of a peasant revolt depends on two important aspects. Firstly, it depends on whether it is widespread, and secondly, whether directed particularly against landowners. If a peasant revolt is widespread, it can achieve an impact transcending the localities to which peasant organisations remain confined. In addition, by striking especially against the property and powers of the landed upper class, it can weaken the foundations of the social and political order of the old regime.⁵¹ Thus, what came about in the French, Russian and Chinese Revolutions was a widespread direct assault on landlords that destroyed the old agrarian class relations.

Given the significance of the peasant revolt in the structural transformation of class relations, it is important to identify the conditions necessary for peasant insurrections. Skocpol downplays the role of ideology arguing that peasants participate in revolutions “without being converted to radical visions of a desired new society, and without becoming a nationally organised class-for-themselves.”⁵² They struggled for concrete goals that involved access to more land and freedom from claims on their surpluses.

Furthermore, she argues against approaches that turn the constant feature of the peasant condition, exploitation, into an explanatory variable. This is because, by definition, “peasants are invariably subjected to nonreciprocal claims on their production.”⁵³ Given that they “are primary agricultural cultivators who must bear the burden of varying combinations of taxes, rents, corvée, and discriminatory prices, they always have grounds for rebellion against landlords, state agents, and merchants who exploit them.”⁵⁴ Therefore, the important question is not only what the grievances that cause peasant revolts are, but also, and more importantly, what transforms the peasantry into a collective force capable of striking out against its oppressors.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

The decisive factor in making possible a peasant rebellion is whether peasants have 'internal leverage' i.e. "some organised capacity for collective action against their exploitative superiors."⁵⁶ The extent, to which peasants have internal leverage, particularly in a state crisis, is determined by two factors. The first is the structural conditions of the peasantry, particularly the degrees of solidarity in peasant communities, and the degrees of peasant autonomy from supervision and control by landlords. The second is the impact of state crises, which results in the relaxation of the state coercive instruments.

Structural Conditions

Peasant solidarity and autonomy must be investigated through an analysis of the agrarian structures of the pre-revolution regime. Both class structures and local political structures are significant as the location of peasant solidarity and autonomy in agrarian class structures depend upon the exact institutional form that these class relations take.⁵⁷

Based on research that investigates the effects of institutionalised agrarian class relations on peasant insurrectionary capacity, Skocpol reaches three conclusions on the relationship between types of agrarian socio-political systems and the potential for peasant rebellion. On the one hand, agrarian regimes that feature large estates worked by serfs or landless labourers "tend to be inimical to spontaneous, self-organised peasant rebellions."⁵⁸ This is because the serfs and labourers are "divided from each other and subject to close and constant supervision and discipline by landlords."⁵⁹ By contrast, rentier agrarian systems where "smallholder peasant families possess and work the land on their own, are notoriously more susceptible to peasant revolts (particularly if socio-economically based community relations tie individual families together in opposition to landlords)."⁶⁰

Skocpol however points out that even if large-estate agriculture is absent, an agrarian order may still be immune to a peasant insurrection if landlords directly control the administrative and military machine at the local level. Thus, those agrarian orders most vulnerable to sudden autonomous peasant rebellion are those that not only have class relations favourable to peasant

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 116.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

solidarity and autonomy. They also have “sanctioning machineries that are centrally and bureaucratically controlled, even as peasant communities enjoy considerable local political autonomy.”⁶¹

The Impact of the State Crisis

The structural situation of the peasantry in local class and political structures, by itself, is not a sufficient cause of a peasant rebellion. It is the interaction between the state crisis, and the structurally given insurrectionary potential of the peasantry, that produces a full-blown social-revolutionary situation.⁶² The breakdown of the repressive capacity of a previously unified and centralised state creates the conditions ultimately favourable for a widespread and irreversible peasant revolt against the landlords. Therefore, “as soon as – and only when – that class [the dominant class], under international pressure, had backed itself into a revolutionary political crisis, did the peasantry become able to achieve long-implicit insurrectionary goals.”⁶³ The result is a social revolution.

Therefore, before a social revolution can occur, the administrative and military power of the pre-revolution state has to break down. The revolutionary crisis, culminating in administrative and military breakdown, emerges because the pre-revolution state gets squeezed in cross-pressures between threatening international pressure and constraints imposed on state responses by the prevailing domestic socio-political structures. This state crisis facilitates for the emergence of a crisis-from-below that takes the form of a peasant revolt, directly attacking the property and privileges of the dominant class, thus accomplishing changes in class relations that otherwise wouldn't have happened.

1.3. The Social-Revolutionary Process: The Mobilisation for Political Violence

The social-revolutionary crisis that breaks down the pre-revolution regime sets into motion political and class struggles that culminate into fundamental social and political structural changes. Skocpol identifies three important patterns of change. Firstly, the broken down autocratic state gives way for the emergence of a strengthened, centralised and mass-incorporating nation-state, which is more potent and powerful in society. Secondly, the

⁶¹ Ibid., 117.

⁶² Ibid.

widespread peasant revolt directed against landlords leads to the structural transformation of agrarian class relations. The landed upper class loses its special role in controlling the peasantry and appropriating agrarian surplus – they become no longer exclusively privileged in society and politics. Thirdly, a new revolutionary political leadership emerges to consolidate the revolutionary process. This emergent political leadership encounters internal disunity and counter-revolutionary attempts in building new state organisations to consolidate the revolution. Their success in meeting the challenges of political consolidation depends on their ability to mobilise the lower class groups formally excluded from national politics (the peasantry or the working classes).⁶⁴

There is also an important characteristic of the social-revolutionary process: political violence characterised by *mass mobilisation* and *mass participation*. This type of political violence serves an important function in the transformation of the society's class and state structures, and in the consolidation and defence of the revolution. The violence has two important functions in the revolutionary process. Firstly, it is instrumental in the crisis-from-below and emerges at the societal level as a *widespread* peasant revolt. Secondly, it is instrumental in the process of consolidating and defending the revolution in the face of a counter-revolution – it is an instrument in the mass mobilisation of society against internal and external counter-revolutionary threats. The following subsection will illustrate the 'popular' nature and dual functions of political violence in the social-revolutionary process, and in so doing, will briefly examine Skocpol's explanations of revolutionary violence in France, Russia and China.

1.3.1. The Peasant Insurrection: The Class Upheaval

The political violence involved in the peasant revolt takes the form of a successful, widespread and direct assault against the landlords. The insurrection is a class upheaval characterised by mass participation and mass mobilisation. The structural conditions necessary for the insurrection, and the political vacuum created by the state crisis, give the revolt a *widespread* and *mass* character. These structural conditions refer to agrarian socio-economic and political structures. Widespread peasant revolts are more susceptible in rentier agrarian systems with considerable degrees of peasant solidarity and autonomy, where "smallholder peasant families possess and work the land on their own [and particularly] where community relations tie the individual families together in

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 161.

opposition to landlords.”⁶⁵ The vacuum of the state crisis refers to the impact of the political crisis as it weakens the coercive apparatus of the state, facilitating a ‘widespread’ rebellion. In Skocpol’s cases, the rentier agrarian systems had class relations favourable to *peasant solidarity* and *autonomy*, and political crises weakened the coercive instruments of the state. This facilitated widespread revolts. These two factors ensured mass participation in the political violence. The peasant revolts in France, Russia, and China exhibit these factors.

France

In France, the peasantry owned a substantial portion of the land. At least one-third of the land was held by millions of peasant farmers in small pieces that “could be managed, bought and sold, and passed to heirs, subject to seigniorial claims.”⁶⁶ In addition, “because very few large landowners directly cultivated their own holdings, roughly another two-fifths of the land was rented to peasant tenants and sharecroppers in mostly small pieces.”⁶⁷ Therefore, peasants controlled the use of most of the land involved in agricultural production.

However, their control of the land was “subject to heavy rental claims on what they produced.”⁶⁸ The “ground rent – royal, seigniorial, tithe and proprietary – [was] the driving force of the realm and its social system. Rent-payers [were] the ruled, receivers of rent and their agents the rulers.”⁶⁹ The rental claims were normally burdensome, but in times of crises of production or marketing, “they loomed as an almost insupportable drain on the margin of livelihood or subsistence.”⁷⁰ Nonetheless, peasants enjoyed a substantial degree of self-government. With the aid of the local priest, they handled their local affairs. Furthermore, there were village assemblies of the heads of households of the community that “met after mass on Sundays to handle a wide range of community affairs.”⁷¹ These assemblies functioned as vital arenas for the discussion of local affairs by all family heads, and their decisions controlled important aspects of village life.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 116.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 118.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 119.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid., 120-121.

The domestic catalyst that led to the rural uprising was an economic crisis: the grain harvest failed. Subsequently, rural incomes fell and agricultural unemployment increased.⁷² As markets for industrial products contracted, “more labourers were thrown out of work.”⁷³ Meanwhile, the price of bread rapidly increased and millions of poor peasants and urban workers faced acute want.

Consequently, there were popular responses to the rising bread prices in 1789 and these followed established forms – the rural and urban poor responded with bread riots. Before 1789, in response to rising bread prices, peasant communities would “seize grain being transported for sale outside their communities” and sell it for a ‘just price’ to local consumers.⁷⁴ Urban consumers responded similarly by seizing bakers’ stocks and handling them the same way. The royal government would then intervene through compromise and restoring order – “combination of supplying grain to the needy and repressing demonstrations.”⁷⁵

Much of what happened in 1789 was a replay of this pattern of popular unrest but with one important difference: it coincided with a state crisis that produced a political revolution – the ‘Municipal Revolution’. Thus, when the peasants began to go beyond bread riots to attack the entire seigniorial system (the targets usually being the landlords), the propertied class was in a poor position to repress the rural disturbances. The early revolts were particularly widespread but with the coming of the summer, “unrest intensified and spread over most of the country.”⁷⁶ Thus, the disorganisation of the upper classes, the result of a state crisis, facilitated the spread of revolts from 1789. In the end, the revolts attacked the existing class structure, eliminated the existing mode of surplus appropriation, and subsequently abolished the seigniorial system and many of the institutions of the old regime.

Thus, the reasons for mass participation in the peasant revolt of the French Revolution are twofold. Firstly, there was a pre-existing potential in French agrarian socio-political structure for anti-seigniorial peasant revolts. The peasants possessed considerable property, community autonomy, and anti-seigniorial solidarity. And secondly, the economic and state crisis of 1789

⁷² Ibid., 121.

⁷³ Ibid., 122.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

that culminated into a political revolution enhanced peasant solidarity and consciousness, weakening dominant class defences in ways that could release the revolutionary potential.⁷⁷

Russia

In the case of Russia, there are similar factors explaining mass participation in political violence: a rentier agrarian system, autonomy and solidarity in peasant community structures, and the impact of a state crisis. The important difference, however, is that the Russian countryside had undergone an important transition from serfdom to a rentier agricultural system – a process of ‘Emancipation’ from serfdom to peasantry. However, despite this freedom from serfdom, the peasantry had more obligations to meet than they had experienced under serfdom.⁷⁸ Therefore, as a whole, “liberation from serfdom had little but bitterly ironic consequences for the peasants [and] although the Emancipation allotted the peasants over one-half of the land, it left them economically worse off.”⁷⁹

As for the institutional basis for Emancipation, the ownership of land allotted to peasants followed traditional patterns. This meant that the predominant form of land tenure was a system of collective ownership called the *obshchina*. The *obshchina* “was a village commune that controlled property in land and distributed access to it among individual households.”⁸⁰ The nobility and the state reinforced it primarily because it provided a useful mechanism for the collective guarantee of peasant obligations. Thus, it became virtually impossible for an individual peasant to break his ties to the *obshchina* and individualist agricultural practices were discouraged. The overall objective was to keep the bulk of the peasants on the land and at work in the old ways.⁸¹

Most of the agricultural lands of Russia were in the hands of nobles and the controls of the *obshchina* over peasant property and cultivation were particularly strong and universally present. Within the *obshchina* framework, the nobility and its estate managers freed the peasant community in most respects from political control. The peasants “were given rights of self-

⁷⁷ Ibid., 125.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 129.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid., 130.

government under the supervision of bureaucratic agents of the Imperial State.”⁸² The village assembly became the centre of formal political authority. In addition to the economic functions of allocating land and regulating crop cycle, the assembly had the responsibility of “community obligations for taxes and redemption payments as well as the regulation of movements of peasants from the village.”⁸³ Therefore, the overall effect of the post-Emancipation agrarian system increased the peasants’ collective handling of their own political affairs and thus rendered the villages more autonomous and solidarity against outsiders.

The deep impulses for agrarian revolts came from the *obshchinas*. Life for peasants who lived in *obshchinas* was a continuous struggle for survival in the face of deepening poverty. This was the result of “the coincidence of stagnant technology, poor market opportunities, and rising population – all in addition to the heavy exaction imposed upon peasant incomes by the landlord and the state.”⁸⁴ Thus, the basic reason for revolt was economic hardship and the state crisis provided the opportunity. And the traditional ideas and forms of community solidarity, in the form of *obshchinas*, shaped the struggle: “The organisational basis of the peasant revolution was, so to speak, ‘ready made’ in the villages.”⁸⁵

In the wake of the February Revolution against tsardom in the cities, “the peasant movement against the local estates commenced in the spring with encroachments upon landlords’ properties and the withholding of rent or labour services.”⁸⁶ The conflict then gradually accelerated and deepened into direct, violent attacks on landlords and seizures of estate lands to be redistributed among peasants, climaxing in autumn 1917, and was officially sanctioned with the Bolshevik ascension to power. What provided the opportunity was the situation of the army – the army that had been mobilised to fight a total European war disintegrated. This relaxed the coercive capabilities of the state.

Like France, the agrarian structural conditions of the peasantry, and the impact of the political crisis, creating opportunities for the revolt to spread explain mass participation in the Russian peasant revolts.

⁸² Ibid., 132.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 135.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

China

In China, a peasant revolution against landlords also occurred. In contrast to France and Russia, the peasantry lacked the structural conditions of solidarity and autonomy that allowed the agrarian revolutions in France and Russia to emerge relatively spontaneously.⁸⁷ Rather, the Chinese agrarian revolution was more protracted and required for its consummation “the establishment through military conquest of secure ‘base areas’, within which collective organisation and freedom from direct landlord control could be created for the peasants.”⁸⁸ Thus, the considerable degrees of peasant autonomy and solidarity, coupled with a state crisis, explain why the peasant revolt is characterised by mass participation.

1.3.2. The Mobilisation for Consolidating and Defending the Revolution

The process of consolidating and defending the revolution is the most violent part of the social revolution. The political violence involved in this period of the revolution is instrumental in defending and consolidating the revolutionary process. The violence is characterised by the mass mobilisation of society by the revolutionary leadership to defend and consolidate the revolution in the face of a counter-revolution. Skocpol makes the point that in social-revolutionary processes, “emergent political leaderships were challenged by disunity and counter-revolutionary attempts at home, and by military invasions from abroad, to build new state organisations to consolidate the Revolutions.” Moreover, “success in meeting the challenges of political consolidation [in the face of internal and external counter-revolutionaries] was possible in large part because revolutionary leaderships could mobilise lower-class groups formerly excluded from national politics, either urban workers or the peasantry.”⁸⁹

Therefore, what characterises social-revolutionary processes is the politico-military mobilisation of popular support in wars against domestic counter-revolutionaries and competitors, and against foreign invaders.⁹⁰ The successful consolidation and defence of a social revolution depends on the ability of the revolutionary leadership to mobilise the society to defend the revolution, in the face of a counter-revolution. In the social-revolutionary interregnum following the state and societal crisis, a political dynamic is discernible. A process of polarisation in the society between two

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 148.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 161.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 283.

political extremes i.e. counter-revolutionary forces and radical revolutionaries, leads to the radicalisation of society facilitating the emergence of a radical revolutionary leadership. Political violence, instrumental in revolutionary defence, occurs in the mass mobilisation of society to consolidate the revolution in the face of counter-revolutionary forces. The cases of France, Russia and China exhibit this pattern.

France

After the revolutionary state crisis of 1789, a political dynamic of polarisation emerged. This political dynamic, on the one hand, “inexorably strengthened the extreme of full-scale aristocratic-monarchical revival”, and on the other hand, “intensified distrust of the king and fear of counter-revolution leading ultimately to radical republicanism.”⁹¹ These tensions immobilised and finally, under wartime conditions, tore apart the united liberal revolutionary government (that launched the political revolution) of 1789-92. Subsequently, this provided the opening for “urban mass mobilisation by radical political elites, men who were marginal to the old landed-commercial dominant class and primarily orientated to self and national advancement through state-building activities.”⁹²

The end of the liberal phase occurred when France declared war on Austria in April 1792. This act “set in motion the processes of government centralisation and popular political mobilisation that were to culminate first in the Montagnard Terror of 1793-4, and then in the Napoleonic dictatorship.”⁹³ In declaring war, the liberal revolutionary government had hoped to unify France and propel it to easy victories. However, the war only exacerbated internal political polarisation as the armies performed poorly, deliberated by the emigration or disaffection of many officers.⁹⁴ In a worsening political and military crisis, and the subsequent decline in economic conditions, the discontent of the urban population was aroused as radical politicians emerged. Moreover, as the situation deteriorated, political awareness and participation among the urban masses increased, and they eventually threw their support to radical political elites. As the threat of armed counter-revolution grew, they began to organise “their own political and military

⁹¹ Ibid., 185.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid., 185-186.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 187.

participation in neighbourhood sections, urban communes, in committees of surveillance, and in armed bands of self-appointed defenders of the Revolution.”⁹⁵

Soon, by the end of 1792, radical revolutionaries removed the liberal revolutionary government. However, by early 1793, as foreign enemies pressed anew, and spurred by the threat of conscription to the new army, the peasants rose against the new revolutionary government. Subsequently, more disaffected politicians went into opposition and this led to numerous counter-revolutionary revolts; providing favourable opportunities for counter-revolution.

What emerged to meet this crisis of defending the revolution from its armed enemies internally and externally was a “dictatorial and arbitrary system of government.”⁹⁶ These were radical leaders of the Montagnard Jacobins and they began to mobilise the urban population. They began to establish themselves in Committees of ‘Public Safety’ and ‘General Security’, and through a network of Jacobin clubs, the Committees imposed tight central co-ordination over national politics.⁹⁷ Subsequently, “draconian and summary judicial measures, known as the Terror, were adopted to imprison and execute enemies of the Revolution.”⁹⁸ Urged by popular supporters of the Montagnard government, these measures “struck nobles, refractory priests, and rich bourgeoisie, but in absolute numbers, many more peasants and urban poor were affected, most of them from rebellious areas.”⁹⁹ Moreover, the overall pattern of the political violence was one of political defence employed to crush rebellion and opposition to the revolution.

Subsequently, the Montagnard dictatorship, through a process of mass mobilisation by the Committees, expanded, invigorated, and supplied the armies of France. Under the rule of the Committee on Public Safety, “the armies of revolutionary France turned from demoralisation and defeats to frequent victories and by early 1794 had mastered every major internal and external military threat to the Republic.”¹⁰⁰ However, disaffection soon grew among the supporters of the Montagnards and by mid-1794, leaders of the radical revolutionaries were dispatched to the guillotine.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 188.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 189.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 190.

Thus, the overall pattern of political violence suggests that the primary function was political defence of the revolution. Mass participation in this political violence was determined by the social and political dynamics of radicalisation and polarisation in the society between two extremes (radical revolutionaries and counter-revolutionaries) under wartime conditions. In addition, success in defending and consolidating the revolution depended on the mass mobilisation of the society into Committees on Public Safety and General Security to defend the revolution from internal and external counter-revolutionaries. These instruments, the Committees on Public Safety and General Security, ensured mass participation in political violence.

Russia

Like France, a political dynamic of polarisation and radicalisation also occurred in Russia after the February 1917 revolutionary crisis and under wartime conditions. But unlike France, it didn't occur within the context of a transition from a liberal to radical regime – “in Russia, there was never any viable liberal regime to be overthrown by anyone.”¹⁰¹ Rather, what set into motion a process of polarisation and increasing radicalism, culminating into intense political violence to consolidate the revolution, was the Bolshevik seizure of power through a coup d'état.

In the deepening chaos in Russia after the February Revolution, the Provisional Government was unwilling and unable to abandon the war, and unable to sanction or stop agrarian revolts. Consequently, political conflict in society deepened and the disorder spread into the cities, the war fronts, and the countryside. Amidst this chaos, the Bolshevik Party, originally the tiniest and the most extremist of the socialist parties, “manoeuvred successfully to develop increased tactical effectiveness and to gain strategically local popular support.”¹⁰²

In the Russian Revolution, ‘October’ was the moment when the “Provisional Government, whose power and authority had been completely undermined by popular revolts, was finally pushed aside through the Bolshevik bid for state sovereignty.”¹⁰³ In the capital, the Bolsheviks organised a military coup through the Petrograd garrison “under the authority of the Military Revolutionary Committee of the Petrograd Soviet, and made in the name of the Soviets of workers’, peasants’, and soldiers’ deputies.”¹⁰⁴ The Bolshevik Party, presenting itself as the leader and representative

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 207.

¹⁰² Ibid., 212.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 213.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

of the proletariat, “undertook to preserve and extend its rule and thereby consolidate and defend the Russian Revolution.”¹⁰⁵

For a while after the coup, the Bolsheviks continued to sanction anarchist forms of popular insurrection. However, given the circumstances of their ascension to state power, they began to rebuild administrative and military organisations, enforcing ever more centralised discipline within the party. However, with the social and economic crises deepening, and the armies in the process of dissolving, the Bolsheviks were in a worse position to govern.¹⁰⁶

The turning point came when Russia negotiated surrender in March 1918, and was subsequently defeated. As a result, counter-revolutionary forces based on armies led by former tsarist officers sprung up, and “Western expeditionary forces scattered around the periphery of European and Asian Russia were initiating attempts at foreign intervention.”¹⁰⁷ To meet these difficulties of military threats and counter-revolution, the Bolsheviks quickly turned to a strategy of organised coercion to defend the revolution. In addition, the Bolsheviks used organised coercion to restore order and discipline to Russian society and the government.

Two important instruments were used in the mobilisation of society to defend the revolution. The first was the Cheka, the political police, which was a special, autonomous administrative agency, charged with combating counter-revolutionary subversion by any means deemed necessary.¹⁰⁸ They were only subject to the authority of Party leaders and were used primarily to restore order and discipline internally. The Cheka “carried out searches, arrests, shootings, afterwards making a report to the Council of People’s Commissars and the Soviet Central Executive Committee.”¹⁰⁹ Their most important activity was the “summary arrest and imprisonment or execution of actual or suspected party and class enemies of the Soviet regime.”¹¹⁰

The second instrument was a centralised, professional, and disciplined Red Army created to defend against the emerging counter-revolutionary armies. Mass mobilisation was key to the success against counter-revolutionary armies. Conscription was decreed and soon, the Red Army was made up of loyal industrial workers and the peasants – in the end, peasants came to constitute

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 214.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 215.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

over four-fifths of the Red Army, which grew to over five million men by 1921.¹¹¹ The Red Army eventually defeated the counter-revolutionary armies and their success depended on their ability to mobilise the peasantry and urban workers in wars against counter-revolutionaries.

China

In the Chinese Revolution, the peasants ended up providing both the revolutionary insurrectionary force and the organised popular basis for the consolidation of revolutionary state power. The Chinese revolution only completed when the revolutionary leaders tapped into the enormous rebellious, productive, and political energies of the peasant majority.¹¹²

Unlike the French Revolution, which had the Jacobins, or the Russian Revolution, which had the Bolsheviks, the Chinese Revolution had two parallel revolutionary movements that aimed at and achieved considerable success in consolidating state power. One, the Kuomintang, “based itself primarily upon urban support and resources”; the other, the Chinese Communist Party, “based itself after 1927 primarily upon peasant support and rural resources.”¹¹³ The ultimate success of the Chinese Communists “depended upon their ability to penetrate rural communities, displace the remnant gentry, and mobilise peasant participation to a degree unprecedented.”¹¹⁴ The Chinese Communists successfully mobilised the peasantry for guerrilla war and land revolution and that was central to the success of the Chinese Revolution. Thus, like the cases of France and Russia, there was a significant relationship between mass mobilisation for revolutionary consolidation and revolutionary success.

Therefore, what characterises social-revolutionary processes is the politico-military mobilisation of popular support in wars against domestic counter-revolutionaries and competitors, and against foreign invaders.¹¹⁵ In France, the Jacobins mobilised urban popular forces to revitalise the national army and defend the revolution. In Russia, the Bolshevik Party, through the Cheka and Red Army, mobilised the industrial proletariat against counter-revolution. Moreover, in China, the Communist Party mobilised the peasants for guerrilla war and land revolution. Political violence, characterised by mass mobilisation, was instrumental in the revolutionary interregnum.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 217.

¹¹² Ibid., 236-237.

¹¹³ Ibid., 242.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

The violence has two important functions. Firstly, it is instrumental in the crisis-from-below and emerges as a peasant revolt. Secondly, it is instrumental in defending the revolution in the face of a counter-revolution, and is characterised by the mass mobilisation and participation of society.

Summing Up

Skocpol defines social revolutions as rapid and basic transformations of a society's state and class structures, accompanied and carried through by class-based revolts from below.¹¹⁶ Her explanation of social revolutions employs three principles of analysis. She approaches social revolutions from a structural perspective, pays attention to international contexts and pressures, and approaches the state as an autonomous organisation. Social revolutions originate from the simultaneous development of two crises: a state crisis and a crisis-from-below. The state crisis emerges from international pressure put on the state, and the failure of the state to respond to it. The state crisis facilitates for the emergence of a crisis-from-below. This takes the form of a widespread peasant revolt. The peasant revolt, however, also emerges from the structural conditions of rural socio-political and economic structures. Its *social-revolutionary impact* is facilitated by the state crisis.

The revolutionary process is characterised by the fundamental transformation of the society's state and class structures. The interregnum is characterised by the mass mobilisation and participation of society in political violence. This violence has two important functions in the revolutionary process. Firstly it is the instrument of the crisis-from-below and takes the form of a peasant revolt. Secondly, it is the instrument of defending and consolidating the revolution in the face of counter-revolutionary forces. The outcome of the social revolution is a strengthened state that is more centralised, bureaucratic, and autonomous domestically and internationally. There is much greater popular incorporation into the state-run affairs of the nation and the state is more potent and powerful within society.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 283

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 4.

1.4. The Analysis to Come: The Case of Rwanda

The 'class analysis' i.e. the analysis of 'class relations', 'class conflict', and 'changes in class relations', is an essential analytical tool Skocpol uses in explaining the process of state and societal structural transformation in social revolutions.¹¹⁷ Social revolutions, from Skocpol's perspective, are 'class-based' movements emerging from the structural contradictions of agrarian rentier systems where peasants are the lower major producing class, and landlords are the dominant surplus appropriating upper class. The social-revolutionary process is characterised by 'class conflict' between the peasantry, in solidarity with a rising revolutionary class, and landlords. The outcome of the revolution is the structural 'transformation of class relations' where the landed upper class loses out to the benefit of lower class groups, and the hegemony of the newly triumphant revolutionary class.

The rest of the study will apply this analytical framework to the Rwandan Revolution. However, in deciphering the logic of the Rwandan Revolution one additional variable must be included – the role of 'political identities' and their 'racialisation' i.e. *race identities*. This is because in Rwanda, the definitive feature of Belgian Colonialism was the generation of 'race' identity in the form of 'Hutu' and 'Tutsi' that became synonymous with 'native' and 'settler' respectively.¹¹⁸ Thus, whereas in Skocpol's *States and Social Revolutions* the distinctions between social groups, and the potential source of social and political conflicts, were based on 'class relations', in the Rwandan Revolution, 'race identity' was an *additional* factor in class relations. The implication of race identity as an additional variable in class and socio-political relations is that social group distinctions in Rwanda were politicised and reinforced. Consequently, social differences coincided with economic differences, which coincided with political differences, which coincided with racial differences. Thus, the peasant identity became a 'subservient' Hutu racial identity, and the landlord/dominant class identity became a 'superior' Tutsi racial identity. The implication of race identity as an additional variable in class and socio-political conflict is that, despite the transformation of colonial class relations between Hutu and Tutsi¹¹⁹, the polarised and conflicting race relations between Hutu and Tutsi were institutionalised and reinforced, leaving them unchanged.

¹¹⁷ Skocpol relies extensively on the Marxist conception of class relations as a theoretical tool.

¹¹⁸ It is important to note that the social categories 'Hutu' and 'Tutsi' predate Belgian Colonialism. It was under Belgian Colonialism that the distinction between the two was made a racial one.

¹¹⁹ With the Tutsi landowners losing out to the benefit of a newly triumphant Hutu revolutionary class.

II

Rwanda's 1959 'Social Revolution'

"How long shall we have to wait until our injustices are redressed?" 'Until the Hutu no longer has the soul of a serf. For that, he must be reborn.'"

Hutu characters in Naigiziki's play, *L'Optimiste*.

This chapter provides an analysis on Rwanda's 1959 'Social Revolution'. In providing this analysis, the chapter uses the independent variables developed in Skocpol's *States and Social Revolutions* to explain the Rwandan 1959 Revolution: the *state crisis* and the *crisis-from-below*. The chapter consists of four sections. The first section discusses the origins of the categories 'Hutu and Tutsi', and shows how the difference between them became racial. The second section discusses the politics of decolonisation, showing how the process politicised the Hutu and Tutsi difference. The third section discusses the dynamics of the social-revolutionary crisis in Rwanda, and the final section shows how Rwanda's Revolution meets Skocpol's expectations on the nature of the social-revolutionary crisis.

2.1. The Origins of the Hutu and Tutsi

2.1.1. The Pre-Colonial Distinction of Hutu and Tutsi

Since the meaning, and significance, of the social categories 'Hutu' and 'Tutsi', are related to the causes of the genocide, it is important to explain how changes in state power and social structure transformed relations between those considered Hutu and Tutsi, creating new forms of cleavages, and fostering new forms of solidarity, leading to revolution and genocide. Catherine Newbury and Mahmood Mamdani, in their fascinating studies on the political history of Rwanda, stress the importance of the development of state power and its impact on local Hutu-Tutsi power relations, focusing on important turning points in Rwanda's history.¹²⁰ In examining the changes in the access to, and use of, state power, they explore the impact of these changes on the development of Hutu-Tutsi identity relations, particularly on the effect on socio-economic and political distinctions.

¹²⁰ Colonial Rwanda, the Rwandan Revolution, and the Rwandan Civil War.

Newbury's research was conducted in Kinyaga, part of the Cyangugu Prefecture in present-day southwestern Rwanda, bordering the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Burundi, far from the central court of the Kingdom of Rwanda. In Kinyaga, political penetration of the royal court was recent, and ideological penetration, involving the imposition of Tutsi political norms, developed in the Kingdom of Rwanda, was yet imperfect.¹²¹ It was thus possible for her to examine how the central political institutions of the Kingdom of Rwanda developed. Moreover, it became evident that the "processes similar to those observed in Kinyaga had occurred elsewhere in [Rwanda] as well."¹²²

On Ijwi Island (currently part of the DRC), an area west of Kinyaga where Kinyagans maintained intensive but informal contacts, with considerable population mobility from Rwanda, 'Hutu' and 'Tutsi' were not relevant social categories except as they related to immigrants from Rwanda who came to the Island.¹²³ Despite the longstanding contacts and extensive knowledge of several aspects of Rwandan society, most people in Kinyaga did not know or clearly understand the term 'Hutu'. All Rwandans i.e. people who came from the Kingdom of Rwanda, were "referred collectively as 'Badusi'.¹²⁴ But individually a Rwandan was identified by his clan."¹²⁵ Initially, this was more significant than the terms 'Hutu' and 'Tutsi'.

The status of 'Tutsi' was often viewed as dependent on the control of wealth, particularly cattle and state power. Before political factors made the social categories of Hutu and Tutsi meaningful, social identification belonged principally to the unit that performed corporate political functions (the lineage of neighbourhood residential group). It was the "introduction to Kinyaga of central Rwandan administrative structures during the reign of Mwami [King] Rwabugiri (1860-1895) that brought contact with political institutions and social distinctions at a new level. It was under these conditions that current ethnic identifications became salient."¹²⁶

Therefore, with the arrival of Rwabugiri and his chiefs, signifying the expansion of the frontiers of the Kingdom of Rwanda into Kinyaga and other new territories, classification into the social

¹²¹ Catherine Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression: Clientship and Ethnicity in Rwanda, 1860-1960* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988).

¹²² Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression*, 9.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹²⁴ This is obtained from the Kinyarwanda term 'Abatutsi' or 'Tutsi'.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

categories of Hutu and Tutsi rigidified. The lineages that were wealthy in cattle and had links to powerful chiefs “were regarded as ‘Tutsi’” and lineages that lacked these characteristics “were relegated to non-Tutsi status.”¹²⁷ During the reign of Rwabugiri, known as the period of ‘Tutsi rule’, the advantages of being Tutsi, and the disadvantages of being Hutu, increased enormously. It was in this context, and under colonialism, where a gradual enlargement to scale of political awareness occurred among those considered not Tutsi i.e. Hutu through the realisation of common oppression.

Mahmood Mamdani also traces the development of the terms and social categories Hutu and Tutsi through the institutional development of the state of Rwanda where Hutu and Tutsi emerged as state enforced political identities.¹²⁸ Mamdani argues that the Rwandan State was a powerful political engine that “restructured social relations wherever its tentacles took hold.” Hutu and Tutsi, he argues, are changing political identities linked to the history of the Rwandan State.¹²⁹ Mamdani concludes that to be Tutsi meant *to be in state power, near state power, or simply to be identified with state power* – just as to be Hutu meant more to be a *subject*.

Newbury identifies three important socio-economic distinctions between Hutu and Tutsi in the pre-colonial era. Firstly, no religious or political ideology sanctioned separation between Hutu and Tutsi. Secondly, the economic distinction between Hutu and Tutsi was not as clear-cut as has sometimes been thought. Both Hutu and Tutsi “engaged in activities associated with the care of cattle, since Tutsi cattle owners often put their cattle in the charge of Hutu herders, and cattle were esteemed by both groups.”¹³⁰

Mamdani shares the same view, questioning the notion of the exclusivity of the agricultural and pastoral activities. According to Mamdani, the “simple notion” that Hutu were agriculturists and Tutsi were pastoralists “is no longer sustainable in light of research which challenges the equation of Tutsi with pastoralism. More evidence has come to light that the predecessors of the Hutu had cattle long before the Tutsi appeared on the scene.”¹³¹ Agricultural and pastoral activities were hardly exclusive as they were jointly carried out in most regions. Therefore, “many Hutu had

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Oxford: James Currey, 2001).

¹²⁹ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 56.

¹³⁰ Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression*, 12.

¹³¹ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 51.

cattle, and many Tutsi farmed land.”¹³² In addition, Mamdani views these identifications, of Tutsi with cattle and Hutu with land, as “historical artefacts politically created alongside the institutional power of the Rwandan State.”¹³³ The major difference between Hutu and Tutsi in control of cattle “could be reduced to *control over political power* and this then becomes a criterion of *political* and *legal*, but not economic, differentiation.”¹³⁴ Father Léon Classe, a missionary with many years of experience in Rwanda, emphasises the distinctive categories between Hutu and Tutsi:

“It should be noted that the term ‘Tuutsi’ often refers not to the origin (descent) but to social condition, or wealth, especially as regards to cattle: whoever is a chief, or who is rich will often be referred to as Tuutsi. Frequently also, because of their manner or their language, ... the inhabitants of the provinces of Central Rwanda, Nduga and Marangara, as well as those of Buganza are referred to as Tuutsi.”¹³⁵

As this text by Father Classe suggests, there was the tendency to associate ‘Tutsi’ with possessions of wealth and power, “and particularly with wealthy people coming from central Rwanda.”¹³⁶ Those more wealthy and powerful were more likely to be regarded as Tutsi, and ultimately, ‘Tutsi’ came to be ‘self-defined’ as an elite – an identity of wealth and power. This status, however, could change, and this brings in the social factor concerning the distinction.

Thirdly, the categories of Hutu and Tutsi were in the past relatively flexible. Social mobility and “passing from one category to the another did occur, though opportunities for mobility out of the Hutu category apparently diminished in the later colonial period.”¹³⁷ Louis de Lacger illustrates this flexibility in social mobility between Hutu and Tutsi:

“... A ‘petit mututsi’ lacking the means of satisfying the monetary demands of providing wives for his offspring is obliged to fall back on the peasant world. He obtains wives from families of peasant status and if the condition of his family is prolonged, if his sons and grandsons are forced to resign themselves to the same type of indigence, his family will see itself gradually eliminated from the society of the ‘right kind’ of people; it will descend to the level of the rural masses. The inverse is no less frequent. A muhutu capable of providing his father-in-law with a cow will be able to obtain a wife from a medium level Tutsi family; with

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid

¹³⁴ Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression*, 12. The same argument made by Mamdani where Hutu and Tutsi are seen as political and legally constructed identities, and politically and legally enforced by the state.

¹³⁵ Father Léon Classe cited in Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression*, 12.

¹³⁶ Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression*, 12.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

time and a growing prosperity his offspring would come to be considered as descendants of a 'good' family."¹³⁸

Therefore, that you were born either Hutu or Tutsi did not mean that you could not change from Hutu to Tutsi, or Tutsi to Hutu, under definitely prescribed circumstances, during your lifetime. Two social rituals demonstrated the flexibility and socially mobile categories of Hutu and Tutsi: *Kwihutura* and *Gucupira*. With regard to *Kwihutura*, the rare Hutu who was able to accumulate cattle and rise through the socio-economic hierarchy "could *Kwihutura* – shed Hutuness – and achieve the political status of a Tutsi."¹³⁹ Their children could now marry Tutsi, and their children would be Tutsi.¹⁴⁰ Conversely, loss of property "could also lead to the loss of status summed up in the Kinyarwanda word *Gucupira*."¹⁴¹ Likewise, a Tutsi family without means may descend in social status and become Hutu. Their children would then have no choice but to marry Hutu.¹⁴²

Therefore, Hutus could *Kwihutura* and move up the social ladder thanks to their acquisition of cattle (the symbol of wealth). In addition, being a Tutsi was no guarantee of wealth and influence in the social, economic and political establishment of the nation – "loss of property meant loss of status as a Tutsi [and] *Gucupira* meant just that."¹⁴³ The significance of *Kwihutura*, the 'accession to nobility', was that "this 'ennoblement' prevented the birth of a distinct Bahutu chiefly stratum which could have become a privileged intermediary between the court and the larger population."¹⁴⁴ While the social space between Hutu and Tutsi was vast, it was "a space that some could and did negotiate, either through opportunity that came with enrichment or through compulsion that was a consequence of impoverishment."¹⁴⁵

Therefore, the state-building efforts of Rwabugiri in the new conquered territories heightened the awareness of social and political difference between Hutu and Tutsi in Kinyaga. With the arrival of the central court authorities, "lines of distinction were altered and sharpened, as the categories

¹³⁸ Louis de Lacger cited in Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression*, 12-13.

¹³⁹ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 70.

¹⁴⁰ Mahmood Mamdani, *When Does a Settler Become a Native? Reflections of the Colonial Roots of Citizenship in Equatorial and South Africa* (Rondebosch: University of Cape Town, 1998), 10.

¹⁴¹ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 70.

¹⁴² Mamdani, *When Does a Settler Become a Native*, 10.

¹⁴³ Captain Eugene Haguma of the RPF cited in Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 295.

¹⁴⁴ Jean-Népomucène Nkurikiyimfura cited in Gerard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis 1959-1994: History of a Genocide* (London: Hurst & Company, 1995), 22. The discontinuity of the ritual of *Kwihutura* during colonialism contributed to the development of a distinct Hutu counter-elite that would have significant consequences.

¹⁴⁵ Mamdani, *When Does a Settler Become a Native*, 10.

of Hutu and Tutsi assumed new hierarchical overtones associated with proximity to the central court – proximity to [state] power.”¹⁴⁶ As the political arena widened, and the intensity of political activity increased, “these classifications became increasingly stratified and rigidified” to the point where “Hutu identity came to be associated with Hutu or Tutsi came to depend on state power. In Newbury’s research, the social category ‘Tutsi’ was associated with “central government power and institutions, and particularly with the exactions of chiefs backed by central government.”¹⁴⁸ Newbury further writes that Kinyagans traced the arrival of the first Tutsi in the region to the time of Rwabugiri.¹⁴⁹

2.1.2. Hutu and Tutsi in the Kingdom of Rwanda

Mamdani’s brief analysis on the expansion of the Rwandan State during the reign of Mwami Kigeri Rwabugiri (1860-95) gives a significant insight into the nature of Hutu identity in the pre-colonial era. In theory, the mwami of Rwanda, who was always Tutsi, was an absolute monarch living at the centre of a large court, and was both the supreme judge and legislature. In practice, however, the mwami was only the apex of a complex pyramid of political, cultural and economic relationships. The administration of the Rwandan State comprised of a three-fold hierarchy of chiefs under the mwami, running from province to district to hill. The *army chief* controlled each province and was in charge of recruiting soldiers for the mwami’s armies.¹⁵⁰ The province was in turn demarcated into districts, “each with two chiefs independent of one another.”¹⁵¹ The *chief of landholding* “was in charge of agricultural land and production”, and his counterpart, the *chief of pastures* “ruled over grazing land and collected dues from stock.”¹⁵² Each district was divided into hills, each with a single chief, the *hill chiefs*.

The chiefs “were bureaucrats who were appointed to their position by a superior, either the mwami or a superior chief.”¹⁵³ All the *army chiefs* and *chiefs of pastures* were Tutsi. However,

¹⁴⁶ Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression*, 51.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 52.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Prunier, 11.

¹⁵¹ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 68.

¹⁵² Prunier, 11.

¹⁵³ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 69.

there was the occasional presence of Hutu chiefs among the *chiefs of landholding*¹⁵⁴ and more so the lower one went down the hierarchy. Thus, in the districts, the lowest ranks of administrators, the *hill chiefs*, “could be Tutsi, Hutu or Twa.”¹⁵⁵

The administrative system towards the end of the nineteenth century had two important features. Firstly, the monarch “ruled through two sets of parallel hierarchies.” At the level of the smallest administrative unit, the hill, “every subject was linked to the monarch through the *hill chief* and the *army chief*.” At the district level, “the *chief of pastures* and the *chief of landholding* functioned as two parallel hierarchies.”¹⁵⁶ The existence of these parallel administrative hierarchies “made it possible for peasants to find the breathing space by playing off one set of officials against another when the need arose.”¹⁵⁷ Secondly, while there was visibly Tutsi the higher one reached the military administrative hierarchy, “the lower ranks of administration, where officials were most involved in face-to-face contact with subjects, [included] a significant presence of Hutu and Twa officials.”¹⁵⁸

Under the Mwami Kigeri Rwabugiri, the Rwandan state witnessed its final and most spectacular expansion of its boundaries where “Rwabugiri led a series of military campaigns that led to the incorporation of ‘Hutu statelets’ in both eastern and western Rwanda.”¹⁵⁹ Research on the expansion during the reign of Rwabugiri and the early colonial period gives an important insight into the nature of Hutu identity. It appears that the social category of Hutu simply applied to all those from a variety of ethnic backgrounds who came to be subjugated to the power of the Rwandan state.¹⁶⁰ The population became Hutu in the last years of the nineteenth century through gradual Tutsi military occupation under Rwabugiri and because of absorption into the institutions of the expanding state of Rwanda.¹⁶¹

The political process where previously autonomous communities were absorbed within the boundaries of an expanding Rwandan state had important consequences. On the one hand, “as local chiefs were dismissed and replaced by incoming collaborators, ‘identified as Tutsi’, land

¹⁵⁴ This could have led many observers of the region to conclude that this was so because agriculture was the Hutu domain.

¹⁵⁵ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 69.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. The northern and southwestern parts, however, remained largely autonomous.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 70. Emphasis added.

¹⁶¹ Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression*.

and cattle gradually accumulated into Tutsi hands.”¹⁶² On the other hand, as those subjugated lost lands and were forced to enter into relations of servitude to gain access to land, ‘identified as Hutu’, “the Hutu identity came to be associated with and entirely defined by inferior status.”¹⁶³ Thus, Hutu meant, and referred to, subjugation, ‘servant’, and inferiority, and Tutsi came to mean ‘in power’, and ‘dominant over Hutu’.

Therefore, the ancestors of the people known as Tutsi and Hutu had separate historical origins for Hutu did not exist as an identity outside of the state of Rwanda. Rather, “it emerged as a trans-ethnic identity of subjects in the state of Rwanda.”¹⁶⁴ The predecessors of Hutu were simply those from different social groups subjugated to the power of the state of Rwanda. In contrast, Tutsi “existed as an ethnic identity before the establishment of the state of Rwanda.” However, with the formal mechanisms in the Rwandan State, such as *Kwihutura* and other instances of intermarriage, allowing rulers to absorb the most prosperous of their subjects into their own ranks, “Tutsi became a trans-ethnic identity.”¹⁶⁵ Therefore, given Tutsi identity was sufficiently porous to absorb successful Hutu through *Kwihutura*, and Hutu was a trans-ethnic identity of subjects, the Hutu/Tutsi distinction in the pre-colonial era was not an ethnic or socio-economic distinction. The distinction was political; dividing a subject population from those identified with state power.¹⁶⁶

2.1.3. Colonialism: The ‘Racialisation’ of Hutu and Tutsi

Colonial Rwanda was a halfway house between direct and indirect rule colonialism¹⁶⁷, combining features of both. Like most of colonial Africa, Belgian colonial power constructed ‘customary law’ and ‘Native Authorities’ (indirect rule colonialism) alongside civil law and civic authorities (direct rule colonialism). However, the difference with other colonial systems is that after the Belgian colonial reforms of 1926-36, all Hutu were ruled by Tutsi chiefs, and not by ‘Hutu’ chiefs. These reforms constructed the Tutsi into a different non-indigenous race: the ‘Hamitic race’.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶² Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 70.

¹⁶³ Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression*, 51.

¹⁶⁴ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 74.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 74-75.

¹⁶⁷ For a more in-depth analysis on the distinction between direct and indirect rule colonialism, see Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

¹⁶⁸ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 34-35.

Unlike most cases of indirect rule where colonialism ruled by producing plural ethnic identities, Belgian colonialism produced bipolar *racial identities* to rule Rwanda. The colonised population comprised of “a *nativised* majority [that] opposed a *non-native* minority.” This opposition in Rwanda “pitted Hutu against Tutsi.”¹⁶⁹ Thus, Rwandan colonial society was divided into two racialised groups, a privileged and dominant Tutsi ‘settler’ Hamitic race and a subjugated and peasant Hutu ‘native’ race, turning race into the primary difference. Subsequently, as the Hutu, excluded from the regime of rights, made sense of the basis of their exclusion and oppression, they organised along ‘racial’ lines, more or less submerging all other differences as secondary.¹⁷⁰ Subsequently, Hutu identity changed from a mark of servitude into an insurgent race identity. As a result, race became the primary and standard marker for the anti-colonial revolutionary struggle.

Therefore, colonialism and colonial ideology invented racial distinction and prejudice between Hutu and Tutsi as a divide and rule practice. It was the obsession with racist ideology, known as the ‘Hamitic hypothesis’, that became the basis of a series of colonial institutional formations, which froze the Tutsi and Hutu as polarised and conflicting races in their relationship to the colonial state, and eventually each other.¹⁷¹

The Hamitic Hypothesis

In Central Africa, perhaps more so than in any other part of the continent, the lingering effects of colonialism in the form of the ‘Hamitic hypothesis’ have been all too evident.¹⁷² Since Rwanda and Burundi’s independence at the beginning of the 1960s, the main proponents of ‘Hamitism’ have not been Europeans. Rather, they have been Rwandans and Burundians, and the people who have been victimised have been other Rwandans and Burundians.¹⁷³ Based on what was more a racist ideology than a scientific evaluation, during Belgian colonial rule, an ancient, fascinating, and complex African society was modernised, simplified and ossified. Colonial administrators, missionaries, and government anthropologists all contributed, and at times unwittingly, to an ideological and tragic reconstruction of Rwanda’s past and, from that artificial past, of the present and future.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 25.

¹⁷¹ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*.

¹⁷² Christopher Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror: The Rwandan Genocide of 1994* (Oxford: Berg, 1999).

¹⁷³ Taylor, 55.

The idea that the Tutsi were superior “because they came from elsewhere” and that the difference between them and the ‘local’ Hutu population was racial, was an “idea of colonial origin.”¹⁷⁴ It was shared by all colonialists (the Belgians, Germans, English, and the French) who were convinced that wherever in Africa there was evidence of organised and sophisticated state life, the ruling groups must have come from elsewhere. These mobile and ruling groups were called ‘Hamites’, and the idea that they were the hidden hands behind every bit of civilisation in Africa was ‘the Hamitic hypothesis’.

The Hamitic hypothesis as a model for understanding the history of East and Central Africa emerged in Europe during the nineteenth century. It drew upon half-truths and outright fictions of a religious and pseudo-scientific nature.¹⁷⁵ Bearing many of the characteristics of an ‘invented tradition’, European colonialists used this hypothesis in contradictory ways. At times, the so-called Hamites, taken to be all black Africans, “were denigrated”, at other times, as in East Africa, Hamites were “perceived to be *quasi-Caucasian* and thus *superior to other Africans*.”¹⁷⁶

There are three strands of nineteenth century European thought that contributed to the weaving of the Hamitic hypothesis: theology, anthropology and biology. In theology, the raw material from which the Hamitic hypothesis was manufactured “can be dated back to the Judaic and Christian myths of biblical and medieval vintage.”¹⁷⁷ Scholars of the period say the word ‘Ham’ appears for the first time in Genesis, chapter five of the Bible. The account in Genesis tells of Ham’s contempt for his father, Noah, whom he saw drunk and lying in a stupor. On emerging from his oblivion, Noah learned that while his other sons, Shem and Japheth, covered their fathers nakedness, averting their eyes to his shame, Ham did not look away. Subsequently, Noah “blessed the descendants of Shem and Japheth, but cursed those of Ham.”¹⁷⁸ The claim that the descendants of Ham were cursed *by being black* “first appeared in the oral traditions of the Jews when these were recorded in the sixth century Babylonian Talmud. That same myth depicts Ham as a sinful man and his progeny as degenerates.”¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁴ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 80.

¹⁷⁵ Taylor, 55.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 58.

¹⁷⁷ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 80.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

The biblical myth claimed that Negro Africans were the descendants of Ham. Though part of humanity, as descendants of Noah, “they were considered the *accursed* part, having descended from a cursed son of Noah. It was in this vein that Leo Africanus, the great North African traveller and once time *protégé* of Pope Leo X, identified Negro Africans as having descended from Ham.”¹⁸⁰

Scholarly understanding and interpretation of the Hamitic hypothesis was to change and shift significantly. By the end of the eighteenth century, the myth that the Negro African was the accursed descendant of Ham turned upside down.¹⁸¹ According to the second and anthropological incarnation, the three sons of Noah (Ham, Shem, and Japheth) represented the three races, and all had originated in some region in Central Asia and had set out to seek their fortunes. The Hamites were the first to head south and said to be the “genius behind ancient Egypt and behind the Phoenicians. However, after founding some civilisations and attempting to keep their blood pure, they had become hopelessly mongrelised by the native and inferior blacks.”¹⁸² The Semites were the next to leave and soon ‘polluted’ in the course of time. It was only the Aryans, the Japhites, who stayed north and retained their purity. In this generally accepted version, the “sons of Noah were the predecessors of the three main races in humanity. The Europeans were begotten from Japheth, the Semites from Shem, and the Hamites from Ham. No longer Hamites but pre-Hamitic species that were said to have corrupted the Hamites, the Negro Africans were finally beyond the pale of humanity.”¹⁸³

The explorer and colonial official whose writings were central to the anthropological incarnation of the Hamitic hypothesis was John Hanning Speke. Speke’s book, *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile*, provided an attempt to offer an explanation to the complex political organisation of the political systems in the Great Lakes region of Central Africa. After observing the various Kingdoms in the Great Lakes, Speke’s basic anthropological theory was that “all culture and civilisation in Central Africa had been introduced by the taller, sharper-featured people.” He considered them a “Caucasoid tribe of Ethiopian origin, descended from the biblical King David, and therefore a superior race to the native Negro.”¹⁸⁴ Speke, in Chapter IX of his book, entitled the ‘History of the Wahuma’, deduced a theory of ‘conquest of inferior races by

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 81.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Ibid., 83.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

superior races' (the Hamites) in the Great Lakes with the arrival of a 'conquering civilisation'.¹⁸⁵ Despite their black skin, these Hamites were almost Caucasian. Speke writes:

"It appears impossible to believe, judging from the physical appearance of the Wahuma, that they can be of any other race than the semi-Shem-Hamitic of Ethiopia... In these countries the government is in the hands of foreigners, who had invaded and taken possession of them, leaving the agricultural aborigines to till the ground, while the junior members of the usurping clans herded cattle – just as in Abyssinia, or wherever the Abyssinians or Gallas have shown themselves. There a pastoral clan from the Asiatic side took the government of Abyssinia from its people and have ruled over them since, changing, by inter-marriage with the Africans, the texture of their hair and colour to a certain extent, but still maintaining a high stamp of Asiatic feature"

Speke then writes that the Tutsi are in fact the Wahuma:

"How or when their name became changed from Wahuma to Watutsi [Tutsi in Kiswahili] no one is able to explain; but again deducing the past from present, we cannot help suspecting that, in the same way as this change has taken place, the name Galla may have been changed from Habshi, and Wahuma from Gallas."¹⁸⁶

Speke decided that these 'carriers of superior civilisation' who were the ancestors of the Tutsi were "the Galla of southern Ethiopia. This opinion was shared by other nineteenth century explorers such as Sir Samuel Baker and Gaetano Casati and by twentieth century missionaries such as Father van den Burgt, Father Gorju and John Roscoe."¹⁸⁷ Other missionaries even thought they were descendants of ancient Egyptians or that they even came from Asia. Father van den Burgt writes:

"We can see Caucasian skulls and beautiful Greek profiles side by side with Semitic and even Jewish features, elegant golden-red beauties in the heart of Ruanda and Urundi."¹⁸⁸

Mgr Le Roy also had his own view:

¹⁸⁴ Philip Gourevitch, *We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families: Stories from Rwanda* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1998), 51.

¹⁸⁵ John Hanning Speke, *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (London: JM Dent, 1969)

¹⁸⁶ Speke, 241-245.

¹⁸⁷ Prunier, 7.

¹⁸⁸ Father van den Burgt cited in Prunier, 7.

"The Bahima [a Tutsi clan] differ absolutely by the beauty of their features and their light colour from the Bantu [Hutu] agriculturalists of an inferior type. Tall and well proportioned, they have long thin noses, a wide brow and fine lips. They say they come from the North. Their intelligent and delicate appearance, their love for money, their capacity to adapt to any situation seem to indicate a Semitic-origin."¹⁸⁹

In the third, and biological incarnation, Sir Harry Johnston, the first British administrator of the Uganda Protectorate, embellished upon Speke's theory. He claimed that the idea of the state and institution of sacred kingship in Great Lakes Africa arrived with pastoral invaders called the *Bacwezi*.¹⁹⁰ The Tutsi king of Rwanda was thus "of non-autochthonous origin; he was a Hamite-Bacwezi Tutsi from Ethiopia."¹⁹¹ Speke and Johnston's theories quickly achieved the status of received wisdom and subsequent historians, explorers and missionaries adopted the Hamitic hypothesis as a means of understanding Great Lakes Africa, modifying it only slightly. It became accepted that the Tutsi 'pastoral invaders' brought with them the kingship institution and skilfully subjugated the 'inferior' Hutu peasant masses. Pierre Ryckmans, one of the most important Belgian administrators in the 1920s summed it up:

"The Batutsi were meant to reign. Their fine presence is in itself enough to give them great prestige vis-à-vis the inferior races which surround ... it is not surprising that those good Bahutu, less intelligent, more simple, more spontaneous, more trusting, have let themselves be enslaved without daring to revolt."¹⁹²

Therefore, the Tutsi were considered intelligent and attractive, but rather frail, and destined for governance. The Hutu, on the other hand, were stocky, coarser featured, but not overtly intelligent; physical strength made them suited for agricultural labour.¹⁹³ The Hamites had now become an entire branch of the race of the Caucasians; "the Tutsi were said to be but one of many Hamitic groups."¹⁹⁴ The Hamitic hypothesis retained such political potency in Rwanda because it became the basis and rationale for constructing a set of colonial institutions. These institutions reproduced the Tutsi as a racialised and superior minority.¹⁹⁵

¹⁸⁹ Mgr Le Roy cited in Prunier, 7-8.

¹⁹⁰ Taylor, 59.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Pierre Ryckmans cited in Prunier, 11.

¹⁹³ Taylor, 60.

¹⁹⁴ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 87.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid. Emphasis added.

Belgian Colonialism

The racialisation of the Hutu/Tutsi difference was not simply an ideological and intellectual construct in the form of the Hamitic hypothesis. More importantly, it was also an institutional construct – “racial ideology was embedded in institutions, which in turn under girded racial privilege and reproduced racial ideology.”¹⁹⁶

During the colonial period, the Rwandan state further expanded. Its widest span occurred during German colonialism. It was with German military support, particularly the “subjugation in 1912 of the northern districts,” that the mwami “was able to enlarge the state’s boundaries.”¹⁹⁷ German and Belgian colonialism ruled through the institutional reach of the Tutsi-created state apparatus. They understood Africa through the “optic of late nineteenth century imperial Europe which saw humanity as a conglomeration of races which required identification and hierarchical classification.” The Belgians, from 1929-1933, transformed the Hamitic Hypothesis into the basis of organising the administrative apparatus of the colonial state. They ‘classified’ the population into Hutu and Tutsi and ‘issued identity cards’.¹⁹⁸ Kwihutura was abolished, and the Hutu-Tutsi distinction consequently froze into a rigid caste-like structure. Subsequently, Hutu experienced brutal oppression under both the Belgians and Tutsi, but particularly on the part of the Tutsi Native Authority. For indirect rule “came to be rule through co-operative elements in the Tutsi oligarchy.”¹⁹⁹

The colonial state had two important features. Firstly, there was a redefinition of the powers of the chiefs, who were now to be colonial state agents. The previous trinity of chiefs “was abolished and powers which had hitherto been separate and differentiated were fused into a single agent” who was always a Tutsi.²⁰⁰ This concentration of powers in the hands of a single chief was bound to lead to abuses.²⁰¹ At the same time, Tutsi chiefs replaced most Hutu chiefs on the lower

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Mahmood Mamdani, “From Conquest to Consent as the Basis of State Formation: Reflections on Rwanda”, *New Left Review*, 216, March/April (1996): 10.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 11.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ René Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi* (New York: Praeger, 1970), 119-120.

rungs of the colonial administration, the *hill chiefs*. This institutional change not only “augmented state power” but also made it more despotic and exclusively Tutsi in character.²⁰²

Secondly, by any standards, Belgian rule was harsh and forced labour was instrumental in the process of exploitation. The indigenous mask of this brutal foreign domination was the hierarchy of Tutsi chiefs. Belgian rule, translated into practice by Tutsi chiefs, was so harsh and severe that hundreds of thousands of Hutu peasants fled into Uganda in the decade after 1928.²⁰³ The colonial state introduced compulsory demands on Hutu subjects, such as the obligation to construct the houses of Tutsi chiefs. And the “smaller the chief, the more arbitrary could be the imposition.”²⁰⁴

At the same time, two broad political processes eroded Tutsi economic supremacy while, leaving intact their political supremacy – the expansion of a money economy and school-based Western education. The money economy “opened up opportunities for enrichment other than through ownership of cattle, weakening the bonds of pastoral servitude that had been the colonial contract between patron and client.” In this context, the expanding school system of the 1940s and 50s “provided the structural basis for the emergence of a new Hutu counter-elite.”²⁰⁵ The post World War Two attitudes of the European clergy went through a major shift. The post war newcomers came from “of relatively humble origins”, and with a previous experience of social and political conditions in the French-speaking provinces of Wallonia, they were more generally disposed to identify with the plight of the Hutu masses.²⁰⁶

Therefore, when Hutu graduates entered the job market in the 1950s, they found few places. Shut out of jobs in the civil service and private sector, they turned to the church for opportunities to make a living and to articulate their major social grievance. The main grievance was “*the institutionalised exclusion of Hutu from what they saw as a Belgian supported Tutsi monopoly over all avenues of social advancement.*”²⁰⁷

Therefore, during colonialism, Hutu and Tutsi officially became racial political identities, *written and frozen into law*. Hutu and Tutsi, were no longer just socially acknowledged, reproduced or

²⁰² Mamdani, “From Conquest to Consent”, 11.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 122.

²⁰⁵ Mamdani, “From Conquest to Consent”, 12-13.

²⁰⁶ Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 106-107.

negotiated – they became political enforced, and consequently, turned into the basis of legal and racist discrimination. This signalled the end of Kwihutura and Gucupira with Hutu and Tutsi now institutionalised racial identities, with Tutsi officially and legally defined as non-indigenous, and Hutu as indigenous. With this end of Kwihutura, the ritual of shedding of Hutu status by the few who managed to acquire wealth, there developed a Hutu counter-elite for the first time since the creation of the Rwandan Kingdom. Not surprisingly, this counter-elite became a vehicle for the emergence of a radical Hutu consciousness that transformed Hutuness from a mark of servitude to a badge of pride demanding *Hutu Power*.²⁰⁸ Hutu became an insurgent peasant identity and a radical nationalist consciousness and movement.²⁰⁹

Thus, the salient fact was that virtually all those who controlled the state (sub-chiefs and chiefs) were Tutsi, and this is where the race factor becomes important. An appeal for Hutu solidarity became, for Hutu leaders, the most effective rallying point for revolutionary activity. Because chiefs were colonial agents, and most of these were Tutsi, an appeal for ‘Hutu’ solidarity, as opposed to all poor people, became more powerful. Moreover, because colonial policies repeatedly pressed upon Hutu their inferior and excluded status, even poor Tutsi did not experience the same forms of discrimination, as did Hutu.

2.2. International Pressure: Decolonisation

*“The Peasants alone are revolutionary. The starving peasant, outside the class system, is the first among the exploited to discover that only violence pays. For him, there is no compromise, no possible coming to terms; colonisation and decolonisation are simply a question of relative strength. The exploited man sees that his liberation implies the use of all means, and that of force first and foremost.”*²¹⁰

Frantz Fanon

Frantz Fanon’s assertion on the revolutionary potential of the peasant masses describes the case of Rwanda on the eve of the Revolution during the terminal years of Belgian colonialism. In no other state, writes Lemarchand, not even in the Congo during the 1964-65 rebellion, “have the

²⁰⁷ Mamdani, “From Conquest to Consent”, 13.

²⁰⁸ Mahmood Mamdani, “When Does Reconciliation Turn into a Denial of Justice?” Text of talk given at the Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria, February 1998.

²⁰⁹ Mamdani, “When Does Reconciliation”. Emphasis added.

²¹⁰ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (London: Penguin Books, 1967), 27-28.

underpinnings of a revolutionary movement been so overwhelmingly rural, and its political orientation more plainly illustrative of the phenomenon of *rural radicalism*.²¹¹

Decolonisation in Rwanda was characterised by massive political violence that led to the violent routing and dismantling of Tutsi power at the local administrative level culminating into a coup d'état in the local state and eventually, a revolution. The violence triggered significant constitutional and political developments that led to a transfer of government power from a Tutsi to a Hutu elite.²¹² Moreover, the political violence that came with decolonisation was the first episode in the history of Rwanda where the battle lines occurred between one group identified as Hutu and the other Tutsi. The 1959 Revolution was the "first significant episode that pit Hutu against Tutsi, so that Hutu and Tutsi became names identifying political adversaries."²¹³

2.2.1. The Limits of Political Reform

After the devastating consequences of the Second World War, the mandated territories of Rwanda and Burundi became trusteeship territories under the United Nations. Undoubtedly, Belgium's commitment to the United Nations trusteeship objectives implied a major departure from its previous colonial policies. The UN Trusteeship Council visiting missions, and the ongoing criticisms voiced against Belgium in the United Nations, played a significant part in hastening the awakening of the Hutu. They were also instrumental in creating a climate of world opinion, which had direct influence on the pace, and direction of its trust territory policy.

The process of decolonisation in Rwanda unfolded as a series of electoral reforms, beginning in 1952. The backdrop to the electoral reform process "was a series of UN decolonisation missions that were regularly dispatched to its trust territories, at least one every three years, sometimes more often, from 1949."²¹⁴ Consistent with the demands of the UN, the political reform that jumpstarted the process of decolonisation began with the holding of local elections in 1953 and a general election in 1956, which were both to be disappointing to the Hutu.

²¹¹ Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 93.

²¹² Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 104.

²¹³ Mahmood Mamdani, "Making Sense of Revolutionary Violence: Some Lessons from the Rwandan Genocide." Text of talk given at the University of Cape Town, August, 2001: 12.

²¹⁴ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 114.

The 1953 local elections were wholly indirect: “not only was the role of elected councils ‘advisory’ but the electoral choice was limited to ‘suitable candidates’ nominated by chiefs and sub chiefs.”²¹⁵ In a political system where the power of Tutsi chiefs was absolute, the outcome was not an election per se but an opportunity for Tutsi sub-chiefs and chiefs to consolidate their power in preparation for independence. There were two significant implications. First, Tutsi tended to predominate in the councils the more one went up the administrative ladder. Thus, whereas “52 percent of council seats at the lowest administrative level were filled by Tutsi”, the proportion reached “90.6 percent when it came to the *Conseil Supérieur du Pays* [High Council], the highest council of the land.”²¹⁶ Second, when Hutu were nominated to councils, they were inevitably clients of Tutsi patrons.²¹⁷

The final opportunity for political reform was the general election of 1956, which was eventually squandered when the mwami rejected a proposal that was to provide separate representation for the Hutu on the High Council. The significance of this proposal was reflected in two important factors. First, the High Council was the “highest advisory body of the state and was expected to become the legislature of an independent Rwanda.”²¹⁸ Second, between 1956 and 1959, “this body included only three Hutu, comprising less than 6 percent of its membership.”²¹⁹

The 1956 general elections introduced a two tier system: “an all male universal suffrage at the lowest administrative level, the sub-chiefdom, while all higher councils continued to be voted indirectly through electoral colleges whose members were nominated by corresponding chiefs.”²²⁰ The outcome reflected the difference in the method employed in each case. There was a clear victory for Hutu candidates at the sub-chiefdom level, where the vote was direct with an all-male universal suffrage, but not at higher levels, where the vote was indirect.²²¹ The limited and contradictory nature of political reform was clear. It merely reinforced the political power and hegemony of Tutsi chiefs by combining ‘participation’ for Hutu at lower levels with guaranteed state power for Tutsi at higher levels, reproducing the hegemony of the colonial state. The experience of reform was to convince the Hutu political elite that nothing short of political power would crack the Tutsi’s hold on social, economic and political power. The crystallisation

²¹⁵ Ibid., 115.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Prunier, 43.

²¹⁸ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 115.

²¹⁹ Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression*, 191.

²²⁰ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 116.

²²¹ Ibid.

of Hutu loyalties, behind the monolithic façade of Tutsi supremacy, soon took a more coherent political shape. This was accelerated by efforts of the ruling class to stem the tide of these new and as yet barely understood revolutionary forces.²²²

2.2.2. The 'Bahutu Manifesto': The Emergence of a Revolutionary Movement

The turning point came in March 1957 when two rival documents greeted the UN Trusteeship Visiting Mission. The first was the political position on decolonisation of the High Council, the *Conseil Supérieur du Pays*, whose membership was overwhelmingly Tutsi. In its 'Statement of Views' (*Mise au Point*), the Council called for "accelerated progress towards self government, with emphasis on extension of educational opportunities, broadening political participation, and socio-economic reforms."²²³ However, the statement only recognised one type of discrimination in Rwanda – "*the segregation between Africans and Europeans.*" There was no mention of the Hutu-Tutsi problem and no recognition of discrimination against Hutu.²²⁴ *Mise au Point* merely called for a rapid transfer of power to the mwami and his council, thereby calling on the UN to transfer power to the Tutsi chiefs. The UN Visiting Mission subsequently pointed out on *Mise au Point*:

"[*Mise au Point*] was as much a reflection of the ineluctability of a profound transformation of Rwanda society as of a desire to accelerate the race to self-government in order to strengthen, through a premature autonomy, the vacillating prerogatives of the dominant class."²²⁵

A month later came the Hutu response to the statement in the form of the *Bahutu Manifesto*. Originally titled *Notes on the Social Aspect of the Racial Native Problem in Rwanda*, and signed by Grégoire Kayibanda and eight other Hutu intellectuals, the Bahutu Manifesto vociferously asserted the centrality of the Hutu-Tutsi problem. They opposed the elimination of the political and legal distinctions between Hutu and Tutsi arguing that it would make it impossible to determine progress towards more egalitarian political structures. The Manifesto maintained that the heart of the problem in Rwanda was the "conflict between Hutu and Hamitic (i.e. settler) Tutsi." The authors called for a *double liberation* of the Hutu "from both the Hamites and the

²²² Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 149.

²²³ Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression*, 191.

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Cited in Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 150.

‘Bazungu’ (whites) colonisation.” It identified the “racial problem” as primarily located in the political, socio-economic, and cultural monopoly held by the Tutsi:

“The problem is above all a problem of political monopoly which is held by one race, the Tutsi; political monopoly which, given the totality of current structures becomes an economic and social monopoly; political, economic, and social monopoly which, given the *de facto* discrimination in education, ends up being a cultural monopoly, to the great despair of the Bahutu who see themselves condemned to remain forever subaltern manual labourers and still worse, in the context of an independence which they will have helped to win without knowing what they are doing. The buhake is no doubt abolished, but it is replaced even more by this total monopoly which is largely responsible for the abuses about which the population is complaining.”²²⁶

Moreover, the Manifesto wrote that the Belgians “‘were important as a constraint on Tutsi exploitation, not because [people] think the European is perfect, but because it is necessary to choose the lesser of two evils’.”²²⁷ As solutions to these problems, the Manifesto recommended the rapid change in Rwanda’s political and social system and a change in the attitude and perception that the Tutsi are superior.²²⁸ They also recommended other specific changes such as land rights, political rights and policies that would combat poverty.

The distinction between *Mise au Point* and the *Bahutu Manifesto* could not have been more clear and polarised, and from their different standpoints, each was a claim for political power. The position of the Tutsi chiefs was that Tutsi privileges were actually ‘traditional’ (pre-colonial) and should be restored upon decolonisation. On the other hand, the view of the Hutu intellectuals was to stress democratisation before independence, and their demand was state power based on the claim that they represented an indigenous majority. The Hutu intellectuals thus created a “popular nationalism” to rival the “Tutsi nationalism from above.”²²⁹ Despite both attributing the economic and social problems among the poor to racial tension, the difference was that “one highlighted the racial contradiction as ‘only’ between foreign black and white, the other underlined it as a contradiction ‘mainly’ between Hamites (Tutsi) and indigenous Bantu (Hutu).”²³⁰

²²⁶ Cited in Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression*, 191.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 192. Emphasis added

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

²²⁹ *Ibid.*

²³⁰ *Ibid.*

The Political Organisation of the Hutu Counter-elite

The authors of the Manifesto formed a loose network of young intellectuals who attended the same seminary. Of these personalities, it was Grégoire Kayibanda, “who possessed the greatest ambition and the surest touch of politics.”²³¹ Kayibanda achieved prominence as a journalist and editor for Catholic periodicals. While serving as the personal secretary to the apostolic vicar of Rwanda, Monsignor Perraudin, Kayibanda became the lay editor and then editor-in-chief of *Kinyamateka*.²³² He then assumed the function of president of the board of directors of the co-operative *Travail, Fidélité, Progrès* (TRAFIPRO) founded and financed by the church. Under the leadership of Kayibanda, TRAFIPRO went far beyond the original goals and served as “the basic cell from which the Hutu movement developed, establishing links between Hutu in the urban areas to the countryside. Before the emergence of organised political groups, TRAFIPRO served its members with immediate political interests.”²³³

From this organisational base, the editorship of *Kinyamateka* and the presidency of the board of TRAFIPRO, Kayibanda launched the cultural association *Mouvement Social Muhutu* (MSM) in June 1957. MSM was an all Hutu political organisation whose political programme was indistinguishable from that of the Manifesto, and thus immediately and vociferously promoted those objectives. However, several months later, in November 1957, Joseph Gitera, one of the signatories of the Manifesto, left the MSM to set up his own organisation *L'Association pour la Promotion Sociale de la Masse* (APROSOMA). As a splinter group, APROSOMA shared with MSM “a deep commitment to the democratisation of Rwanda’s institutions, yet unlike MSM, whose appeal was restricted to the Hutu, APROSOMA sought to enlist the support of the ‘common folk’.”²³⁴

For both groups, the central issue was the monopoly of power, and wealth, held by the Tutsi chiefs, and the abuses perpetrated by them. Their point of divergence was whether the “campaign for equality” among the Hutu should be “directed against all Tutsi without distinction, against the high aristocracy, or against specific abuses committed by certain Tutsi chiefs.”²³⁵ The initial point of

²³¹ Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 150.

²³² Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 118. *Kinyamateka* was a church-owned Kinyarwanda-language paper.

²³³ Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 148.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 151-152.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

divergence was thus more a matter of tactics and strategy than of doctrine, but it eventually turned out to be a source of major disagreement among the Hutu elites.

The Reaction of the Monarchists

The more assertive the Hutu counter-elite grew, the more this provoked a “shrill reaction from those Tutsi who had swallowed the wholesale venom that was the Hamitic hypothesis, bent on defending colonial privilege as a time-tested tradition.”²³⁶ The decisive response came in two public statements in May 1958 from a group of elderly and conservative Tutsi at the mwami’s court – the so-called *bagaragu b’ibwami bakuru*, the mwami’s clients.²³⁷ They claimed that “there was no question of any fraternity between Hutu and Tutsi since *Kigwa*, the ancestor of the *Abanyiginya* dynasty²³⁸, had reduced the Hutu by force”. In rejecting the demands of the Hutu, they evoked the tradition of conquest:

“Equal rights are out of the question because our kings conquered the land of the Hutu, killed their ‘little’ kings and thus subjugated the Hutu: how can they now pretend to be our brothers?”²³⁹

The second statement rejected the demand that land property held by Tutsi lords be abolished, and defended its continuation as “the custom of the country”. In his response to the Hutu agitation, Mwami Rudahigwa summarised the deliberations of the High Council:

“It is a damaging increasing noisy propaganda spread by a small group acting under foreign influence with communist ideas. Their intention is to divide the country. They would not succeed to divide a country whose national unity and secular political force organisation has annihilated the most powerful attackers. The country is reunited to identify, cut down, eradicate, and burn that ill tree which is infecting its life.”²⁴⁰

These statements were bound to invite a response from the Hutu elite. Subsequently, the ‘race issue’ became the core of the debate, contributing to two significant factors. First, despite claims that it represented the views of a small ultra-conservative minority, their closeness to the royal court “contributed to strengthen solidarity among the Tutsi as a group.”²⁴¹ Second, by asserting

²³⁶ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 118.

²³⁷ Prunier, 47.

²³⁸ The Abanyiginya are an elite Tutsi clan, whose elite status dates back centuries.

²³⁹ Cited in Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 154.

²⁴⁰ Cited in Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 118-119.

²⁴¹ Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 155.

historical claims of the Tutsi over the Hutu, the statements prompted the Hutu to challenge the historical symbols of Tutsi supremacy. By late 1958, the *Karinga* drum, the supreme symbol of monarchy, became the target of violent criticisms in the Hutu press calling on the church to put an end to the idolatry surrounding the *Karinga*.²⁴² More than merely the symbolic association with the crown, the Hutu political elites attacked the *Karinga* for “conjuring up a vision of permanent Hutu inferiority”. Therefore, by focusing their attacks and criticisms against the *Karinga* drum, the Hutu “struck at the most sensitive aspect of Tutsi political culture.” Not only did this lead the Tutsi to vigorously reassert their legitimacy of their traditional institutions, but also “heightened the fears and hence the sense of solidarity of the ruling elites.”²⁴³

As Rwanda became a simmering cauldron, it convinced the Hutu that they had to organise more rapidly in preparation for possible violent confrontation. It also convinced the monarchists that an alternative source of cohesion needed to be formed, especially after the sudden death of Mwami Rudahigwa in July 1959 under mysterious circumstances. Given the rising political tension, and that the next round of elections were due at the end of 1959, political parties emerged that reflected the internal differentiations within each political camp. As mentioned, APROSOMA was formed in 1957. Next was the conservative Tutsi and pro-monarchist party, the *Union Nationale Rwandaise* (UNAR) founded in August 1959. UNAR’s leadership “read like a who’s who of Tutsi chiefs” and was “clearly intended to serve as the instrument of [conservative] Tutsi supremacy.”²⁴⁴ Then in September 1959 the ‘moderate’ Tutsi Chief Bwanakweri formed the *Rassemblement Démocratique Rwandaise* (RADER), another Tutsi party. Its soft line against Belgian colonial power eventually pushed it to the margins of Rwandan politics.

On October 1959, Kayibanda transformed the MSM into a tightly knit political party, the *Mouvement Démocratique Rwandaise – Parti du Mouvement et de l’Emancipation Hutu* (MDR-PARMEHUTU), that was to become the vanguard party of the Revolution. PARMEHUTU emerged as a robust and militant extremist Hutu organisation, fully committed to the liberation of the Hutu against the Tutsi. Commonly referred to as the main Hutu party, PARMEHUTU claimed to be both ‘Hutu’ and ‘democratic’ in the same name. What distinguished PARMEHUTU from APROSOMA was the revolutionary ideology, and its ‘extremist’ claims for Hutu power. This ideology was the overriding conviction that the ‘Rwandan nation’ is a ‘Hutu nation’, and therefore

²⁴² Ibid. The *Karinga* contained in its external trappings the sexual organs of defeated Hutu kings. Therefore, one can see why the emblem of kingship should have caused revulsion among the Hutu elites.

²⁴³ Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 155.

²⁴⁴ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 120.

state power in an independent Rwanda must also *exclusively* be Hutu i.e. a Hutu State or Hutu Republic. Therefore, Tutsi may live in Rwanda only as a resident alien minority at the sufferance of the Hutu nation.

Two rival political parties defined the expanded arena of Tutsi politics: UNAR and RADER, one conservative and the other reformist. Similarly, two parties with divergent tendencies defined the Hutu political arena: PARMEHUTU the radical extremist tendency and APROSOMA the moderate. Their point of divergence, as mentioned, was whether the campaign towards equality should be directed against all Tutsi without distinction, against the Tutsi elite, or against specific abuses committed by chiefs. As will be seen, PARMEHUTU had more appeal amongst the Hutu masses.

2.3. The Crisis-From-Below: The Peasant Revolt

The Rwandan Revolution was launched in November 1959, with a Hutu uprising, a Tutsi counter-attack, and a decisive Belgian administrative response. The Revolution ended 22 months later, when legislative elections and a referendum on the monarchy held in September 1961. A republican government replaced the monarchy. The composition of the ruling class transformed, as a Hutu revolutionary class replaced the former Tutsi ruling and landed upper class. Sporadic and severe violent incidences characterised this period of transition.

Although Belgian support helped the Revolution succeed, the events in Rwanda were engineered internally. This was an *assisted revolution* and not an *imposed revolution*. The difference is significant for the concept of an *assisted revolution* reflects certain realities of the years immediately following independence. Many rural Hutu had a stake in the new political order, and all shared a strong commitment not to return to the 'old order' in later years.²⁴⁵

2.3.1. The Hutu Peasant Uprising

The eruption of violence that suddenly swept through Rwanda in November 1959, and culminated into a 'popular revolt', was the outcome of the enormous political tensions that had been building up in previous months. From UNAR's mass meeting in September 13, 1959, where the party's programme launched, to UNAR's critical response to the formation of PARMEHUTU, alleging a

conspiracy between the church, government and PARMEHUTU, there was intense political confrontation. This was between the Hutu movement, Belgians and priests, on the one hand, and UNAR on the other, with insults, accusations, and counter-accusations, culminating in the banning of UNAR Tutsi chiefs.

The igniting spark occurred on Sunday November 1, when a band of young UNAR militants attacked Dominique Mbonyumutwa, a Hutu sub-chief and leading member of PARMEHUTU. Although he escaped with his life, rumours spread that he was killed and the local Hutu moved quickly to retaliate. The day after the assault, a large crowd of Hutu demonstrated outside the house of the local chief, in Ndiza, to voice their anger. While the crowd became increasingly restive, a sub-chief named Nkusi, well known for vociferously being anti-PARMEHUTU, openly expressed his contempt for PARMEHUTU, threatening to kill its leaders.²⁴⁶ The Hutu reacted instantaneously – “brandishing their sticks and long-handed sickles, they ran after Nkusi, who found temporary asylum in the chiefs house.” After convincing the chief to let Nkusi out, “they hacked him to pieces, along with three other Tutsi notables who happened to be visiting the chief.”²⁴⁷

Then violence spread like wildfire throughout the entire country. In the following weeks, roving bands of Hutu pillaged and set aflame thousands of Tutsi huts. From the Ndiza chiefdom (where the initial attack occurred), the insurrection engulfed the whole region of Gitarama.²⁴⁸ Rural violence spread to the PARMEHUTU dominant territories of Ruhengeri, Byumba and Gisenyi, the bloodiest incident occurring in the territory of Kibuye, where local Hutu inflicted heavy casualties on Tutsi. Most analysts of these events consider the violence spontaneous.²⁴⁹ The focus of the revolt were the ‘Tutsi chiefs in the local authorities’ i.e. the landed dominant class, and the revolt was carried out by the ‘Hutu peasantry’ i.e. the lower classes. The brutality and rapidity with which this peasant revolt spread was indeed evidence of the intensity amongst Hutu peasants against the behaviour of many Tutsi local authorities during colonialism, and a desire for fundamental change among many rural people.²⁵⁰ Not only did it demonstrate the depth of the rural discontent, but also the ability of the Hutu to destabilise the state.

²⁴⁵ Catherine Newbury, “Ethnicity and the Politics of History in Rwanda”, *Africa Today*, 45, 1 (1998): 5.

²⁴⁶ Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 162.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression*, 194.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Newbury, “Ethnicity and the Politics of History”, 6.

The Hutu uprising, however, provoked a Tutsi counter-attack better organised and more brutal, forcing the Belgian administration to act. Despite being denied a request to re-establish order with his army, the mwami, ignoring the Belgian order, ordered the arrest of Hutu leaders. Beginning on Saturday November 7, "units of the earlier Tutsi army organisation were dispatched, and a number of Hutu leaders were killed."²⁵¹ Being prime targets, Belgian-led forces protected Gitera and Kayibanda went into hiding. Those captured were taken to the *Ibwami* (royal residence) at Nyanza where UNAR leaders tortured many. The Tutsi regime had intended to "eliminate Hutu leaders in the hope that this would squelch the movement of rural radicalism and agitation in the countryside." Following these disturbances, more than 300 Tutsi chiefs and sub-chiefs were either forced to resign or killed.²⁵²

2.3.2. The State Crisis: The Belgian Coup d'état in the Local State

The shock waves of the peasant uprising had barely died when the Belgians gathered a new political storm. The Belgian administration was well prepared. Before the first round of violence could swing from a Hutu revolt into a full-scale Tutsi repression, the colonial power resorted to emergency military action. The Belgian power declared a state of emergency, imposed military rule throughout Rwanda, and appointed Colonel B.E.M Guy Logiest, a former officer of the *Force Publique* in the Congo, as Special Military Resident.²⁵³ However, the emergency action did not stop at restoring order. Encouraged by the former Vice-Governor General of Rwanda, Jean-Paul Harroy, Colonel Logiest's decisive emergency intervention took on the dimensions of a coup d'état in the local state. Arguing that the presence of Tutsi as sub-chiefs "disturbed the public order", Guy Logiest "began to 'replace' Tutsi with Hutu chiefs thus shepherding a 'revolution' against what had hitherto been the colonial powers own authorities."²⁵⁴

Through this blatant pro-Hutu policy, the Belgians appointed more than 300 Hutu chiefs and sub-chiefs.²⁵⁵ Soon thereafter, the Belgian military went a step further and augmented a Hutu

²⁵¹ Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression*, 196.

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*.

²⁵⁴ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 124.

²⁵⁵ Tor Sellstrom & Lennart Wohlgemuth, *International Response to Conflict and Genocide: Lessons from the Rwandan Experience, Study 1, Historical Perspective: Some Explanatory Notes* (Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute, 1997).

administration with an embryonic Hutu dominated armed force – an indigenous military territorial guard of 650 men and was composed of 85 percent Hutu and 15 percent Tutsi.²⁵⁶

The appointment of over 300 Hutu chiefs and sub-chiefs to occupy the posts, which the Tutsi authorities had left vacant, “inaugurated a period of profound instability, marked by considerable administrative inefficiency, mutual provocations and recurrent violence.”²⁵⁷ For the Belgians, the exigencies of the political situation made it imperative to hasten the politicisation of the Hutu peasantry – no matter the cost. There are two important reasons for this. The first official reason of the Belgian administration is illustrated in the declaration made by the Special Resident, Colonel Logiest, in the course of the *réunion de cadres* of January 11, 1960:

“What is our goal? It is to accelerate the politicisation of Ruanda [Rwanda]. In Urundi [Burundi] politics are avoided; one would like to have elections before political parties are brought into being. This may be alright for Urundi, but here the situation is different. Not only do we want elections but also we want everybody to be aware of this. People must go to the polls in full freedom and in full political awareness. *Thus, we must undertake an action in favour of the Hutu, who live in a state of ignorance and under oppressive influences. By virtue of their situation we are obliged to take sides. We cannot stay neutral and sit.*”²⁵⁸

Logiest highlights two types of considerations. The first is the practical aspect. The climate of unrest engendered by the November revolt made the task of the administration on the spot an extremely arduous and dangerous one. The consensus was that only through a genuine transfer of authority to Hutu elites could one expect a return to normalcy. This presumably implied a commitment in favour of PARMEHUTU.²⁵⁹ The second is the interpretation of the events that swayed the decision. For it is clear that the Belgian administration perceived the PARMEHUTU-APROSOMA movement as a ‘popular revolution’ i.e. a spontaneous uprising of the ‘downtrodden’ Hutu peasant masses against Tutsi tyranny. Therefore, they felt compelled to do nothing to thwart it and everything to implement it.

The second official reason of the administration reflects different sets of motivation. After the independence of Congo-Kinshasa, new connections formed between Tutsi elements exiled by the revolt and certain Congolese parties with which the administration did not have good relations. The UNAR leadership-in-exile “courted the support of the [*Mouvement National Congolais*] MNC-

²⁵⁶ Sellstrom & Wohlgemuth, 29.

²⁵⁷ Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 173.

²⁵⁸ Colonel Guy Logiest cited in Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 175.

Lumumba.” Moreover, “as the rumour spread that the local MNC branches in the Congo (especially in Goma and Bukavu) were giving financial assistance to the Tutsi leadership – *pre-conditions*’ meanings hardened to certainty.”²⁶⁰ Therefore, in supporting the Hutu against the Tutsi, the Special Resident essentially acted with unshakeable conviction that in doing so he was liberating the Hutu peasantry from the oppression of both feudalism and Communism.

The Communal Elections

Despite the motivations, the reconstitution of the local state hierarchy was bound to have major repercussions for the outcomes of the subsequent communal elections (established in line with the communiqué of November 10, 1959). This is because the local administration organised communal elections and controlled the ballot boxes.²⁶¹ The significance of these Hutu ‘interim appointments’ is that they afforded the Hutu leadership a unique opportunity to expand their activities to areas where popular support for their cause had yet to awaken.

The electoral struggle was really a political struggle for supremacy between Hutu and Tutsi, “for democracy meant the advent of majority rule and majority rule necessarily meant Hutu rule.”²⁶² For PARMEHUTU, ‘democracy’ meant:

“The liquidation of the old customs of bondage and domination which gave the Tutsi a position of hegemony over the Hutu”

This meant working with the Belgians because:

“It is the administration which has acknowledged the equality of the Hutu and Tutsi, protected the Hutu, relieved him of his heavy burdens and freed him of his enemies, of the *corvées* and other merciless obligations; it meant a decent salary for the workers, jobs for the unemployed, and *the ownership of land*.”²⁶³

²⁵⁹ Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 175.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 176.

²⁶¹ The commune, headed by a ‘burgomaster’ assisted by a popularly elected council, was to take the place of the sub-chiefdom as the basic political unit; the existing chiefdom was to be converted into purely administrative entities; at the central level, legislative powers would be vested in an indirectly elected Legislative Council. For more, see Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 178.

²⁶² Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 178.

²⁶³ Electoral speeches by PARMEHUTU leaders Alexis Baziyaka and Hasani Ndagari delivered in Ruhengeri cited in *ibid.*

The last claim, 'the ownership of land', was a revolutionary claim, and the Belgians endorsed it by urging people to register and vote, drawing attention to the 'virtues of democracy' and the 'ills of feudalism'. Belgium mobilised the full weight of the colonial propaganda machine and embarked on a sustained inflammatory campaign against UNAR leaders on behalf of PARMEHUTU.

This had significant implications. The exasperation of the Tutsi leadership soon reached the point of violent explosion. The first incident occurred on June 6, 1960 in the region of Gikongoro. Immediately after a "group of young Tutsi set fire to a Hutu hut, a dozen Tutsi huts were burned to the ground the local Hutu population." By June 12, "1,165 [Tutsi] huts had been destroyed in the region of Gikongoro and Cyanika."²⁶⁴ Similar incidences of Tutsi killings took place near Kigali and the chiefdom of Bufundu. Moreover, a great and pervasive climate of fear and suspicion gripped Rwanda at the approach of the elections. The political violence was often the product of panic and excitement, and both sides were equally guilty of provocations, but the initial challenge usually came from local Tutsi extremists. The Hutu reaction was often swift and tempestuous – "countless Tutsi huts were burned down in retaliation... in some areas, committees on public safety and militia units were organised." Eventually, the entire southern half of Rwanda transformed into a vast training ground for Hutu 'counter-terrorists', arsonists, and criminal bands. As time went on, the Hutu did not even wait for the Tutsi challenge to occur – they simply went ahead and burned the huts of Tutsi, as if it were a mere routine duty.²⁶⁵

Despite the period of insecurity, communal elections were held between 26 June and 30 July. PARMEHUTU scored a landslide victory, winning 70.4 percent of the votes, 2,390 out of 3,125 seats, therefore holding a dominant position in the local councils.²⁶⁶ The new local administrative authorities were now called *bourgmestres* (burgomasters) on the Belgian model and they ruled through 229 communes. There were only 19 Tutsi out of the 229, and 160 were PARMEHUTU. A provisional assembly of 48 members, dominated by PARMEHUTU, replaced the High Council, formerly headed by the mwami, and Kayibanda formed a 'multiracial' provisional cabinet "with nine Europeans, seven Hutu and three Tutsi."²⁶⁷ Then in October 1960, Colonel Logiest summed up the political situation in Rwanda in four words: "*The Revolution is over.*"²⁶⁸ PARMEHUTU was

²⁶⁴ Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 179.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 180.

²⁶⁶ Prunier, 51.

²⁶⁷ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 127.

²⁶⁸ Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 183.

everywhere in the process of consolidating its electoral gains and an entirely new structure was taking shape at the local level. This was the consequence of the radical shift in the distribution of power brought about by PARMEHUTU's landslide victory.

The PARMEHUTU leadership, desperately seeking to tighten its grip on the emergent political structure, and to bring maximum pressure to be upon the Belgian metropolitan government, was determined to go it alone beyond the formalities of the transition phase. As PARMEHUTU had captured control of local institutions, the next step was to extend their power to the central organs of government. They argued for holding legislative elections as soon as possible after the communal elections since PARMEHUTU had "so clearly revealed itself as 'the party of the masses', and in fact held a dominant position in almost every communal council." They further argued that any attempt to delay the installation of an autonomous government through popular elections "would necessarily be interpreted as a sign of bad faith by the masses, and thus provoke new outburst of violence."²⁶⁹

Alarmed that PARMEHUTU was willing to use all methods to consolidate its hold on power, the opposition joined hands. By November, the leaders of APROSOMA, RADER, and UNAR "came together to form a 'Front Commun' in opposition to PARMEHUTU." The Front Commun denounced the "dictatorial regime" of PARMEHUTU as "racist, racial and anti-democratic" accusing the regime of "deliberately attempting to crush all other parties through corruption and intimidation."²⁷⁰

After ongoing confrontations with the United Nations, Colonel Logiest and Kayibanda finally arranged a 'legal coup'.²⁷¹ Known in Rwandan history as the '*coup of Gitarama*', this was carried out on 28 January 1961. On that day, "dozens of trucks from all around the country converged on the town of Gitarama, bringing to the destination precisely 3,126 communal councillors and burgomasters." Another 25,000 people spontaneously assembled. Addressed by members of the provisional government, the gathering "abolished the monarchy and proclaimed a Republic", thereby granting *de facto* independence. Then, sitting as a constituent assembly, the councillors and burgomasters elected the president of the Republic. The coup was complete when the president called upon Grégoire Kayibanda, as Prime Minister, to form the future government.²⁷²

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 189.

²⁷⁰ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 127-128.

²⁷¹ Prunier, 53.

²⁷² Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 124.

The UN was not impressed, and demanded a fresh general election and a referendum on the monarchy in Rwanda – given UNAR’s expected rejection of the Gitarama ‘legal coup’. When the UN initiated general election followed, in September 1961, UNAR decided to participate “but the conditions had changed dramatically: the machinery that organised and oversaw elections was no longer Tutsi.”²⁷³ As was expected, the legislative elections merely confirmed the supremacy of PARMEHUTU as they won 77.7 percent of the vote against 16.8 percent for UNAR. Moreover, the referendum rejected the monarchy in favour of a republican system of government.²⁷⁴ However, the human cost of the Revolution did not become fully discernible until after independence, when thousands of innocent Tutsi fell victim of a repression they could neither foresee nor prevent.

2.4. Skocpol Application: The Causes of Revolution

The political conditions out of which the Rwandan Revolution emerged meet Skocpol’s expectations on the causes of social revolutions. Concerning Skocpol’s conditions for revolution, both state and society are in conditions of structural inequality within and beyond one country. Within the country, the state is bureaucratized and autonomous from the society. The society is agrarian and consists of three important classes: rural landowners, the peasantry, and a middle class that is urban. Moreover, the state relies on the political support of the landowners, as well as the agrarian economic resources produced by the peasantry. In the international arena, other sets of structural inequalities exist as the agrarian bureaucracy encounters international pressure. It is in this context of structural inequality within and beyond the country that two crises develop: a state crisis and a crisis-from-below.²⁷⁵

Rwanda, on the eve of the Revolution, meets these political conditions. In Colonial Rwanda, state and society were also in a specific condition of structural inequality, internally and externally. The institutional make-up of the colonial state ensured a bureaucratic and autonomous state from society. The Belgian colonial administration ruled the Hutu subject population through a Native Authority in which the institution of chieftaincy was centralised and exclusively Tutsi. Society in Rwanda was also predominantly agrarian and contained three important classes. It comprised of rural landowners (Tutsi chiefs), the peasantry, which was almost all Hutu, and the middle classes in the urban areas, which consisted of both Hutu and Tutsi. As in most African colonial situations, the

²⁷³ Ibid.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 125.

state relied on the political support of colonial agents i.e. the Tutsi Native Authority (the chiefs and landowners), as well as the agrarian economic resources produced by the Hutu peasantry. Concerning these economic resources, the Belgian project of colonial development relied on a system of extra economic compulsions enforced by Tutsi chiefs in the Native Authority. This involved forced labour, forced crops (the compulsory cultivation of food crops), and forced sales for the Hutu.²⁷⁶

As a colonial state, Rwanda experienced another set of structural inequality in the international arena. Colonial Rwanda was in a highly vulnerable and dependent position in the international system. External pressure came in the form of the international disruptions of colonial controls, and the source was the United Nations. In this situation of structural inequality within and beyond Rwanda, two simultaneous crises developed, a *state crisis* and a *crisis-from-below*.

2.4.1. The Simultaneous Crises: A Different Sequence

The important difference between Skocpol's analytical framework and the case of Rwanda concerns the relationship between the state crisis and the crisis-from-below. According to Skocpol, the state crisis has its origins when the state encounters international pressure. Success in meeting the challenges of this external pressure depends on the ability of the state to mobilise resources from the society and implement reforms requiring structural transformations.²⁷⁷ The state crisis thus emerges when the regime fails to implement sufficiently basic reforms or to promote rapid enough economic development to meet and weather the intensity of international pressure. This failure is largely due to the uncooperative attempts of the dominant class, threatened by the structural reforms. The dominant classes resist the state's reformist actions, block the economic and political schemes, express their opinions in hostile political action via political revolution, and depose the regime. The political revolution thus signifies the state crisis and the beginnings of a revolutionary crisis.²⁷⁸

This state crisis facilitates for the emergence of a crisis-from-below, and this takes the form of a peasant insurrection. The social-revolutionary significance of the peasant revolt is that it is a widespread class upheaval specifically directed against the landowning class. The factors necessary

²⁷⁵ Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*.

²⁷⁶ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 94-96.

²⁷⁷ Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

Hutu political elite under Kayibanda. This involved the articulation of a radical ideology that came in the form of the Bahutu Manifesto and the formation of a cultural association *Mouvement Social Muhutu*, building the foundation for the establishment of the radical Hutu party, PARMEHUTU. Therefore, unlike in Skocpol's study, an emergent political elite expressed their opinion in hostile political action by organising politically, as opposed to the deposition of the regime by the dominant classes. The origin of the revolutions was thus not a state crisis.

The revolutionary crisis in Rwanda emerged not from a state crisis as suggested by Skocpol's framework, but rather, from a *crisis-from-below* that *facilitated the emergence of a state crisis*. Concerning the crisis-from below, similar to Skocpol's study, the decisive factor that made it possible for the Hutu peasant rebellion was that the Hutu peasantry had *internal leverage* i.e. "organised capacity for collective action against their exploitative superiors."²⁸¹ The degrees of *solidarity* in the Hutu peasant community and the degrees of peasant *autonomy* amongst Hutu explain the emergence of the peasant revolt.

Hutu *peasant solidarity* was the outcome of the colonial oppressive experience of all Hutu, primarily because all Hutu were subjects and thus excluded from the regime of rights. As Hutu made sense of the basis of their exclusion and oppression, they organised and united along Hutu lines, more or less submerging all other differences as secondary. This is evident in the radical ideology articulated by the emergent Hutu elite in the Bahutu Manifesto. The Manifesto made it very clear that the heart of the Rwandan problem was "the conflict between Hutu and Hamitic (settler) Tutsi" and called for the *double liberation* of the Hutu "from both the Hamites and the Bazungu (whites) colonialists."²⁸²

Hutu *peasant autonomy* was possible through the political organisation of the Hutu. This occurred in three phases. The first phase was the foundation of the co-operative TRAFIPRO, serving as the basic cell from which the Hutu movement developed and established links between Hutu in the urban and rural areas. The second phase was the launch of the cultural association MSM that articulated a radical Hutu ideology. The third phase was the formation of political parties with PARMEHUTU attracting a mass following and representing radical Hutu nationalist ideas, and APROSOMA representing moderate thinking. Thus, the articulation of a radical Hutu ideology, and the political organisation of the Hutu around that ideology explain Hutu peasant solidarity and

²⁸¹ Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, 112.

²⁸² Cited in Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression*, 191.

autonomy. This provided the Hutu with internal leverage and organised capacity for collective action against the Tutsi Native Authority.

It was within this context that the crisis-from-below emerged, as PARMEHUTU engaged in intense political competition with the radical Tutsi party, UNAR. Similar to Skocpol's framework, the Hutu peasant revolt was spontaneous and widespread, directed specifically against Tutsi chiefs, the landed dominant class. Moreover, the violence was particularly brutal and spread rapidly. However, before the Tutsi local authorities could launch a counter-attack, the Belgian administration intervened in favour of the Hutu, staging a coup in the local state, thus signifying the *state crisis*. Colonel Logiest began to expel Tutsi chiefs and replace them with Hutu chiefs. He then went a step further by ousting the Tutsi local administration and augmented a Hutu administration with an embryonic Hutu dominated armed force. Communal elections occurred under this new Hutu administration and PARMEHUTU won a landslide victory, this further consolidated their hold on state power. The Gitarama coup consolidated the Revolution at a political level, thus signifying a *political revolution*. At this stage of the Revolution, the crisis-from-below had facilitated for the emergence of a state crisis. In addition, PARMEHUTU had consolidated its political victory in the communal elections and at the Gitarama coup. The challenge, however, lay in consolidating the revolution at the social and societal level.

2.4.2. The Emergence of Bipolar and Adversarial Race Identities

The decolonisation process, and revolutionary crisis, polarised and politicised the differences between Hutu and Tutsi, and consequently, Hutu and Tutsi emerged as bipolar and adversarial race identities. As discussed, the historical development of state power in Rwanda, and the relationship between Hutu and Tutsi within that historical context, established the foundations for these political relations. Recall that in the pre-colonial Rwandan state, the Hutu-Tutsi difference was primarily a political distinction that divided a subject population from those identified with state power, but no religious or political ideology sanctioned the differences. Furthermore, the economic distinction was not clear-cut, and the existence of two social institutions, Kwihutura and Gucupira, ensured for social mobility.

As discussed, based on this political distinction, colonialism racialised and institutionalised the Hutu-Tutsi difference. This occurred in two processes. Firstly, on the part of the colonial bureaucracy, with the assistance of the Hamitic Hypothesis, it was a top-down invention as a form

of cost-effective control over the local population. The institution of chieftaincy and the Native Authority were exclusively Tutsi, and the Tutsi were the agents of colonialism. Consequently, all Hutu were relegated to subject status. Thus, the political distinction became a racial distinction, which inevitably became an economic distinction. Secondly, the racialisation was also a construction from below as an answer to the changes brought by the Belgian colonial state. Subsequently, the Hutu made sense of their subjugation in racial terms and transformed Hutu identity into an insurgent race identity, turning race into the primary and standard marker for the anti-colonial movement.

The process of decolonisation politicised and polarised the Hutu-Tutsi difference, as the limitations of political reform transformed Hutu and Tutsi into the basis for political competition. This led to their polarisation and subsequent inflammation as political elites mobilised, organised political parties, and competed based on Hutu and Tutsi. This unfolded in two phases: the articulation of polarised *political ideologies*, and the formation of polarised *political parties* (all based on Hutu versus Tutsi).

Concerning *political ideology*, the positions of the *Conseil Supérieur du Pays* (the High Council dominated by Tutsi chiefs), and Kayibanda and his aides, were undoubtedly polarised. The High Council, in their *Mise au Point*, made their views on decolonisation very clear – “asserting the prerogatives of the Tutsi dominant class.”²⁸³ By contrast, Kayibanda and eight Hutu intellectuals, in the Bahutu Manifesto, made their position clear – “double liberation of the Hutu from both the Hamites and the Bazungu colonisation.”²⁸⁴ Each was a claim for political power – the maintenance of Tutsi hegemony on the part of the High Council, and the struggle to capture political power on the part of Kayibanda and his aides.

These two ideological standpoints became the basis of *political organisation*. The Tutsi chiefs organised and formed the UNAR whose leadership “read like a who’s who of Tutsi chiefs and was clearly intended to serve as the instrument of conservative Tutsi supremacy.”²⁸⁵ From the basis of a Hutu cultural association, Kayibanda formed the radical and extremist Hutu organisation PARMEHUTU that equated the Rwandan nation with the Hutu nation. The main political competitors were these two extremists and polarised political parties, primarily formed to pursue exclusively Hutu and Tutsi political interests.

²⁸³ Cited in Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 150.

²⁸⁴ Cited in Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression*, 191.

It was only months after the formation of PARMEHUTU and UNAR when political competition between them turned violent in the form of a peasant revolt, further reinforcing these polarised differences as Hutu and Tutsi emerged as adversaries. The widespread and brutal violence that followed took on a Hutu versus Tutsi character, and was from the organisational bases of PARMEHUTU and UNAR. While political structures were in the process of reform, as new parties emerged and as Belgium managed PARMEHUTU's political revolution, the Hutu-Tutsi distinction inflamed to the point where Hutu and Tutsi signified political adversaries. Competing nationalisms, Hutu and Tutsi, and the ensuing political organisation, PARMEHUTU and UNAR, inflamed the distinction. Thus, at the onset of the peasant revolt, involving violence between PARMEHUTU and UNAR, Hutu and Tutsi had emerged as adversarial race identities.

Therefore, the political setting, and structural conditions, necessary for social revolution fit Skocpol's analytical description. Moreover, the structural transformations involving the change in political structure and class upheaval also fit Skocpol's analytical framework. There are however two important differences: the *sequence of the simultaneous crises* and the *role of race identity*.

Concerning the crises, in Skocpol's case, the state crisis facilitates the emergence of a crisis-from-below. In Rwanda however, the crisis-from-below i.e. the class upheaval facilitated the emergence of a state crisis. Thus, the Rwandan Revolution began with a *social-revolutionary* crisis. The implication is that the origin of revolutionary change was *society* and not the state. The political elites had to catch up with a *transforming society*, and consequently, the Hutu masses became the driving force of the Revolution. This makes Rwanda's Revolution 'social'. Subsequently, as society became radicalised and violent, so PARMEHUTU had to follow suit and become more radical in order to make political capital, and to lead the revolution. In addition, the implication of race identity as an additional variable polarised and inflamed the socio-political distinction between Hutu and Tutsi, making race the marker of political adversary in the Revolution. As will be seen in the following chapter, this heightened the Hutu-Tutsi political antagonisms leading to a Rwanda's first genocide.

²⁸⁵ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 120.

III

The Social-Revolutionary Process

The Mobilisation for Mass Killings

Immediately after the republican government came to power on July 1, 1962, there was a spirit of tolerance in the new Rwandan political community. At the time of independence, the balance of forces was not as one-sided as one would think. UNAR had two key ministries, Public Health and Cattle Raising, held respectively by Francois Ncogozabahizi and Etienne Afrika, and UNAR deputies held 7 seats out of 44 in the National Assembly. Moreover, UNAR had its own local headquarters in Kigali, printed its own newspaper, and criticised the government at will.²⁸⁶

However, the New Regime of 1969 was strikingly different. The government was an exclusively 'all-Hutu' government, and the only legitimate opposition was that which existed within PARMEHUTU.²⁸⁷ Hutu controlled all the overwhelming majority of posts in the civil service and not a single post of prefect or sub-prefect remained in the hands of UNAR. The local UNAR had its headquarters dissolved, all its leaders executed and brutally killed, and its newspaper banned.²⁸⁸ The New Hutu Regime had an enormous degree of racial exclusivity and was constantly pre-occupied with two vital objectives. The first was to avert the danger of a Tutsi-led counter-revolution, instigated from outside. The second was to build support from within, so as to lessen the chances of a successful counter-revolution, and at the same time strengthen the bases of internal legitimacy and the solidarity of the New Regime.

What happened between these years? What accounted for the transition from 'relative' stable political coexistence between PARMEHUTU and UNAR, Hutu and Tutsi, to a racially exclusive mono-ethnic state? The most important starting point understands the socio-political consequences of the November peasant revolt – it led to a severe refugee crisis that in turn caused massive social and political instability. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an analysis on this most violent part of Rwanda's Revolution. In this social-revolutionary process, Rwanda experienced its first genocide against the Tutsi.

²⁸⁶ Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 197.

3.1. The Political Context: Internal Displacement and Refugee Crisis

The most tragic consequence of the November Hutu peasant uprising was the violent and forced exodus of thousands of Tutsi families from Rwanda, “with all the material hardships and emotional pangs that such a massive uprooting is liable to entail.”²⁸⁹ The political implications of this were considerable. The revengeful attitude that this situation fostered among the refugees, combined with the prevailing climate of mutual suspicion, significantly contributed to the ever-increasing deterioration of Hutu-Tutsi relations. The ultimate repercussions would go as far as the genocide in 1994.

By April 1960, the total number of Tutsi refugees, and internally displaced Tutsi, rose from about “7,000 at the end of November 1959 to 22,000.” Of these, about “7,000 were installed at the Nyamata camp for refugees, in Bugesera.” The remaining 15,000, distributed through the territories of Byumba, Gisenyi, and Astrida, “found temporary asylum in mission stations and government buildings or wandered over the countryside in a vain quest for food, shelter and security.” Most, however, eventually resettled in the neighbouring countries of Burundi, the Congo, Uganda and Tanzania. From a mere trickle, the number of refugees who sought asylum abroad grew rapidly after 1960, “from approximately 1,500 in late 1960, approximately 130,000 Tutsi had left the country by the end of 1963.”²⁹⁰ By late 1964, the number of official Rwandan refugees in the Great Lakes Region had grown to 336,000 – with 200,000 in Burundi, 78,000 in Uganda, 36,000 in Tanzania, and 22,000 in Zaire.²⁹¹

Despite various efforts to meet the needs of the refugees, very little could be done to ease the desperate socio-economic conditions, and more importantly, to prevent UNAR from making political capital out of the situation. Various spokesmen for UNAR constantly, and consistently, reminded refugees of “their brutal uprooting, the devastation of their crops, the killing of their cattle, the destruction of their dwellings, the rape of their wives and daughters.” Moreover, attention was drawn to the “enforced promiscuity of the refugee camps, to the criminal expulsion of the old and the young from their salubrious native regions and their parking, without shelter of any sort, in a region infested with tsetse flies.”²⁹²

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

²⁸⁹ Ibid., 171.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., 172.

²⁹¹ Ibid.

²⁹² Cited in Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 172.

UNAR made every effort to keep alive the grievances of the refugee population. Moreover, they were able to relate these grievances to the allegations of 'racial bias' on the part of the Belgian colonialists, made very easy by their outspoken pro-Hutu policy. Soon, "the refugees were converted into ardent supporters of UNAR."²⁹³ Thus, the origins of the resentment towards the Hutu and Belgian authorities are within the inhuman conditions the Tutsi lived, and their "unanimous conviction that they owed their fate to a 'deliberate' racial bias on the part of the administration." This is because the overwhelming majority of Tutsi began their exodus *after* the November uprising when they suddenly found themselves confronted with Hutu chiefs and sub-chiefs *all appointed by the administration*.²⁹⁴ Moreover, the sheer arbitrariness and ruthlessness with which many of these Hutu chiefs used their authority resulted in a further exodus of Tutsi families, and bitter resentment. Therefore, the refugee problem was the "consequence of the 'interim appointments' of Hutu chiefs and sub-chiefs in those areas where the actual or presumed hostility of the [Hutu] local population caused the eviction of Tutsi authorities."²⁹⁵

However, the crippling of all disabilities suffered by the Tutsi leadership-in-exile was their inability to achieve an adequate measure of political unity and cohesion among themselves. There were three major factions. One such faction was the *les monarchistes* (the monarchists) and was comprised of those who had been close to the court in Rwanda. Another group, *les progressistes* (the progressives), came from the younger western educated chiefs, "with some attracted to socialist ideas."²⁹⁶ Finally, there were the *activists* who were the hard-core guerrilla, *Inyenzi* fighters, who provided the armed incursions that began in 1960 and lasted until 1964.

3.2. The Counter-Revolution: The Inyenzi Raids

Lemarchand documents an insightful and prophetic dialogue between Colonel Logiest and a Belgian security agent, a few months before Rwanda's official independence:

"Colonel Logiest: The possibility of terrorist actions aided from the outside is not absolutely unthinkable, but the chances of success of an internal action are very slim. The xenophobic parties are disorganised.

²⁹³ Ibid., 173.

²⁹⁴ Ibid. Emphasis added.

²⁹⁵ Ibid.

²⁹⁶ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 128.

Security officer: But one must recognise that an outside intervention [by UNAR] could trigger off an internal reaction. Tutsi terrorists organised outside Rwanda could infiltrate the country and instigate seditious movements among certain segments of the population.

Colonel Logiest: If such a movement should emerge among the Tutsi it would be a signal for a massacre by the Hutu. I think the Tutsi are fully aware of this.²⁹⁷

The infamous 'Bugesera Invasion' of December 1963 was the decisive, and tragic, confirmation as to how the Hutu would respond to any 'Tutsi armed invasion' from 'political exile'. Following the Bugesera Invasion and between December 1963 and January 1964, "at least 10,000 Tutsi died under the blows of the Hutu." For weeks, "Rwanda lived through an unprecedented orgy of violence and murder. Never before, not even during the worst period of the Revolution, had the killings reached such frightening proportions [and] never before had racial hatred led to such bestial cruelty."²⁹⁸ The scars these events left on the socio-political institutions of Rwanda never healed, and re-opened in 1990, when the descendants of these Tutsi counter-revolutionaries attempted to finish what their fathers had started.

Those who led the series of raids into Rwanda, culminating into the Bugesera Invasion, came from the militant 'activists' faction of the exiles, particularly those located in Burundi and the former Zaire. Their dedication to the cause of UNAR and the monarchy, and their uncompromising fanaticism, was intensified by the "hardships of their life in exile, and by their vision of a better future." Thus, many refugees were predisposed to join the *Inyenzi* particularly because of the feeling that "outside their country they will always be subject to pressures, vexations and hostility on the part of the populations where they have sought refuge."²⁹⁹

3.2.1. General Patterns of Political Violence

To understand the intensity of the Hutu response to the infamous Bugesera Invasion, it is important to provide a brief discussion on the general pattern of political violence that developed after the November uprising.

²⁹⁷ Minutes of the territorial administrators meeting between Colonel Guy Logiest and a Belgian security agent held on October 27, 1961, in Kigali cited in Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 216.

²⁹⁸ Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 216.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 217.

Three identifiable patterns of political violence characterised the period after the peasant revolt. First, Tutsi violence (the armed raids) took the form of “isolated acts of terrorism against specific individuals and families.”³⁰⁰ These raids primarily targeted the officials of the new local state power, and Hutu officials were the legitimate targets. However, these isolated acts invited cruel repression, and repression too began to assume a standard form: “it *targeted the local Tutsi population as active or potential support for the Inyenzi.*”³⁰¹ Second, with the increased mobilisation of the refugee population, more systematic attempts were made to organise Inyenzi fighters whose principle objectives were to make armed raids on specific localities. Third, there were instances of relatively organised invasions involving well-trained commando units with the objective of overthrowing the new government. In all, there were as many as ten known raids by the Inyenzi into Rwanda. From their bases in Burundi, Uganda, Tanzania and Congo, the Inyenzi attacked sporadically and in an uncoordinated manner.³⁰²

With the initial exodus of Tutsi refugees in early 1960, where Rwanda became the scene of countless violent incidences, the pattern of violence was everywhere similar involving “the settlement of personal scores between individual refugees and Hutu officials.”³⁰³ By early 1962, planned-armed raids had become the standard forms of violence. The aim moved beyond the settlement of scores to the “infliction of maximum harm to Hutu officials, regardless of rank and position, and regardless of the consequences that such actions might entail for the local Tutsi community.”³⁰⁴

Undoubtedly, the costs of the reprisals were much higher than the Inyenzi had anticipated. Two successive raids in 1962 led to the death of two policemen in February and 1 policeman, 2 civil servants and an ordinary Hutu in March. The reprisal came the day after the March raid in the prefecture of Byumba. Between “1,000 and 2,000 Tutsi men, women and children were massacred and buried on the spot, their huts burned and pillaged and their property divided among the Hutu population.”³⁰⁵ Soon after, the raids and reprisals took a standard form. A raid “turned into a signal for the massacre of the local Tutsi population, and for the distribution of property among those organised as the local self-defence group – *repression joined political violence to redistribution of*

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

³⁰¹ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 129. Emphasis added.

³⁰² Raymond Ntalindwa, *Towards an Interpretation of the Rwandan Conflict* (London: Blackworld Links Ltd, 1999).

³⁰³ Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 217.

³⁰⁴ Ibid.

³⁰⁵ Ibid., 219.

property, rewarding perpetrators with benefits.”³⁰⁶ As Joan Kakwenzire and Dixon Kwamukama further write, “[the racialisation] of the internal Rwandese political struggles led to a war waged literally by ‘outsiders’ against the ‘insiders’, who then reverberated on the insiders in turn.”³⁰⁷

Therefore, during the first 18 months of the First Republic, from May 1962 to November 1963, raids were a localised affair and so were the reprisals that followed. However, the intensity would radically shift up a gear with the Inyenzi Bugesera Invasions of November and December 1963.

3.2.2. The Bugesera Invasion and Genocide of the Tutsi

On December 21, 1963, one of many attacks launched from Burundi. The operation was carefully planned. The invading force, numbering approximately 200 to 300 men, armed with bows and arrows and homemade rifles, crossed the Burundi border at Nemba at 4:30am. They attacked and overran the Rwandan military camp at Gako, and after subsequently stocking up on arms and ammunition, went straight to the refugee camp at Nyamata, where they received an enthusiastic welcome from the local Tutsi population.³⁰⁸

By the time they reached the Nyabarongo River 12 miles south of Kigali, they were confronted and overwhelmed by the superior firepower of the *Garde Nationale Rwandaise* (GNR). They were swiftly obliterated and in the course of the engagement, hundreds of Tutsi lost their lives, including Congolese ‘rebels’. Moreover, on one of the ‘rebels’, the GNR found invasion plans and the list of ministers they wished to install.³⁰⁹

Kayibanda, using his ruthless Minister of Defence and Army Chief of Staff, Major-General Juvénal Habyarimana, responded with unprecedented ferocity to ‘defend the Revolution’. The response involved the elimination of opposition leaders and figures, and embarking on a campaign of terror and pogroms against the entire Tutsi local population. They first rounded up and jailed almost all-leading Tutsi personalities of UNAR and RADER. A few days later, they were taken to Ruhengeri and summarily executed.³¹⁰ At the same time, civilian ‘self-defence’ groups were organised among

³⁰⁶ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 129. Emphasis added.

³⁰⁷ Joan Kakwenzire and Dixon Kamukama, “The Development and Consolidation of Extremist Forces in Rwanda 1990-1994”, in *The Path of a Genocide: The Rwanda Crisis from Uganda to Zaire*, eds. H. Adelman and A. Suhrke (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1999), 63.

³⁰⁸ Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 222.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 223.

³¹⁰ Ntalindwa, 61.

the Hutu population to counter attempts at internal subversion. One minister was assigned to each of the 10 prefectures to supervise the organisation of the self-defence units, and each prefecture converted into 'emergency regions'.³¹¹ Moreover, Kigali Radio "repeatedly beamed emergency warnings, asking the population to be *constantly alert for Tutsi terrorists*."³¹² In such a climate characterised by intense fear, rumour and suspicion, the worst was about to happen.

The mass killings began on December 23 in the prefecture of Gikongoro at the instigation of the local prefect, André Nkeramugaba. Addressing a mass PARMEHUTU meeting, Nkeramugaba could not have made his intentions more clear:

"We are expected to *defend ourselves*. The only way to go about it is to *paralyse the Tutsi*. How? They must be killed."³¹³

Armed with clubs, machetes, pangas and spears, "the Hutu *methodically began to exterminate all Tutsi in sight* – men, women and children." About 5,000 Tutsi were massacred in the prefecture of Gikongoro and soon, the contagion spread to other areas, "accompanied by wanton cruelty." In one locality, more than one hundred Tutsi women and children "were reported to have voluntarily drowned themselves in the Nyaborongo River in a suicidal attempt to escape the clutches of attacking Hutu mobs." Various eyewitnesses reported of "unspeakable brutality." Popular participation in violence created "a kind of collective catharsis through which years of pent-up hatred suddenly seemed to find an outlet."³¹⁴ Commenting on the genocide, the British philosopher Bertrand Russell called it, "*the most horrible and systematic human massacre we have had occasion to witness since the extermination of the Jews by the Nazi*."³¹⁵

How many people were killed? An international team estimated that in Gikongoro prefecture alone, between 5,000 and 8,000 Tutsi were killed; that is about 10-20 percent of the total Tutsi population of the prefecture.³¹⁶ Human Rights Watch estimates that Hutu crowds killed as many as 20,000 Tutsi, and by 1964, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that

³¹¹ Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 223.

³¹² Ibid. Emphasis added.

³¹³ Cited in Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 223-224.

³¹⁴ Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 224.

³¹⁵ Cited in Ntalindwa, 59.

³¹⁶ Sellstrom & Wohlgemuth, 31.

about 150,000 Tutsi had fled to Tanzania, Burundi, Zaire and Uganda.³¹⁷ Catherine and David Newbury estimated that between 10,000 and 14,000 people were killed in the first few years after decolonisation.³¹⁸

The international response was indifferent. One American journalist observed:

“Not a single African state except Burundi raised a voice in protest. Not a word came from any other nation, western or eastern. Above all, not a finger was raised by the UN, under whose official tutelage the trusteeship region of Rwanda was given its independence.”³¹⁹

The efforts UNAR made to make capital out of the tragedy came to nothing and UNAR leaders found themselves heavily decimated, deprived of vital bases of internal support and more isolated internationally. In an effort to stem further attacks and render refugees a spent force, and getting the cue that threats of expulsion could deter the refugees from organising, the Rwandan government embarked on a campaign of expulsion against Tutsi refugees. They subsequently signed various co-operation and security accords with neighbouring countries.³²⁰ For the new Hutu government, the immediate result of this post-revolutionary episode gave the authorities “a new lease on life, and a far greater measure of popular support and internal cohesion than would have been otherwise.” A Rwandan government official who spoke to Lemarchand could not have been more certain:

“Before the attacks of the *Inyenzi* the government was on the point of collapse. We were faced with enormous dissension among ourselves. Not only have we survived the attacks but the attacks made us survive our dissensions.”³²¹

Unfortunately, when faced with a strikingly similar and difficult political episode almost thirty years later, the Rwandan government was unable to devise alternative ways of bringing about national unity and internal cohesion.

³¹⁷ Human Rights Watch Arms Project, “Arming Rwanda: The Arms Trade and Human Rights Abuses in the Rwandan War”, *Human Rights Watch*, 6, 1 (1994): 8

³¹⁸ Cited in Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 130.

³¹⁹ Cited in Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 227.

³²⁰ Ntalindwa, 60.

³²¹ Cited in Lemarchand, 1970: 227

3.3. Skocpol Application: The Revolutionary Process and Political Violence

The revolutionary process in Rwanda, and its characteristic mass mobilisation for political violence fits Skocpol's framework. Similar to Skocpol's study, the social revolutionary crisis in Rwanda also *set into motion political struggles that culminated into fundamental structural changes*. Moreover, similar to Skocpol, *three patterns* of changes are evident. First, the colonial state gave way to a powerful Republican, centralised, and *mass incorporating nation-state* that was more potent in society. After the Belgian 'coup', this happened in three phases: the consolidation of local state power at the communal elections, the political revolution in the Gitarama coup, and the victory over the Inyenzi (the counter-revolution).

Second, the Hutu peasant uprising directed against Tutsi chiefs *transformed the local agrarian Hutu-Tutsi relations*. The insurrection led to the deposition and expulsion of Tutsi chiefs, and their replacement with Hutu chiefs with Belgian assistance. Moreover, the Tutsi chiefs *lost their privileged roles in politics and society*. Third, PARMEHUTU emerged to *consolidate the revolutionary process* and were *challenged by the internal disunity*, in the form of APROSOMA and the Front Commun, and *counter-revolutionary forces*, in the form of the Inyenzi. Moreover, their success depended on their *ability to mobilise the society to defend and consolidate the revolution*. Thus, the broad patterns of social-revolutionary change meet Skocpol's expectations.

3.3.1. The Mass Mobilisation and Participation for Violence

As discussed, a central characteristic of the social revolutionary process is political violence characterised by mass mobilisation and participation. It serves as an important function in the transformation of society's class and state structures, and in defending and consolidating the revolution against internal and external counter-revolutionaries. There are two important functions. First, it is instrumental in the crisis-from-below and emerges as a widespread peasant revolt. Second, it is instrumental in defending and consolidating the revolution in the face of a counter-revolution. This involves the mass mobilisation of society. In Rwanda, political violence characterised by mass mobilisation and participation played this similar role.

The Hutu Peasant Upheaval

The Hutu peasant revolt was a widespread direct assault against Tutsi chiefs and was characterised by mass participation. The causes of the 'mass participatory' character of the violence are located in the structural conditions of Hutu-Tutsi relations in the colonial state, and the political space created by decolonisation. The structural conditions that allowed for mass participation were the high degrees of *autonomy* and *solidarity* between Hutu during the decolonisation process. This was largely due, as discussed, to the pre-existing basis for solidarity among Hutu peasants, and the political space created by decolonisation. Hutu peasant *solidarity* and *autonomy* were realised in the articulation of the radical Hutu revolutionary ideology, located in the 'Bahutu Manifesto', and the political organisation of that ideology, in the form of PARMEHUTU. The common oppression experienced amongst all Hutu made the appeal for 'Hutu solidarity' an effective rallying point. Moreover, the political organisation, linking the urban to the rural, ensured political autonomy and mass political participation when the peasant revolt broke out.

The Mass Mobilisation for Genocide against Tutsi

As discussed, defending and consolidating the revolution in the midst of a counter-revolution is the most violent part of the social-revolutionary process. Political violence is instrumental in defending the revolution and is characterised by mass mobilisation and participation. Success in defending the revolution depends on the ability of the revolutionary leadership to mobilise in mass the society against a counter-revolution. In Skocpol's cases of France, Russia and China, the instruments of mass mobilisation for revolutionary defence were the new structures created by the radical revolutionary parties. In France, the Jacobins created 'Committees of Public Safety' and 'General Security' as essential instruments and political structures for defending the revolution against counter-revolutionaries. In Russia, it was the Bolshevik Party that created Cheka for internal political policing and organised coercion, and the Red Army for the mass mobilisation of the peasantry against counter-revolution. Moreover, in China, the Chinese Communist Party mobilised the peasantry for guerrilla warfare and land revolution.

Rwanda had similar developments, as mass participatory political violence was central to, and instrumental in, defending and consolidating the revolution under the leadership of PARMEHUTU. The context, like the cases of France, Russia, and China was a counter-revolution. However, in Rwanda, it emerged out of a refugee crisis caused by the peasant revolt. The violent political and

social crisis caused by the peasant revolt led to the killings and deposition of Tutsi chiefs who, together with their families and other Tutsi, went into exile in neighbouring countries. As discussed, PARMEHUTU's chief political opposition, UNAR (whose leadership was primarily Tutsi chiefs) made political capital out of the situation and organised the refugees into armed guerrillas for counter-revolution. Armed raids from neighbouring Burundi, which targeted Hutu officials, usually assumed a standard form: "it targeted the local population as active or potential supporters of the Inyenzi."³²²

The Bugesera Invasion took place when the number of Tutsi refugees had soared to 130,000. The response of the PARMEHUTU government to this counter-revolutionary invasion resembled that of the Jacobins, Bolshevik Party, and Chinese Communist Party: *the mass mobilisation of society to defend the revolution, against the Inyenzi*. This mass mobilisation involved assigning one minister to each of the ten prefectures, converting each prefecture into an emergency region, and organising society into armed civilian self-defence groups (i.e. Committees of Public Safety) within each of these emergency regions. In this organisational context, the retaliation against the Inyenzi was a two-fold strategy: the elimination of political opposition to PARMEHUTU, and the methodical extermination of all Tutsi. Thus, the mass mobilisation of society to commit genocide against the Tutsi was the chief instrument of defending the revolution against a counter-revolution. The then prefect of Gikongoro, André Nkeramugaba, could not have been clearer:

"We are expected to defend ourselves. The only way to go about it is to paralyse the Tutsi. How? They must be killed."³²³

The genocide of the Tutsi became the effective instrument for the successful defence of the revolution and its consolidation. The genocide gave the extremist Hutu revolutionary leadership "a greater measure of popular support and internal cohesion."³²⁴ A government official who spoke to Lemarchand made this point:

"Before the attack of the Inyenzi the government was on the point of collapse. We were faced with enormous dissension among ourselves. Not only have we survived the attacks, but the attacks made us survive or dissensions."³²⁵

³²² Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 129.

³²³ Cited in Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 223-224.

³²⁴ Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi*, 227.

³²⁵ Cited in *Ibid.*

Therefore, the mass mobilisation for genocide against the Tutsi population, seen as active or potential supporters of the counter-revolution, led to the successful defence of the revolution and the subsequent strengthening and unification of the new post-colonial state of Rwanda. The genocide of the Tutsi was thus an outcome of, and caused by, the social-revolutionary process of the 1959 Rwandan Revolution. This process involved the transformation of Rwanda's state and class structures, and the politicisation of Hutu and Tutsi as race identities, where Hutu and Tutsi emerged as bipolar and adversarial race identities engaged in a zero-sum political game. The mass mobilisation for violence was thus instrumental, like in the cases of France, Russia, and China, in defending and consolidating the Revolution.

3.3.2. The Incomplete Social Revolution: Reinforcing Cleavages

As discussed, Skocpol defined social revolutions as rapid and basic transformations of a society's *state and class structures* carried through by *class-based revolts from below*.³²⁶ Overall, Rwanda's Revolution fits this description. There occurred a basic transformation in *state structures* as the Rwandan State transformed from a Belgian colonial state administered by a Native Authority into a Republican state administered by an elected Hutu leadership. There also occurred a transformation of *class structure* as the colonial class relationship between Hutu 'subjects' and Tutsi 'chiefs' was abolished. This was carried through by a Hutu *peasant revolt* against the Tutsi Native Authority.

Moreover, the Rwanda Revolution involved the *coincidence of a crisis-from-below*, in the form of a Hutu peasant revolt, and a *state crisis*, in the form of a Belgian coup in the local state. Concerning the sequence of the state crisis and crisis-from-below, the case of Rwanda was not a perfect fit as the crisis-from-below facilitated the state crisis, whereas for Skocpol the sequence is vice versa. In addition, the nature of political violence and its significance in the revolutionary process are similar.

Despite these similarities, the revolutionary process in Rwanda was incomplete. This is primarily because of the lack of transformation in race relations between Hutu and Tutsi. Recall that Hutu and Tutsi were essential factors in the institutional and structural make up of colonial Rwanda. Since a complete social revolution requires the successful transformation of social and political structures, i.e. of state *and* society, the transformation of Hutu and Tutsi as institutionalised and

politicised race identities would be necessary to complete the social-revolutionary process. The revolutionary process, however, changed class but not these Hutu-Tutsi relations. Subsequently, Hutu and Tutsi emerged as bipolar, adversarial, and antagonistic race identities locked in a zero-sum political game. This made the revolutionary process permanent as it institutionalised political opposition between Hutu and Tutsi.

Reinforcing this permanence was the externalisation of Tutsi political opposition. After the genocide, the number of Tutsi refugees in the Great Lakes region created by the Revolution reached 336,000 by late 1964. Thus, the institutionalisation and externalisation of political opposition between Hutu and Tutsi made the revolutionary process *incomplete* and *permanent*. Consequently, the race identities, consolidated in the revolutionary struggle, were able to persist in a changed context, thereby subverting the possibilities opened by that struggle. The important implication was that the *seeds for a second social-revolutionary crisis were planted*, as Rwanda became the only country in the region that violently drove an entire group from its population into political exile. The incomplete social revolution victimised the Tutsi, turned them into refugees, and to complete the process, was to annihilated them decades later. The following chapter deals with this second revolutionary crisis, which was the continuation of this incomplete social revolution.

³²⁶ Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, 4.

IV

The Rwandan Civil War

The Second Revolutionary Crisis

The incomplete 1959 Revolution, the subsequent reinforcement of Hutu and Tutsi as bipolar adversaries, and the externalisation of political opposition to the Revolution, laid the foundation for the emergence of a second social-revolutionary crisis in Rwanda. This revolutionary crisis was more profound than that of 1959. The revolutionary crisis and ensuing process began as a civil war, and ended as a large-scale genocide. The aim of this chapter is to provide an analysis on Rwanda's second social-revolutionary crisis that came in the form of a civil war, and ended as a genocide. In so doing, the chapter uses the independent variables in Skocpol's analytical framework on the causes of social revolution. The chapter consists of five sections. The first is the background section. The second provides an analysis on the *international pressure* applied to Rwanda. The third and fourth discuss the attempts and failure *political reform* as a response to the pressure, and the ensuing *state crisis*. The final section discusses how the civil war meets Skocpol's expectations of a social-revolutionary crisis.

4.1. Background: The Political Evolution of the RPF and 'Akazu'

The two principal political foes of the 1990 – 1994 civil war were a young exile movement of second-generation Rwandan refugees in Uganda, leading the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), and a clan-based oligarchy, the Akazu³²⁷, under President Juvénal Habyarimana. Understanding the post-revolutionary political history of these groups, and the dynamics of their political and military struggle that was the 1990-1994 civil war, is crucial in explaining the genocide.

4.1.1. The Post-Revolutionary Hutu Republics: The Origins of the 'Akazu'

In Rwanda, independence created a profoundly new and ambiguous situation. The political system of the post-revolutionary Hutu State was inverted: one mono-ethnic power system replaced another. The Tutsi totally lost their social and political power, with more than half massacred and

³²⁷ The 'little house'. In pre-colonial Rwanda this was the name given to the 'inner circle' of the king's court.

in neighbouring countries as refugees.³²⁸ With the system now inverted a small Hutu revolutionary political elite was at the helm of the political power structure. To consolidate the social-revolutionary process, a dual mandate of 'state-building' existed. This formed as the basis of the distinction between the First and Second Hutu Republics under Kayibanda and Habyarimana respectively.

The first 'state-building' mandate was the "definition and strengthening of the state as an institution with authority and capabilities" and this was the characteristic of the Kayibanda regime, bearing similarities to Skocpol's cases of France, Russia and China.³²⁹ PARMEHUTU, as the vanguard party, exhibiting similarities to the Bolsheviks and Chinese Communists, took this responsibility. The second was the "strengthening of the control of the state by the powers-that-be: *they, and no one else, must be shown to be the best suited to lead the state.*"³³⁰ For this, a clan-based oligarchy, the 'Akazu', emerged to take on the responsibility, and was under the leadership, but not control, of Habyarimana. In addition, to legitimise themselves vis-à-vis internal and external forces, both regimes employed two separate but interrelated discourses of legitimisation. One was the Hutu 'Social Revolution' ideology largely tailored for domestic consumption; and the other was the Hutu 'development' ideology, aimed at both the international and domestic audiences, facilitating the maintenance of the powers-that-be in their position.³³¹

The Ideology of 'Social Revolution': The Politics of PARMEHUTU

The ideology of 'Social Revolution', originating from the Bahutu Manifesto, was the notion that Rwanda "belongs to the Hutu, who are its true inhabitants, who had been brutally subjugated for centuries by the foreign exploiters, the Tutsi." In this light, the Hutu had wrestled power away from their former masters and oppressors in 1959 and "installed what amounts to a true democracy representative of the vast majority of the people."³³² This notion that the "government is the legitimate representative of the majority Hutu, and the sole defence against the Tutsi's evil attempts

³²⁸ Peter Uvin, "Prejudice, Crisis, and Genocide in Rwanda," *African Studies Review*, 40, 2 (1997): 91-113; Peter Uvin, *Aiding Violence: The Development Enterprise in Rwanda*, (West Hartford: Kumarian Press, 1998); Jan Gorus, "The State as an Instrument of Ethnicity: Ethnic Construction and Political Violence in Rwanda," in *Politics of Identity and Economics of Conflict in the Great Lakes Region*, eds. Ruddy Doom and Jan Gorus (Brussels: VUB University Press, 2000).

³²⁹ Uvin, "Prejudice, Crisis, and Genocide", 97.

³³⁰ Ibid. Emphasis added

³³¹ Catherine Newbury, "Rwanda: Recent Debates over Governance and Rural Development," in *Governance and Politics in Africa*, eds. G. Hyden and M. Bratton (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992).

³³² Uvin, *Aiding Violence*, 26.

to enslave the people again” constituted the powerful core of the legitimisation of the ruling cliques hold on power.

This anti-Tutsi ideology was undoubtedly racist for two main reasons. Firstly, it highlights the distinction between Hutu and Tutsi as one between ‘races’. In addition, the assumption that the Hutu are the only ‘natives’ to Rwanda, with Tutsi being ‘foreigners’, is loaded with the old racist colonial myths of the so-called ‘Hamitic race’.³³³ Secondly, the distinctions between Hutu and Tutsi are invested with notions of ‘racial superiority’ and ‘inferiority’, with Tutsi collectively attributed to evilness.³³⁴

In line with this ideology, and in expanding the presence and frontiers of the Rwandan state to the most remote corners of the territory and of social life, PARMEHUTU developed a policy that became the foundation for systematic ‘racial’ discrimination against the Tutsi. This occurred in the areas of political power (the armed forces, the government, and the single party) and vehicles of socio-economic mobility (education, foreign training, and state jobs). The armed forces, diplomatic services and parliament were thus reserved exclusively for Hutu. Moreover, a quota system was installed that limited access to higher education and state jobs to a number supposedly equal to the Tutsi proportion of the population. In addition, the system of ‘ethnic identity papers’ introduced by the Belgians was kept intact by the government.³³⁵ Subsequently, the “return of Tutsi refugees – whose numbers would grow up to half a million by the 1990s, mainly as a result of natural population growth – was excluded, with the argument that there was no room in Rwanda.”³³⁶

The quota system, ethnic identity cards, and the racist ideology served more to keep Hutu-Tutsi divisions alive and allow for social control by the state, than to implement actual discrimination. They were part of the “institutional structure of Hutu power, administrative ‘proofs’, reminders of the boundaries that separated the Tutsi from everyone else, and of the fact that the state was watching out for the interests of the majority Hutu.”³³⁷ This institutionalisation of the Hutu-Tutsi distinction further reinforced the cleavages, and in the process, demonised the Tutsi, and institutionalised a policy of redress.

³³³ Uvin, “Prejudice, Crisis, and Genocide”.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, 100.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, 101.

³³⁷ *Ibid.*

While in normal times, this institutional structure of discrimination “served less to address direct harm to specific Tutsi than to provide general [legitimation]”, in crisis times, it provided a tool that activated to discriminate against Tutsi. This happened in 1972-3 when the Kayibanda government experienced a heavy loss of legitimacy, resulting from the unhappiness at the pace of change. This coincided with the brutal and genocidal massacre of at least 300,000 Burundian Hutu, mostly school children, leading to the exodus of 200,000 Hutu into Rwanda.³³⁸ The impact on most Hutu on Burundian events, and the general displeasure at the slow rate of change, led to the break out of popular unrest in Rwanda. Soon, under the leadership of the highest echelons of the state, massive anti-Tutsi campaigns were orchestrated. With the ensuing political instability, and subsequent north/south regional divide, the National Defence Minister and Chief of the Armed Forces, Major-General Juvénal Habyarimana, led the army to carry out a bloodless coup on July 5, 1973. This marked the beginning of the Second Hutu Republic.

The Ruling Oligarchy: The Politics of the Developmental State

The Second Hutu Republic under Habyarimana built on the institutional structures of the First Hutu Republic and adopted the discourse of ‘development’ i.e. ‘development ideology’. The ideology of development consisted of the argument that “*the states sole objective is the pursuit of economic development for the underdeveloped Hutu masses.*” As a result, “*the ‘living forces’ in the country, and all those abroad, who are interested in promoting development for the Hutu, should work with the state to make that possible.*”³³⁹ This ideology served to legitimise the government’s intrusive presence in all aspects of social life. The single party was renamed *Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement* (MRND) and parliament, the National *Development Council*. Moreover, a local journal even proudly announced that “during the Council of Ministers of November 13 1987, the President of the Republic ‘anoblissait’ (ennobled) the term peasant by extending it to all Rwandans.” The implication was that if all Rwandans are peasants, “there are no more classes, no distinctions – except of course between Hutu and Tutsi, the only allowed, never forgotten distinction.”³⁴⁰

³³⁸ Philip Gourevitch, *We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families: Stories from Rwanda* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1998), 67. For a general view on the recurrent of Burundian massacres see René Lemarchand, *Burundi: Ethnocide as Theory and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

³³⁹ Uvin, “Prejudice, Crisis, and Genocide”, 99.

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

Given the foreign backing of Habyarimana's development agenda, development aid became crucial to the survival of the regime's state-building project. Given the tenacity with which Habyarimana pushed the development agenda, Rwanda became one of the most aided countries in the world with development aid to Rwanda "vastly larger than private investments and commercial exports combined."³⁴¹ Physically and geographically, the development aid system was omnipresent in Rwanda. By the end of the 1980s, "Rwanda was the largest recipient of foreign aid from Belgium and Switzerland [and] had the highest density of technical assistants (foreign experts in the country) per square kilometre in Africa."³⁴²

Given the lucrative relationship between the Rwandan state and the international development community, controlling political power by the new leadership became very crucial. After Habyarimana's coup, a movement of northern clan members related by clan-family to Habyarimana progressively captured the state. Although the vast majority of those who held power in Rwanda were Hutu, they were Hutu of particular clans, especially those from the northwestern regions of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri: the Bashiru Hutu from the Bushiru region.

Members of the Bashiru Hutu consolidated both formal and informal control over the Rwandan state, and through it the main channels of Rwanda's commercial, intellectual, and cultural life. In the arena of formal power, the Bashiru Hutu "dominated the Rwandan State through the MRND, which President Habyarimana claimed to be the only legal party." The relationship between the MRND and the state "was similar to that of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) to the Soviet Government." The government of Rwanda "became in effect a subset of the party, and security and success within the party were the sine qua non of political advance in Rwanda." The MRND ran what amounted to a system of *nomenclatura* through which "key positions in the regional bureaucracy, the education sector, the army, the state enterprises, and the church were given to party members and supporters."³⁴³

The great measure of success the Bashiru Hutu demonstrated in working this system was that their members held more than 80 percent of command positions in the armed forces, the Forces Armées

³⁴¹ Uvin, *Aiding Violence*, 40. Development aid to Rwanda increased from just under US\$200 million in 1977 to just over US\$600 million in 1991. In total, there were approximately 200 donors in Rwanda that managed more than 500 projects in 1986, ranging from small to very large. For more see Uvin, *Aiding Violence*.

³⁴² Uvin, *Aiding Violence*, 42.

³⁴³ Bruce Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda: The Dynamics of Failure* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), 26.

Rwandais (FAR). By the mid-1980s, nearly a third of the 85 most important posts in the Republic, and all leading positions in the state security services were occupied by individuals from the prefecture of Gisenyi, and within Gisenyi, the Bushiru region.³⁴⁴ Thus, at the elite level, Habyarimana's clan family dominated the inner circles of power, state enterprise, regional prefectures, and church leadership. Indeed, so close knit was the circle that it earned the nickname 'little house' (i.e. the little house around Habyarimana) or 'Akazu'.³⁴⁵

The existence of the Akazu was no secret. In later years a defector from the MRND, Christophe Mfizi, a former national minister of information from Habyarimana's home region of Gisenyi and one of his closest aides, went public to reveal how Rwanda was "ruled by an oligarchy from the north."³⁴⁶ Mfizi christened the Akazu, Réseau Zéro.³⁴⁷ According to Mfizi, the Akazu treated Rwanda like "a private company from which a maximum profit could be squeezed."³⁴⁸ Berkeley describes the Akazu as akin to the Sicilian Mafia, "with the same imperatives of blood and family that bind all such gangs together." It was a racketeering enterprise, the leaders "calculating strategy after the time-honoured logic of Don Vito Corleone."³⁴⁹ It is as if men like Corleone seized control not just of 'turf' on the margins of society, but of the state itself and all its organs. This would include the police and army, secret police, the courts, the central bank, the civil service, the press, television, and radio.³⁵⁰ Rwanda's Bashiru Hutu elite not only closely resembled the socio-political organization akin to the Sicilian Mafia, but also, says Berkeley, "established a clear example of the state as a racketeering enterprise."³⁵¹ Gorus and Gourevitch also share this description, arguing that the 'Akazu' resembled a criminal syndicate, invested in the logic of a gang being involved in the illegal arms trade and the sale of Rwanda's mountain gorillas.³⁵²

³⁴⁴ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 152. The Akazu not only dominated the army through all the regular command posts of FAR, but through total domination of the Presidential Guard, a Praetorian Guard that was Habyarimana's first line of defence.

³⁴⁵ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 26-27.

³⁴⁶ Linda Melvern, *A People Betrayed: The Role of the West in Rwanda's Genocide* (London: Zed Books, 2000), 42.

³⁴⁷ Helen Hintjens, "Explaining the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda," *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 37, 2 (1999)

³⁴⁸ Melvern, 43.

³⁴⁹ Bill Berkeley, "Road to a Genocide," *Dissent*, 49, 1 (2002): 72. Don Vito Corleone is 'the Godfather' and head of the Corleone family in Francis Ford Coppola's epic masterpiece about the Sicilian Mafia in the United States, *The Godfather*.

³⁵⁰ Berkeley, 72.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² Gourevitch, 76; Gorus, 183.

4.1.2. The Politics of Exile: The Origins of the Rwandan Patriotic Front

The violent convulsions that accompanied the Rwandan Revolution produced a flow of refugees into the neighbouring countries, including tens of thousands of Tutsi who fled to Uganda. The story of the formation of the RPF, whose members are predominantly the descendants of Tutsi refugees produced by the 1959 Revolution, involves their relations within the wider processes of Ugandan post-colonial politics.³⁵³ The political evolution of the Tutsi political refugees of 1959 into the RPF occurred in three critical phases.

The first community of Rwandan refugees emerged as a result of decolonisation. The Tutsi aristocracy, organised in UNAR, lost their social and political positions to the Hutu radical nationalist movement, PARMEHUTU. The relations between UNAR members and other elements of Ugandan society were relatively calm despite underlying economic tensions. This was interrupted when Milton Obote played up tensions with the Rwandans for purposes of political gain.³⁵⁴ Idi Amin's entry via a military coup, traumatic for many Ugandans, saw a return for the Rwandans to the relative calm of the Obote era.³⁵⁵ During this period, however, the leading political organisations within the refugee community, such as the *Imburamajo*, had become inert and no pan-Rwandan movement had emerged.³⁵⁶ Given that the Rwandan government's official position was that Rwanda was 'full up', and that those who fled should make their homes elsewhere, "they had been excluded from the international fora." Moreover, as "the prospects of imminent return seemed increasingly distant, [and] the struggle for personal survival increased," the governments of host countries permitted refugees less and less room for political organisation.³⁵⁷

Initially, the main strategy refugees used to deal with their status were to become a part of their host societies. This was a regional political development. Gasarasi documents how the Tanzanian government eventually bestowed citizenship upon Rwandan refugees, with the Burundian

³⁵³ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 21.

³⁵⁴ Ogenga Otunnu, "Rwandese Refugees and Immigrants in Uganda," in *Path of a Genocide: The Rwanda Crisis from Uganda to Zaire*, eds. Howard Adelman and Astri Suhrke (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1999); Ogenga Otunnu, "An Historical Analysis of the Invasion by the Rwandan Patriotic Army," in *Path of a Genocide: The Rwanda Crisis from Uganda to Zaire*, eds. Howard Adelman and Astri Suhrke (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1999).

³⁵⁵ Otunnu, "An Historical Analysis".

³⁵⁶ Cyrus Reed, "Exile, Reform, and the Rise of the Rwandan Patriotic Front," *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 34, 3 (1996): 479-501.

government giving out official documents granting them access to education and employment, and the Ugandan Amin regime incorporating some into the armed forces.³⁵⁸

The second and more troubled phase began in 1981 when Tanzania's invasion of Uganda to oust Amin ended with the resumption of power by Milton Obote. Again, the Rwandans became targets of attack by Obote and in response, joined a guerrilla opposition movement known as the National Resistance Army (NRA), and its political arm the National Resistance Movement (NRM) commanded by Yoweri Museveni. Among the founders of the NRM were Fred Rwigyema and Paul Kagame, who would later be the commanders-in-chief of the RPF, and the military wing, the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA). Both were also active members of the Rwandan Alliance for National Unity (RANU) – a diplomatic lobby political organisation founded in 1982 by exiles, focusing its attention on the return of refugees.³⁵⁹

As attacks against the Rwandan community in Uganda escalated, “more and more members of the diaspora joined the NRM and its military wing, the NRA, which recruited anyone who was willing to fight, regardless of nationality.”³⁶⁰ In the process, a large cadre of Rwandan exiles not only gained crucial guerrilla warfare experience, but also rapidly rose through the command ranks of the NRM and NRA. With little more than what they perceived as a just cause and a clear goal, “a young, poorly trained and equipped army defeated an internationally recognised and supported regime whose military forces were far superior to its own.” The significance of the victory was clear: “if Ugandans could unite to defeat their government, why could Rwandans not do the same?”³⁶¹

The ascension of the NRM to power in 1986, with Yoweri Museveni as the new president, led to the third and most complex phase of the Rwandan Tutsi diaspora history in Uganda. Two significant and interrelated developments occurred: “the integration into Museveni's security apparatus of a large number of Banyarwanda, most of the second generation [1959 Tutsi refugees]; and a growing split between this group and the rest of the Banyarwanda.”³⁶² The integration into the security services was a natural outcome of the crucial role played by Rwandans in Museveni's

³⁵⁷ Charles Gasarasi, “The Mass Naturalisation and Further Integration of Rwandese Refugees in Tanzania: process, problems and prospects”, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 3, 2 (1990): 90.

³⁵⁸ Gasarasi, 88.

³⁵⁹ Cyrus Reed, “The Rwandan Patriotic Front: Politics and Development in Rwanda”, *Issue: A Journal of Opinion*, 23, 2 (1995): 48-53.

³⁶⁰ Reed, “Exile, Reform”, 485.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*

guerrilla campaigns. Fred Rwigyema and Paul Kagame³⁶³ rose, respectively, to the positions of deputy minister of defence and deputy chief of military intelligence.³⁶⁴ However, by the late 1980s, the political influence of the Rwandans became the topic of increasingly vocal criticism by Museveni's political opponents, who used his reliance on the Rwandans against him.

Connected to these developments was the growing split between the more militant second-generation refugees and the wider Rwandan refugee population. The wider population had instilled most of their hopes in RANU. However, after repeated denials of the return of refugees by Habyarimana's government, RANU began taking compromised political positions such as asking for symbolic overtures from an ever-reluctant Habyarimana. For the new militants, RANU was too passive. Consequently, men like Fred Rwigyema and Paul Kagame, who were in positions of considerable power and influence, "began to explore more radical alternatives, including a military option of forced return." In 1987, a group of like minded second generation refugees, "the majority of whom had been born in Uganda and never set foot in Rwanda, formed the Rwandese Patriotic Front."³⁶⁵ The RPF clearly stated its intention "to fight to achieve its goals, and began to prepare itself militarily in several ways."³⁶⁶ From the outset, the RPF was a movement conceived to organise for a military return of the Rwandan refugee population.

The political dynamics within Uganda and the NRM also further radicalised the RPF. Although relations between Museveni and the RPF leadership were strong, by the end of the decade "many of the old antagonisms between the Rwandans and their neighbouring populations had reappeared."³⁶⁷ This was evident in the fact that the topic of Rwandan refugees was discussed as *a problem* in Uganda's senior legislative body, the National Ruling Council.³⁶⁸ The National Ruling Council, not fully controlled by Museveni, decided to remove all the remaining Rwandan nationals from the NRA and to bar all Rwandans from owning land in Uganda. The results of these developments for the Rwandans is that despite their significant contribution in the NRA

³⁶³ Paul Kagame was to become the President of Rwanda and the RPF

³⁶⁴ These positions were even more powerful than they sound for in the politics of the NRM government, several Museveni opponents were given seats in the cabinet. Thus, deputies and key ministers loyal to Museveni controlled real power, according to Jones. Rwigyema and Kagame were at the heart of a powerful network of Rwandan soldiers and security officials in the NRM and NRA.

³⁶⁵ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 23.

³⁶⁶ Reed, "The Rwandan Patriotic Front", 49-50. However, in its 'Eight Point Programme', the RPF also called for national unity, democracy, and 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.

³⁶⁷ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 23.

³⁶⁸ For an in depth analysis on the issue, see Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 172-184.

victory, being a refugee in Central Africa brought home a bitter truth: in Central Africa today, once a refugee, always a refugee. An RPA commander in post-genocide Rwanda summed up this bitter truth:

“You stake your life and at the end of the day you recognize that no amount of contribution can make you what you are not. You can’t buy it, not even with blood.”³⁶⁹

Moreover, Presidents Museveni, Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, and Habyarimana met in Kampala two weeks before the RPF invasion to discuss the refugee issue and find a regional solution. The immediate consequence of these developments, including the eventual dismissal of the legendary Rwigyema, was to tilt the balance of opinion in favour of an armed return into Rwanda. In a response letter to the Human Rights Watch Arms Project, Uganda’s ambassador to the United States, S.T.K. Katenta-Apuli, explained the reasons:

“Because he opted to remain a Rwandese national, he [Major-General Fred Rwigyema] and many other Rwandese in this category were removed from the NRA by a decision of the National Resistance Council (Parliament). During the Parliamentary debate on the Uganda Investment Code, non-nationals including Rwandese refugees were *precluded from owning land*. It is believed that the combination of these two fundamental decisions convinced Rwandese refugees that they *did not have a bright future in Uganda* and precipitated the mass desertion from NRA and *invade Rwanda to regain their rights in their country of origin*.”³⁷⁰

Thus, the RPF invasion was also an armed repatriation of Banyarwanda refugees from Uganda into Rwanda as they returned to regain their rights as Rwandans in their country of origin. The dynamics that led to the split in the NRA leadership between the Banyarwanda and Ugandans, which led to the 1990 invasion, was also born of the dilemma of the NRM once it captured state power. As Mamdani writes, it was also “a crisis that the NRA leadership, both those who stayed within Uganda and those who crossed the border into Rwanda with the RPF, tried to turn into an opportunity. It was a gamble whose cost would be difficult to tell, even with hindsight.”³⁷¹

³⁶⁹ RPA commander cited in Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 174.

³⁷⁰ Letter to Human Rights Watch from the Ugandan Ambassador to the United States, Katenta-Apuli cited in Human Rights Watch Arms Project, “Arming Rwanda: The Arms Trade and Human Rights Abuses in the Rwandan War,” *Human Rights Watch*, 6, 1 (1994).

³⁷¹ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 184.

However, this is only part of the story. Jones's argument, a view confirmed by United States intelligence sources, was that Museveni at least passively supported the RPF invasion. For Jones, Museveni "facilitated the armed repatriation of the Rwandan refugees, both to repay the support of the RPF leadership and to solve an internal Ugandan problem."³⁷² And the timing of the invasion was propitious – 1990 Rwanda was undergoing a process of rapid economic, social and political decay that was substantially weakening the position of the ruling oligarchy, the 'Akazu'.

4.2. International Pressure: The RPF Campaign

4.2.1. The October 1990 Invasion

As Bruce Jones writes, "if the timing of the war was propitious, it was not entirely accidental."³⁷³ For the timing of the invasion, according to Paul Kagame, came from the failure of diplomatic efforts to resolve the question of the rights of refugees to return to Rwanda.³⁷⁴ The tense political climate in Rwanda and disarray within the senior circles of Habyarimana's regime were brought to the attention of the RPF by the defection of Pasteur Bizimungu³⁷⁵, a senior civil servant, and the friendship of the wealthy Tutsi businessman, Valens Kajeguhakwa.³⁷⁶ Both these influential men told the same story: "the Rwandese political system was on the verge of collapse and any strong push from outside would complete the process."³⁷⁷ Moreover, the fact that Habyarimana could no longer delay pressure from French president Francois Mitterrand to embark on a political reform program towards a multiparty system, had the potential to deprive the RPF of one of its best public relations points i.e. that it was fighting a totalitarian single-party dictatorship. They had to act fast.³⁷⁸

The October 1990 RPF invasion occurred at the Uganda-Rwanda border crossing of Kagitumba. Led by the charismatic Major-General Fred Rwigyema, about 2,000 soldiers of the RPA fought south from Kagitumba along the Gabiro Highway, "winning a series of rapid victories against their government-force opponent", the Forces Armées Rwandaise (FAR) which was caught by

³⁷² Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 24.

³⁷³ *Ibid.*, 28.

³⁷⁴ Otunnu, "An Historical Analysis".

³⁷⁵ Bizimungu would later become the president of Rwanda under the first RPF-led government.

³⁷⁶ Prunier, 90.

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

surprise and in disarray.³⁷⁹ Within days, the RPF was celebrating its victories “by consuming vast quantities of looted pink champagne.” However, they suffered a significant loss when the military leader, Fred Rwigyema, “took a bullet in the forehead on the first day of battle” under mysterious circumstances.³⁸⁰

The success of the RPF’s withdrawal from Uganda into Rwanda, without being noticed even by US Central Intelligence Agency’s (CIA) monitoring presence, stemmed from the fact that within the NRA “a parallel command structure, headed by Rwigyema, existed in the form of the Rwandan Patriotic Army – code named ‘*Inkotanyi*’, a Kinyarwanda word meaning tough fighters.”³⁸¹ As a clandestine structure within a military organization, the RPF “utilised the cell structure of the RPF in which few knew more than a handful of other members.” Moreover, because of the confusion between who was Ugandan or Rwandan, “members of the NRA recall awakening on the morning of 1 October, only to find that large numbers of their ranks, most of who were thought to have been Ugandans, had seemingly vanished overnight.”³⁸²

After the invasion, Habyarimana requested military support from Belgium and France. Belgium agreed but with limited troops, but France was more forthcoming with President Mitterrand intervening directly.³⁸³ Zairian president Mobutu sent 1,000 men from his paratroops division to fight in Rwanda.³⁸⁴ The Zairian and French troops were able to assist the FAR in turning the tables on the RPF. Successive ambushes, killing senior leaders of the RPF, Majors Banyingana and Bunyenyezi, handed the RPF its first loss in battle. Disorientated by the loss of troops and leadership, the RPF retreated and by November 1 had been pushed back into Uganda.³⁸⁵ However, this was only temporary.

³⁷⁹ Prunier, 94.

³⁸⁰ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 28-29. Also see Otunnu, *An Historical Analysis*, and Prunier on the various explanations put forward as to how and why Rwigyema died. Otunnu speaks of a power struggle in the senior echelons of the RPF that was about fundamental battle and political strategy that also apparently influenced the timing of the invasion and the ill preparedness of the RPF. Prunier, on the other hand, does not leave out the possibility that his death could have just been one of those casualties of war.

³⁸¹ Reed, “Exile, Reform”, 488. This was also the name of elite fighters in the ancient Rwandan monarchy, though whether the RPF new of this is unclear.

³⁸² *Ibid.*

³⁸³ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 30. This was in line with the 1975 defence agreement between France and Rwanda. French troops, however, have never officially confirmed that they engaged with the RPF but rather played a supporting role for the FAR i.e. freeing the FAR of its defensive tasks, and thereby enhancing their capacity to engage the RPF in the north.

³⁸⁴ However, these troops conducted themselves with extreme indiscipline, looting, harassing, and raping Rwandan civilians. Within a few weeks, Habyarimana was in an awkward position of having to ask Mobutu to recall his troops.

³⁸⁵ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*.

4.2.2. The Re-organisation of the RPF

In order to build morale and re-establish itself in the public eye, the RPF regrouped under new leadership provided by Kagame who was recalled from a training program at Fort Leavenworth in the US, to take over the reins of the RPF. After a brief period of regrouping in Uganda, “the RPF divided into two groups – a smaller force crossed south into Rwanda and hid in the forests and marshes of Akagera National Park, destabilizing the eastern part of the country.”³⁸⁶ Taking advantage of Uganda support, a larger force re-assembled in the volcanic mountains of the Virunga National Park along the northwestern border with Uganda, which provided natural protection for guerrilla fighters, as well as mountain gorillas.³⁸⁷ From the high vantage point of the Virunga Range, “Kagame’s RPF began a classic guerrilla campaign of hide-and-harass.”³⁸⁸ By mid-1991, the RPF had “limited the FAR’s offensive options and disrupted economic activity in the north, thereby straining government revenues.” Moreover, “a January attack on Ruhengeri succeeded in freeing sympathetic prisoners, capturing military hardware, and most important, making a strong psychological imprint on the country.”³⁸⁹

A Zaire-sponsored cease-fire agreement signed in N’Sele, near Kinshasa, on March 29 1991 had little effect on actual military operations, holding barely enough for the signatures to dry. After their raid on Ruhengeri, “the RPF fighters had withdrawn again and settled down to a typical guerrilla hit-and-run pattern of operations in the northern prefecture of Byumba.”³⁹⁰

The turning point came in November 1991 when, following the signing of a second ceasefire, the FAR unsuccessfully launched a major artillery attack on RPF positions. This proved to be a decisive psychological and military advantage for the RPF. Moving out from their positions in the mountains, “the RPF launched a series of attacks not only to disrupt FAR movements but also, for the first time, to hold territory.”³⁹¹ In the first months of 1992, the RPF “consolidated its position in the north” was imposing the reality of its presence in the prefecture of Byumba, the breadbasket of Rwanda. The “economic and financial impact on the Rwandan state of the

³⁸⁶ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 31.

³⁸⁷ By locating themselves in this region, the RPF effectively crushed the tourist industry, which had emerged as one of Rwanda’s principle foreign exchange earnings after the coffee crisis.

³⁸⁸ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 31.

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁰ Prunier, 135.

³⁹¹ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 32.

destabilisation of Byumba was perhaps more important than simple military loss. In June 1992, the Rwandan government agreed to the launch of comprehensive political negotiations to lead toward a peace settlement.³⁹²

4.2.3. The Consequences: Internal Displacement

Because of the NRA's successful guerrilla campaigns in Uganda's civil wars, the political education of the RPF veteran took place in the context of military victories, not losses.³⁹³ In Rwanda, the RPF maintained this tradition from a scattered 2,000 to a 15,000-strong and efficient force by the middle of 1991.³⁹⁴ By the end of 1991, the RPF had taken control of "a strip of territory along the Ugandan border stretching some 32 kilometres into Rwanda."³⁹⁵

The RPF, however, entered a period in which every military victory brought a bitter lesson about the political realities of Rwanda. The RPF consistently "failed to translate military victory on the field into political gains within the population." Every time the RPF advanced and captured new territory, "the population fled."³⁹⁶ Contrary to the expectations of the RPF, "local Hutu peasants showed no enthusiasm for being 'liberated' by them [and] ran away from the area of guerrilla operations."³⁹⁷ "The RPF's conventional guerrilla strategy", wrote Cyrus Reed, "was accompanied by the large-scale flight of the peasantry rather than their politicisation."³⁹⁸

Thus, with every RPF advance, the number of internally displaced people multiplied. From the 1990, October invasion to the 1992 Byumba offensive, the numbers of internally displaced grew from 80,000 to 350,000.³⁹⁹ Following the massive February 1993 offensive, when the RPF doubled the size of territory under its control, "the numbers of the displaced swelled to 950,000 and 1,000,000." At the peak of the war "when the rebels entered Gitarama in June 1994, the town emptied, as if on cue."⁴⁰⁰ Gerard Prunier, after the brutal 'February War' of 1993 visited RPF-held areas and found them 'eerily empty of life':

³⁹² Ibid.

³⁹³ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 186.

³⁹⁴ Ibid.

³⁹⁵ Ibid.

³⁹⁶ Ibid.

³⁹⁷ Prunier, 135-136.

³⁹⁸ Reed, "Exile, Reform", 491.

³⁹⁹ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 187.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid.

“RPF soldiers had not looted anything and houses could be seen with chairs still set around a table and mouldy food on the plates where people had fled so hurriedly as not to eat their last meal. The RPF admitted that only 1,800 Hutu peasants were left in an area, which had had a population of about 800,000 before the war. The killings in Ruhengeri which were not immediately known were not the motive for this exodus.”⁴⁰¹

Mamdani cites the Ugandan veteran journalist, Charles Onyango-Obbo in his description of RPF held areas during the war:

“In RPF-controlled areas of Rwanda, there is an eerie calm. The rebels have asked all the civilians to leave, because they don’t want the responsibility of caring for them and fear infiltrators. Privately, some officers say they hope that as the number of displaced people swells, pressure will grow on Habyarimana to reach a settlement in the war.”⁴⁰²

The RPF-Peasantry Relations: Mutual Distrust

Therefore, peasants fled as the RPF approached and the RPF in turn began to ask peasants to leave. With the civil war, the general attitude of peasants shifted dramatically and brought to life memories long since buried under the weight of daily considerations. Catherine and David Newbury, in conversations with internally displaced Hutu peasants in Rwanda, demonstrate this shift in peasant attitudes:

“Time and again conversations in the refugee camps returned to focus intensely on the monarchical regime before independence and the 1959 Revolution. The RPF was seen by many as the re-incarnation of the pre-Revolutionary power structure.”⁴⁰³

The refugee camps produced by the RPF military victories became breeding grounds for the social construction and reconstruction of the past as people tried to make sense of the RPF’s intentions.⁴⁰⁴ Given the extraordinary socio-political similarities between Hutu and Tutsi in Rwanda and Burundi, Liisa Malkki’s fascinating study of the Burundi Hutu refugee community in Tanzania is useful as a framework of understanding the dynamics of Hutu refugee camps

⁴⁰¹ Prunier, 175.

⁴⁰² Cited in Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 187.

⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*, 188.

⁴⁰⁴ Obi Igwara, “Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Genocide in Rwanda,” in *Ethnic Hatred: Genocide in Rwanda*, ed. Obi Igwara (London: ASEN Publications, 1995).

during the Rwandan civil war. She shows how, through a process she calls 'mythico-historical' production, memories of martyrdom emerged as central features of Hutu identity formation and solidarity:

"The most unusual and prominent social fact about the camp was that its inhabitants were continually engaged in an impassioned construction and reconstruction of their history as 'a people'. The narrative production of this history ranged from descriptions of the 'autochthonous' origins of Burundi as a 'nation' and of the primordial social harmony that prevailed among the original inhabitants (the Twa and Hutu), to the coming of the pastoral Tutsi 'foreigners from the north' to the Tutsi theft of power from the 'natives' (Hutu and Twa) by ruse and trickery, and finally, to the culminating mass killings of Hutu by Tutsi in 1972. These narratives, ubiquitous in the camp, formed an overarching historical trajectory that was fundamentally also a national story about the 'rightful natives' of Burundi. The camp refugees saw themselves as a nation in exile, and defined exile, in turn, as a moral trajectory of trials and tribulations that would ultimately empower them to reclaim (or create anew) the 'homeland' in Burundi... Never intended as such by architects, the camp had become the most central place from which to imagine a 'pure' Hutu national identity."⁴⁰⁵

Thus, the colonial origins of the Hutu and Tutsi conflict were recalled in the memories of Rwandans as they questioned the intentions of the RPF and their links with the monarchical elite of the 1950s. The fear of the return to the conditions of the late 1950s, under a well-remembered dynasty and army, was real enough in the eyes of many Rwandans to flee when the RPF approached. They would rather prolong the agony of life in squalid refugee camps. Imagined or real, the fear was that history would repeat itself.⁴⁰⁶ Therefore, as the civil war progressed, "memories that would have seemed esoteric in the hey-day of the second post-revolutionary republic, fitting material for intellectual reflection but no guide to day-to-day endeavours", came alive.⁴⁰⁷

As for the RPF, they certainly did not foresee the catalytic effect of the invasion on Hutu solidarities, and the subsequent growing determination of hard-liners within the regime to manipulate the sufferings of Hutu peasants for political advantage.⁴⁰⁸ The perceptions that the

⁴⁰⁵ Liisa Malkki, *Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory and National Cosmology Among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1995), 3.

⁴⁰⁶ Johan Pottier, "Representations of Ethnicity in Post-Genocide Writings on Rwanda," in *Ethnic Hatred: Genocide in Rwanda*, ed. Obi Igwara (London: ASEN Publications, 1995).

⁴⁰⁷ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 188.

⁴⁰⁸ René Lemarchand, "Rwanda: The Rationality of Genocide," in *Ethnic Hatred: Genocide in Rwanda*, ed. Obi Igwara (London: ASEN Publications, 1995), 61.

RPF had of themselves as liberators turned out to be tragically out of sync with the image of that a great many Hutu had of their would be 'liberators'.⁴⁰⁹ The RPF too changed: "from recognising that peasants distrusted them to a distrust of peasants, a sort of mutual distrust, was but a short step."⁴¹⁰ From the "initial expectation of a relationship of political tutelage that was meant to translate shared interests into shared perspectives, RPF cadres had to come to grips with a relationship in which the role of coercion seemed to increase in direct proportion to military success."⁴¹¹ The RPF's military victories and territorial advancement was eventually accompanied not only by displacements but also forced removals, kidnappings, pillage, terror and even killings as the mutual distrust increased with RPF advancements. In February 1992, Africa Watch in Rwanda reported these incidences:

"Since the start of the war the RPF had killed 707 non-combatant civilians in Byumba prefecture... and 131 in Ruhengeri prefecture... On December 1, 1999 they attacked a camp sheltering 6,000 displaced people at Rwebare. On December 9, 1991, a small RPF commando attacked the secondary school at Rushaki where some 600 displaced persons had taken refuge. The next day another group of rebels shot and killed 25 civilians, mostly women and children...."

The report also mentions incidences of terror against the peasant population:

"RPF soldiers have kidnapped dozens of civilians, forcing many of them to carry pillaged goods or to serve the RPF in other ways. One woman told Africa Watch that she had seen the RPF kidnap her thirteen-year old son. Another victim commented that it was useless to try to reason with the rebels because 'they kill you if you don't go away with them'."⁴¹²

The Human Rights Watch Arms Project of January 1994, also reported the human rights violations committed by the RPF cadres in their war campaign and the effects on the civilian local population:

"The RPF forcibly moved hundreds, perhaps thousands, of civilians from their homes, pillaged and destroyed their property, and recruited boys and men against their will to serve the RPF as porters and cattle herders... In the wake of the RPF's February 1993 offensive, the RPF extra judicially executed at least 100 civilians in and near Ruhengeri in northwestern Rwanda. Independent Rwandan human rights

⁴⁰⁹ Lemarchand, "Rwanda", 61

⁴¹⁰ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 188.

⁴¹¹ Ibid.

⁴¹² Africa Watch, "Rwanda: Talking Peace and Waging War," *Human Rights Watch*, 4, 3 (1992): 22.

groups saw the bodies of several victims and collected testimony of dozens or survivors. Local clergy from Catholic parishes in Gahanga and other communities near Ruhengeri estimate that up to 200 civilians were extra judicially executed by the RPF in their areas alone.”⁴¹³

Other reports also spoke about the conditions of the refugee camps within Rwanda, where the internally displaced people were crowded into squalid camps where sanitary conditions were deplorable with inadequate medical attention. Moreover, since the displaced were farmers or herders, they were removed from the land that sustained them and unable to produce anything or to help the economy as a whole.⁴¹⁴ As one report said: “*They lead a precarious and miserable existence.*”⁴¹⁵

Thus, “the reality of the guerrilla struggle in Rwanda turned out to be dramatically different from that in Uganda.”⁴¹⁶ In Rwanda, there were no ‘liberated’ zones; only ghost villages where peasants had hurriedly ran away from the approaching rebels, and “no effort to reach out to mobilize peasants politically.”⁴¹⁷ The RPF continued to avoid establishing administrative structures in the territory they conquered. Rather, they sought to “increase the political and financial costs of the war for the Habyarimana regime by displacing the local population and halting production. Between 1991 and 1992, such policies resulted in the flight of hundreds of thousands of civilians into camps near Kigali.”⁴¹⁸

The financial implications of this campaign were tremendous. It robbed the fields of a labour force generally responsible for producing the bulk of Rwanda’s cash crops at the very time that military expenditure and the costs of caring for displaced people increased dramatically.⁴¹⁹ Moreover, “with the war located in the north, Rwanda’s least expensive routes to the sea were blocked.”⁴²⁰ Thus, if there was anything in the relationship between the Hutu peasantry and the RPF, there to ‘liberate’ them, there was mutual distrust. The peasants who were predominantly Hutu showed no enthusiasm of being liberated. Subsequently, the object of this kind of liberation was “no longer the local population, but the territory”. Thus, liberation turned out to be a

⁴¹³ Human Rights Watch Arms Project, 13.

⁴¹⁴ Africa Watch, “Beyond the Rhetoric: Continuing Human Rights Abuses in Rwanda,” *Human Rights Watch*, 5, 7 (1993).

⁴¹⁵ Africa Watch, “Rwanda: Talking Peace and Waging War”, 23.

⁴¹⁶ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 188.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid.

⁴¹⁸ Reed, “The Rwandan Patriotic Front”, 50.

⁴¹⁹ Reed, “Exile, Reform”, 491.

⁴²⁰ Ibid.

combination of “occupation and displacement: occupation of the land and displacement of the population.”⁴²¹

4.3. Internal Reform and Terror: The Government Response

4.3.1. The Context: Democratisation

The RPF invasion acted as a violent catalyst on an internal political situation on the verge of transformation. As in many other African countries in the late 1980s, swept by the winds of political liberalisation, various sectors of Rwandan society began to voice demands for political reform.⁴²² Various elite groups began to demand a national conference like those held in Benin and Zaire.

The decisive factor that pushed the Rwandan regime towards the path of democratisation occurred when President Habyarimana attended the Franco-African summit at La Baule in June. Known as the ‘La Baule Speech’, President Mitterrand, keen on linking economic aid with political democratisation in Africa, “advised Habyarimana”, including leaders of francophone countries, “to introduce a multiparty system in Rwanda.”⁴²³ The advice was quickly followed and in July 1990 Habyarimana, who previously had always stringently enforced the MRND political monopoly, suddenly declared his support for the multiparty system. In September, he appointed a commission to draft a national charter for the country’s political future. It was just as these changes were promising greater participation in the political system when the RPF attacked Rwanda.

In announcing the national commission on political reform, Habyarimana had anticipated a two-year period of study before it would submit the report. However, mounting internal opposition calling for further political liberalisation, forced the national legislature on June 1991 to adopt a new constitution that would establish an office of Prime Minister. More importantly, multiparty politics was legalised, putting an end to the era of the one-party state. The ink had not even dried when new political parties sprang up. Two of the emerging parties are of particular significance:

⁴²¹ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 189.

⁴²² Timothy Longman, “Rwanda: Chaos from Above,” in *The African State at a Critical Juncture: Between Disintegration and Reconfiguration*, ed. L.A Villalon and P.A Huxtable (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), 80.

⁴²³ Prunier, 89-90.

the *Mouvement Démocratique Républicain* (MDR) and the *Coalition pour la Défense de la République* (CDR).

The MDR constituted the chief threat to both the MRND and the Akazu that controlled it. For the MDR was a “reformed version of the old PARMEHUTU.”⁴²⁴ In re-establishing the old ‘revolutionary political networks’, the MDR stressed both its affiliation to the same old PARMEHUTU-strong central region of Gitarama, and its opposition to the northwestern ruling oligarchy of the Habyarimana regime. Two additional parties emerged: the Parti Social-Démocrate (PSD), a centre-left party that was both Hutu and Tutsi, and the Parti Libéral (PL), and a centre-right party that also attracted both Hutu and Tutsi eventually rivalled the MDR. A Christian democratic party, *Parti Démocrate-Chrétien* (PDC) also emerged.

With the organisation of parties, the opposition had political structures to mobilise protests against an MNRD establishment stubbornly run by a clan-based oligarchy bent on keeping its money and maintaining its political power. Their first goal was to force Habyarimana to accept a coalition government that would give them a chance to share political power. After opposition parties mounted massive demonstrations in early 1992 in which 50,000 people took to the streets, Habyarimana was obliged to begin talks with them.

It is within these negotiations that a group of radical Hutu extremist in the Akazu announced the establishment of a new party, the CDR. The CDR was a radical Hutu extremist party, working on the right of the MNRD, and goading it and the regime for their supposed ‘softness’ towards the RPF and its democratic ‘accomplices’ i.e. the opposition.⁴²⁵ The CDR asserted that “no party, no institution, no person had been able to defend the interests of the majority [i.e. Hutu] publicly and consistently”, and so they must take their fate, as Hutu, in their own hands.⁴²⁶

African Rights views the formation of CDR as central to the growth, politicisation and radicalisation of the ideology ‘Hutu extremism’, a political phenomenon and philosophy that is not only racist, but also positively genocidal.⁴²⁷ Hutu extremism has its deepest roots in the northwestern region of Gisenyi, and in particular, in the Akazu. According to African Rights, “the

⁴²⁴ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 154.

⁴²⁵ Prunier, 128.

⁴²⁶ Alison Des Forges, *‘Leave none to tell the story’: Genocide in Rwanda* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1999), 53.

fears of the Akazu were reinforced with the formation of the MDR, and the threat of a southern [i.e. Gitarama] resurgence.” Hutu extremism “was in part a strategy to outflank the MDR, and in part an attempt to deny the reality of the north-south divide by stressing Hutu solidarity.”⁴²⁸ The CDR was the political institutionalisation of Hutu extremism as the CDR broke away from the MRND with Habyarimana’s blessing. It was a political strategy to counter the RPF threat and the democratisation threat. Thus, “the *raison d’être* of the CDR was political extremism and, whatever Habyarimana’s intentions, this developed a momentum of its own.”⁴²⁹

Prunier writes that the organisation’s leaders were on the “lunatic fringes of radical Hutu extremism but were far from being without talent or intelligence.”⁴³⁰ From the political circles of the CDR, journalists of *Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines* (RTLMC), the infamous radio station that played a firebrand role during the time of the genocide, were recruited. Moreover, Hassan Ngeze, a prominent CDR member, ran *Kangura* (‘wake him up’) the Hutu extremist Kinyarwanda paper.⁴³¹

It was after the formation of the CDR and negotiations with opposition, when Habyarimana agreed to incorporate the major opposition parties into a new cabinet, which took office in April 1992. In the new coalition government, Habyarimana remained president of the Republic. The MNRD retained nine of the nineteen cabinet posts including the important ministries of interior and defence. The MDR had the posts of Prime Minister, foreign affairs and two other ministries, and the PL, PSD each had three seats, and PDC had one.⁴³²

Thus, the political space once dominated by a regional clan-based ruling oligarchy in a one-party state began to fragment, eroding the political power of the Akazu. Entering the former single party political arena were three additional political competitors. The RPF, representing one extreme, was predominantly Tutsi and comprised of descendants of the ‘counter-revolutionaries’ of 1959. The MDR was Hutu and a reformed ‘moderate’ version of the revolutionary vanguards, and the PSD and PL were ‘moderate’ Hutu and Tutsi. In response to this, the CDR entered the political arena to the right of the MRND occupying the other extreme. Thus, the RPF and

⁴²⁷ African Rights, *Rwanda: Death, Despair, and Defiance* (London: African Rights, 1995), 37. Hutu extremism is also known as ‘Hutu Power’.

⁴²⁸ African Rights, 37.

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴³⁰ Prunier, 129.

⁴³¹ *Ibid.*

⁴³² Prunier, 145.

CDR/MRND occupied the two political extremes and the MDR, PSD and PL competing in the political centre. The main issue of contention between the opposition parties was on how to confront the all-powerful RPF, whether by war or by peace process.

4.3.2. The Terror: Propaganda and Repression

The RPF invasion offered Habyarimana, in a rapidly changing political environment, the opportunity to rebuild his power base by rallying Rwandans against the enemy.⁴³³ In responding to the news of the invasion, most people, including Hutu and Tutsi opponents of the regime, came to the support of the government. However, for Habyarimana, the attack posed a risk as well as an opportunity: "it might embolden the opposition within the country and even lead to its alliance with the enemy." Rather than rely on a spontaneous coalescing of support from all sides, Habyarimana decided to pursue a more forceful strategy of terror, to sacrifice the Tutsi in hopes of uniting all Hutu behind him. The initial government response was three-fold: waging propaganda war; massive arbitrary arrests and detention of Tutsi; and the initiation of state-sponsored violence against the Tutsi.

The Propaganda War

When the RPF invaded Rwanda, the Rwandan government responded with more than a military defence – it launched a massive propaganda war against the RPF in an attempt to discredit and exaggerate the military threat that they represented. Since the 1973 coup, the Ministry of Information was under the control of the *Office Rwandais d'Information* (ORINFOR), which controlled all government media and was directly responsible to the president's office.⁴³⁴

Despite the RPF's skilful presentation of the reasons of the attack, and the acceptance of their position by a large section of the international media, that was not the case in Rwanda.⁴³⁵ Within Rwanda, the government's interpretation of the invasion overwhelmingly prevailed. The government's constant theme was that the 1959 'Social Revolution' was unfinished as "*the Tutsi were 'allowed to escape' abroad and their children are now returning.*" Thus, as the militias went to kill, they were encouraged to kill the young children too on the grounds that "*today's*

⁴³³ Des Forges, 49.

⁴³⁴ Linda Kirschke, *Broadcasting Genocide: Censorship, Propaganda, and State-Sponsored Violence in Rwanda 1990-1994* (London: Article 19, 1996)

⁴³⁵ Kirschke, 24-25.

*RPF fighters were yesterdays refugee children.*⁴³⁶ There was a constant determination of not letting the Hutu population ever forget that Hutus had suffered and that *all* Tutsi were equally guilty, even the poor who had not benefited from decades of Tutsi domination. Subsequently, the RPF was labelled 'Inyenzi' and accused of trying to re-establish the Tutsi monarchy in order to oppress the Hutu majority. Then Foreign Minister Casimir Bizimungu warned:

"This terrorist organisation has its only aim the establishment of a minority [Tutsi] regime embodying feudalism with a modern outlook. The Rwandan people will not agree to reverse history, leading the nation's dynamic forces back to feudal drudgery and enslavement."⁴³⁷

The authorities identified the RPF with the Tutsi leaders of the colonial era and associated them with the repressive Rwandan past precisely because their political history has its origins in the diaspora of the 1959-1961 'Social Revolution'. Simultaneously, the Rwandan government accused Tutsi civilians from the interior of supporting the RPF by virtue of their ethnicity. The UN Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions, Bacre Waly Ndiaye, confirmed this:

"The result of this attack and of a policy of deliberately-targeted government propaganda was that all the Tutsi inside the country were collectively labelled accomplices of the RPF."⁴³⁸

Two medias were crucial to this task: radio and print. With regard to print media, one of the most virulent voices of hate, the newspaper *Kangura*, began spewing forth attacks on the RPF and Tutsi immediately after the October 1990 invasion. Because of its intimate links with the CDR, the Akazu, and senior members of the security services, such as Colonel Anatole Nsengiyumva (the Gisenyi military commander), and the president's wife and Akazu leader, Agathe Habyarimana, *Kangura* was well informed.⁴³⁹ As such, the political predictions of *Kangura* often proved right, "giving the paper authority and credibility as a guide to the thinking of the hard-line politicians, including the president."⁴⁴⁰ With the formation of CDR, *Kangura* became its chief mouthpiece.

⁴³⁶ Cited in African Rights, 39.

⁴³⁷ Foreign Minister Casimir Bizimungu cited in Kirschke, 25.

⁴³⁸ UN Rapporteur Bacre Waly Ndiaye cited in Kirschke, 25.

⁴³⁹ Melvern, 39-51; African Rights, 70-71.

⁴⁴⁰ African Rights, 71.

In urging its readers to discriminate against the Tutsi and Hutu 'moderates', Kangura engaged in incitement to hatred. This was presented at its crudest in the form of the '10 Hutu Commandments', which mimic the Ten Commandments of the bible, well known throughout this predominantly Christian country. These 'Commandments', published in December 1990, were instructions to mistreat and discriminate against Tutsi. They justified these measures by claiming, "all Tutsi were dangerous and aimed to exterminate Hutu, suggesting that they must be dealt with before they could strike."⁴⁴¹ For example, the last three Commandments read:

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

9. The Bahutu, wherever they are, must have unity and solidarity, and be concerned with the fate of their Hutu brothers:

- The Bahutu inside and outside Rwanda must constantly look for friends and allies of the Bahutu cause, starting with their Bahutu brothers;
- They must constantly counteract Tutsi propaganda;
- The Bahutu must be firm and vigilant against their common Tutsi enemy.

10. The Social Revolution of 1959, the Referendum of 1961, and the Hutu Ideology must be taught to every Muhutu at every level. Every Hutu must spread this ideology widely. Any Muhutu who persecutes his brother Muhutu for having read, spread and taught this ideology is a traitor.⁴⁴²

The '10 Commandments' were presented as a "response to an earlier article published in Kangura, entitled the *Plan de colonisation Tutsi* (Tutsi Colonisation Plan).⁴⁴³ This was a fictitious account about how the Tutsi were planning to colonise the entire region of Central Africa and enslave the Hutu. Kangura's message echoed the official government propaganda about the RPF:

"Since the Social Revolution of 1959, the Tutsi have never relinquished their plan to take over the country, to exterminate the intellectuals and to dominate the Hutu farmers."⁴⁴⁴

⁴⁴¹ Kirschke, 67.

⁴⁴² The Hutu Ten Commandments cited in African Rights, 43.

⁴⁴³ Liisa Malkki provides a fascinating analysis on the persistence, amongst the Hutu political diaspora in Montreal, of the ideological prediction of a 'Tutsi Dynasty and the extinction of the Hutu'. According to Malkki, many Hutu she interviewed in Montreal were convinced that the Tutsi in the Great Lakes Region, through the RPF and Uganda, were strengthening their regional alliance with a view of taking over the whole Great Lakes Region, making a Tutsi empire, and ultimately exterminating the majority Hutu population. For more see Liisa Malkki, *Envisioning African Futures: Dystopia and the Social Imagination of Political Disorder* (Unpublished, 1998), 5-8.

⁴⁴⁴ Cited in Kirschke, 67.

As for Radio, until 1992, Radio Rwanda was very much the voice of the government and the president and its message was thus relatively consistent with that of Kangura.

Massive Arrests of Tutsi

Because the government accused Tutsi civilians of supporting the RPF by virtue of their ethnicity, civilian and military authorities arrested and detained, without charge or trial, thousands of citizens suspected of sympathising or collaborating with the rebels. The propaganda war soon escalated beyond rhetoric. During the night of 4-5 October 1990, "the Rwandan authorities simulated what they claimed was an RPA attack on Kigali, by using FAR who fired guns within the capital from 1:00am until 7:00am." This was as a 'fake attack' to heighten fears about the RPF and the war itself, "suggesting that hostilities had quickly spread from Uganda and into the capital."⁴⁴⁵

The staged incursions served as a pretext for the authorities to begin massive arrests of Tutsi and government critics, whom they categorically accused of working with the RPF. Arrests occurred throughout the country although mostly in and around Kigali. Africa Watch claims that roughly 75 percent of those arrested were Tutsi, including many Tutsi community leaders and others who 'supposedly' had relations with the rebels.⁴⁴⁶ They estimate the number of arrests to be around 10,000, although the government by mid-April 1991 acknowledged that it had arrested 8,047 persons and 48 had remained in detention.⁴⁴⁷ In a speech on October 15, 1990, President Habyarimana explained why so many Tutsi were arrested stating that the Minister of Justice, Théoneste Mujyanama:

"Has decided that these [Tutsi] are accomplices. In order to prepare an attack of such scale, there needed to be people who could be trusted. Rwandans of the same ethnic group were the obvious choice."⁴⁴⁸

President Habyarimana also used the fake attack as a pretext to call upon civilians to participate in the defence of the nation, claiming that rebels were disguised as civilians.⁴⁴⁹ Prefects also urged Habyarimana "to vigorously destroy the manoeuvres of the enemy, both the 'Inyenzi' terrorists and those of the opposition that has developed inside the country." They advised him to

⁴⁴⁵ Kirschke, 25-26; Des Forges, 49.

⁴⁴⁶ Africa Watch, "Rwanda: Talking Peace and Waging War," *Human Rights Watch*, 4, 3 (1992): 7.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁴⁴⁸ President Habyarimana cited in Kirschke, 26.

“fight openly against what could be called the ‘Kanyarengwe effect’, which poses a threat to the necessary solidarity of the Bahutu.”⁴⁵⁰

State-Sponsored Violence

In the context of civil war, political competition and virulent propaganda, it was a matter of time before local civil servants began directly instigating and organising several massacres of Tutsi civilians. Clearly distinct from the fighting at the battlefield, state-sponsored violence was incited, and directed, by Rwandan authorities. The authorities repeatedly invoked the civil war as a pretext to massacre civilians. Each massacre was “carefully timed and deliberately organised to follow a turning point, either in the civil war or in the subsequent negotiations.”⁴⁵¹ Three major massacres occurred before the official beginning of the Arusha peace process.

The first massacre took place in the weeks immediately following the October invasion, when an estimated 300 Tutsi were massacred in cold blood in Kibilira.⁴⁵² According to testimony gathered, the violence that began in Kibilira followed a meeting of communal councillors, in which the authorities produced two dead bodies, claiming they were Hutu killed by Tutsi.⁴⁵³ The authorities then ordered the councillors to ‘sensitise the population’ and then set fire to the houses of Tutsi in the region claiming that the ‘Inyenzi’ had planned to exterminate all Hutu.⁴⁵⁴

The second massacre started in Bugogwe against the Bagogwe, a sub-group of the Tutsi who live in north-west Rwanda, and was a direct response to the January 1991 RPF raid on the town of Ruhengeri.⁴⁵⁵ In late January through to February 1991, “police, military, civilian officials and ordinary people launched a series of assaults that left more than 300 Bagogwe dead and many others injured.”⁴⁵⁶ The third massacre at Bugesera in March 1992 was of a different type. It was not retaliation but an offensive with hundreds killed. The killings this time was prepared for in

⁴⁴⁹ Kirschke, 27.

⁴⁵⁰ Des Forges, 51. Colonel Kanyarengwe was an important military officer who had fled Rwanda in 1980 after accusations that he was plotting against Habyarimana. He had subsequently joined the RPF and became a senior member. Because he was a Hutu from northern Rwanda, his participation in the RPF exemplified the dreaded union of dissatisfied Hutu and the RPF.

⁴⁵¹ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 192.

⁴⁵² Africa Watch, “Rwanda: Talking Peace and Waging War”, 12.

⁴⁵³ Africa Watch, “Beyond the Rhetoric: Continuing Human Rights Abuses in Rwanda”, *Human Rights Watch*, 5, 7 (1993): 7.

⁴⁵⁴ Kirschke, 33.

⁴⁵⁵ Prunier, 136.

⁴⁵⁶ Africa Watch, “Rwanda: Talking Peace and Waging War”, 12.

advance: “the civilian Hutu population was urged and organised to defend itself against an expected massacre by the RPF and its civilian collaborators.” An international commission of inquiry that visited Rwanda found evidence that “these deaths were carried out by death squads directed by the security services in the office of the president.”⁴⁵⁷

Mamdani and Prunier identify important features of how the civil war pogroms were organised. While initiated from the centre, “every massacre was executed locally.” Just as the local state apparatus organised the flight of the Tutsi during the pogroms of 1963-64, redistributed the property, “local authorities also organised the massacres that followed the RPF invasion.”⁴⁵⁸ A pattern soon could be discerned. Prefects and burgomasters “organised Hutu militants who identified and targeted Tutsi ‘collaborators’, took over the land of those who were killed or fled, and redistributed it to militants.” From the massacre at Kibilira in 1990, local officials were instructed to “kill Tutsi as part of their communal work obligation.” Killings of Tutsi were referred to as *umuganda* i.e. communal work, “chopping up men as ‘bush clearing’ and slaughtering women and children as ‘pulling out the roots of the bad weeds’.”⁴⁵⁹ Even the burying of the dead was required and called *umuganda*.⁴⁶⁰

In this context, two trends gathered – one accelerated the element of spontaneity, the other reinforced organisation. The spread of massacres gave free rein to forces of banditry and pillage. As banditry and pillage grew, so did random killings and while there were reports of the poor attacking the rich, “the killings remained directed in the main at those identified as the political enemy, not the class enemy.”⁴⁶¹ Thus, whereas the RPF resorted to the *displacement* of Hutu peasants to pressure the regime, the government of Rwanda “sought to achieve a similar objective through the periodic *massacres* and ‘racial cleansing’ of ordinary Tutsi citizens.” Therefore, the massacres, which had ceased in 1964, after the last ‘Inyenzi raid’, “came back to life as the RPF invasion once again brought self-appointed custodians of the Hutu Revolution face-to-face with the spectre of Tutsi power.”⁴⁶²

⁴⁵⁷ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 192.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁹ Prunier, 137-138 and 142; Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 194.

⁴⁶⁰ Human Rights Watch/Africa, “Rwanda: A New Catastrophe?” *Human Rights Watch*, 6, 12 (1994): 7.

⁴⁶¹ Human Rights Watch/Africa, “Genocide in Rwanda, April/May 1994,” *Human Rights Watch*, 6, 4 (1994): 7.

⁴⁶² Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 192.

4.3.3. The Military Response

Two important events occurred in December 1991. The first was the issuance of a press release by the high command of the Rwandan Army that declared “their support for democratisation and reaffirmed the neutrality of the military towards all political parties.” At the same time, they condemned newspapers that “*spread propaganda for the enemy*” and Rwandans who, “*knowingly or unknowingly, aided the enemy under the cover of political party activities.*” The underlying threat was explicit in the recommendation in one of the releases that the Central Information Service, an arm of the secret police, “*neutralise all collaborators identified with the enemy.*”⁴⁶³

On 4 December 1991, President Habyarimana set up a special military commission. This commission was presided by Colonel Théoneste Bagosora, the *directeur de cabinet* in the Ministry of Defence, and included Colonel Déogratias Nsabimana, the chief of staff, Lieutenant-Colonel Anatole Nsengiyumva, the intelligence chief, and Major Aloys Ntabakuze.⁴⁶⁴ The commission was given the task of finding an answer to the following question: “*What do we need to do in order to defeat the enemy militarily, in the media and politically?*”⁴⁶⁵

On September 12, 1992, Colonel Nsabimana, the chief of staff, sent an extract of the commission report to his commanders, for the first time defining ‘the enemy’. The extract came from the office of the chief of military intelligence (G2), Lt-Col Nsengiyumva.⁴⁶⁶ The report divided ‘the enemy’ into two categories: the principal enemy, and partisans of the enemy. The principal enemy was:

“*The Tutsi inside or outside the country who are nostalgic for power, who do not recognise and have never recognised the realities of the Social Revolution of 1959, and are seeking to regain power in Rwanda by any means, including taking up arms.*”⁴⁶⁷

The partisans of the enemy were defined as “*anyone providing any kind of assistance to the main enemy.*” Like the December 1991 press release, the document gave the ‘necessary nod’ towards democratisation stating that “*Political opponents who want power or the peaceful democratic*

⁴⁶³ Africa Watch, “Rwanda: Talking Peace and Waging War”, 20-21.

⁴⁶⁴ United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, *The Prosecutor against Théoneste Bagosora: Amended Indictment*, Case No. ICTR-96-7-1 (1996)

⁴⁶⁵ UNICTR, *The Prosecutor Against Theoneste Bagosora*, 13.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶⁷ UNICTR, *The Prosecutor Against Theoneste Bagosora*, 13; African Rights, 39; Des Forges, 62.

change of the regime of Rwanda are NOT to be confused with the ENI [enemy] or with partisans of ENI." The document further specified that the enemy was recruited from within certain social groups, notably "*the Tutsi inside the country, Hutus who are dissatisfied with the present regime, foreigners married to Tutsi women, the Nilo-Hamitic people of the region.*"⁴⁶⁸

Many of the themes of this document sent to soldiers on September 12 echo in a CDR tract issued the next day. In its 'Notice No.5', the CDR "warned of the dangers from enemies inside Rwanda, who were supposedly aiding the RPF." The CDR document, in demanding action, reveals the similarities in the statements of CDR radicals and the high military command:

"The CDR party calls upon the government and the president to deal with this problem. If it does not, the great mass [Hutu masses] cannot stand by and do nothing. An enemy is an enemy. Anyone who co-operates with the enemy is a traitor to Rwanda."⁴⁶⁹

Subsequently, the Rwandan army grew in size dramatically, from 5,000 to 30,000. The new recruits were poorly trained and ill disciplined. Africa Watch representatives reported daily abuses by the military, ranging from frequent harassment to murder.⁴⁷⁰ Many civilians arrested at the start of the war "were confined at military camps and the people detained were more seriously beaten than those taken directly to prison."⁴⁷¹ Moreover, the Rwandan army "slaughtered hundreds of civilians in the course of the military operations against the RPF." The army also "killed civilians in support of the attacks by Hutu civilian crowds against Tutsi [and] in a number of other cases, the army assassinated or summarily executed civilians singled out for murder by local authorities."⁴⁷²

FAR prepared by purchasing US\$6 million worth of arms from Egypt, a further US\$5.9 million worth of arms and ammunition from South Africa, and more from France and the United States.⁴⁷³ As new weapons were obtained from new external sources, the government was able to distribute hundreds of kalashnikov automatic rifles from existing stocks to civilian groups loyal to

⁴⁶⁸ Cited in UNICTR, *The Prosecutor Against Theoneste Bagosora*, 14 and Des Forges, 63.

⁴⁶⁹ Cited in Des Forges, 64.

⁴⁷⁰ Human Rights Watch Arms Project, "Arming Rwanda: The Arms Trade and Human Rights Abuses in the Rwandan War", *Human Rights Watch*, 6, 1 (1994).

⁴⁷¹ Africa Watch, "Rwanda: Talking Peace and Waging War", 17.

⁴⁷² Human Rights Watch Arms Project, "Arming Rwanda", 11.

⁴⁷³ *Ibid.*, 14-18.

the regime.⁴⁷⁴ In 1991, the Rwandan government began a program of arming civilians to create 'self-defence' forces. The Human Rights Watch Arms Project obtained a Rwandan government document marked 'SECRET' dated September 29, 1991, from Colonel Nsabimana to the Defence Minister. The document was a proposal to provide a gun for every administrative unit of ten households and to train civilians who would be able to handle the gun as part of 'self-defence'.⁴⁷⁵ It is these self-defence units, found in every commune and village that formed the civilian core of the machinery that carried out the mass killings.

The state initiative to create armed civil units for self-defence was different from the initiative of the ruling party and its allies in the CDR. The MRND and CDR initially organised youth wings, which increasingly engaged in violence against rival youth wings – such as the *Inkuba* of the MDR and the *Abakombozi* of the PSD.⁴⁷⁶ With connections to the armed forces, the youth wings of the MRND, the *Interahamwe* ('those who attack/work together'), and the CDR, the *Impuzamugambi* ('those with a single purpose'), rapidly transformed into armed militia, receiving training from regular soldiers.⁴⁷⁷ As the civil war expanded, they began taking paramilitary functions. Moreover, as the number of internally displaced people increased with every RPF advance, so the *Interahamwe* and the *Impuzamugambi* reached out to this constituent, incorporating them into the armed militia. An easily available anchor for frustrated unemployed youth in refugee camps, the militia began to proliferate throughout the country and "by early 1994, some 30,000 to 50,000 youth were estimated to belong to militias."⁴⁷⁸ From being active participants as youth wings in a political process that expanded as the democratic opening broadened, "they soon turned into perpetrators of the violence that began to consume that same political process."⁴⁷⁹

4.4. From Political Reform to State Crisis: The Peace Settlement

As previously discussed, the FAR, despite its enlarged army, had been unable to dislodge the RPF from their bases deep in the volcanic mountains of the Virunga. The turning point came in November 1991, immediately following the signing of a second cease-fire, when FAR launched

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid., 27.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid., Appendix C.

⁴⁷⁶ Des Forges, 55.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid., 56.

⁴⁷⁸ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 206.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid., 206-207.

unsuccessful artillery attacks on RPF positions.⁴⁸⁰ This prompted the RPF to launch a series of successful attacks that disrupted FAR movements and enabled the RPF to gain vast amounts of territory. In early 1992, the RPF “consolidated its position in the north, imposing the reality of its presence especially in the prefecture of Byumba, the bread-basket of Rwanda.” Given the enormous financial, economic and humanitarian impact of the war, the government of Rwanda agreed to the launch of comprehensive political negotiations to lead toward a peace settlement with the RPF.

4.4.1 Analysis of the Peace Settlement

The Arusha peace settlement suffered one classic dilemma of conflict management and political transition – whether to integrate or marginalize the hard-liners opposed to the resolution process. Having failed to resolve the role of the hard-line Hutu extremists, the Arusha Accords became one of the proximate causes of the genocide.⁴⁸¹ There were three phases in the Arusha peace process. The first phase was the pre-negotiation phase, the second was the negotiation phase occurring between June 1992 and August 1993, and the third was the implementation phase, disrupted by the genocide. In this context, this sub-section is concerned with three issues: the nature of the RPF and Rwandan government delegations; the process and content i.e. the transitional bargain and the victors deal; and the outcome of the process. In so doing, the major interruption of the peace process, the ‘February War of 1993’ will be discussed and its implications for the peace settlement.

The Delegations: The RPF and Rwandan Government

The most important teams at Arusha were the Rwandan government and the RPF. Important insights into the peace process can be gained by examining the differences between these delegations because their characters help explain the course and the outcome of the negotiations.

The first distinction is that the “RPF was extremely disciplined and effective” whereas the Rwandan government delegation “was divided, undisciplined, and ineffective” as a negotiating

⁴⁸⁰ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 31.

⁴⁸¹ Bruce Jones, “The Civil War, the Peace Process, and Genocide in Rwanda,” in *Civil Wars in Africa: Roots and Resolution*, eds. T.M Ali and R.O Mathews (London: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1999), 66.

team.⁴⁸² The reasons for this are very simple. Firstly, the RPF “had an enormous amount to gain from the Arusha talks and sent a strong team. The team included the general secretary of the RPF, Dr Théogène Rudasingwa, Pasteur Bizimungu, and Dr Patrick Mazimhaka, the vice chair of the RPF.” Of these, Rudasingwa was “the eyes and ears of Paul Kagame at the talks [and] Mazimhaka was the principal negotiator.”⁴⁸³ The chain of command, through Rudasingwa, back to the military and political leadership of the RPF, was clear and unitary, and the delegation was noted for its discipline and discretion, giving it a negotiating advantage over the other side.⁴⁸⁴

As for the government of Rwanda, the decision to launch the Arusha process was taken by a coalition government. This coalition had brought several major opposition parties into a power sharing agreement in Kigali. Therefore, at the peace process, several of these political parties represented the government. Therefore, within this team, separate chains of commands were at play and representatives were responding to separate centres of power each pursuing divergent interest. The Foreign Minister Ngulinzira and Labour Minister Ndasingwa, both MDR took their orders from the Prime Minister Dismas Nsengiyaremye, who was also, MDR. Ambassador Pierre-Claver Kanyarushoki, the Rwandan Ambassador to Uganda, was a close confidant of Habyarimana. Finally, Colonel Théoneste Bagosora represented the hard-line Bashiru Hutu elements in the FAR and CDR.⁴⁸⁵ The wide divisions were “reflected in a fractured negotiating team” that was unable to keep team positions secret. This weakened the government’s negotiating strength at Arusha.⁴⁸⁶

The second distinction is that the RPF gained important advantage over time because while it was serious about negotiations, it was also prepared to return to the battlefield if they did not achieve what they wanted in talks.⁴⁸⁷ Having spent their lives in exile and ten years in armed camps in the bush, first with the NRA and then with the RPA, “they could afford a few more years fighting more than they could afford to lose in the peace process.” This was in contrast to the government’s position. Two years of war had destroyed “an economy in deep retraction, domestic pressures for change were mounting, and international pressure for change, from Western donors and from international financial institutions, was equally intense.” Moreover, the government

⁴⁸² Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 72.

⁴⁸³ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁴ Jones, “Civil War, the Peace Process”, 67.

⁴⁸⁵ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 72. The MDR Foreign Minister is reported to have said that it was easier to negotiate with the RPF than with his own delegation.

⁴⁸⁶ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 72.

⁴⁸⁷ Jones, “Civil War, the Peace Process”, 67.

“was on its last legs and could ill afford a long, drawn-out process or a return to fighting.” Thus, “not only did the composition and capacity of the two teams reflect a power disparity, but their positions did as well.”⁴⁸⁸

This strength-weakness distinction is a crucial variable in understanding the agreements reached and their implications. The important elements of Arusha seem to have represented victories for the RPF rather than mutually accepted settlements. They thus represented defeats particularly for the hard-line elements in Kigali, who had the real power as they controlled the armed forces, and were in the CDR.

Process and Content: The Transition Bargains

The Arusha negotiations lasted thirteen months, from July 1992 to August 1994, and in that period stalled and recommenced several times, as the two sides reached agreement and then deadlock, and then agreement again on a series of items. On 4 August, the two sides signed the “Peace Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Rwanda and the Rwandese Patriotic Front,” commonly referred to as the Arusha Accords.⁴⁸⁹ It included five protocols. The first protocol on the ‘Rule of Law’ was signed 18 August 1992 and on ‘Power-Sharing within the Framework of a Broad-Based Transitional Government’ was in two parts agreed on 30 October 1992 and 9 January 1993. The Protocol on the ‘Repatriation of Rwandan Refugees and the Resettlement of Displaced Persons’ was signed on 9 June 1993 and on ‘Integration of Armed Forces of the Two Parties’ in 3 August 1993. Finally, the protocol on ‘Miscellaneous Issues and Final Provisions’ was signed on 3 August 1993.⁴⁹⁰ Two contradictory agreements are in these protocols: “a *transition bargain* between the regime and opposition and a *victor’s deal* for the RPF.”⁴⁹¹

The transition bargains are contained in the first three protocols and cover the political elements. The first part of the second protocol defined the political system of authority under a broad-based transitional government (BBTG). This was to be parliamentary in large measure rather than presidential, with the power residing in a Council of Ministers (on the insistence of the RPF)

⁴⁸⁸ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 73.

⁴⁸⁹ Jones, “Civil War, the Peace Process”, 68.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁹¹ Ibid.

rather than with the president and his advisors.⁴⁹² The second part of the protocol created the Transitional Assembly to replace the *Conseil National du Développement* (CND). This was to be a powerful institution, as there was a parliamentary relationship between the BBTG and the TNA.

The most contentious issue was on the composition of the transitional institutions: the TNA and BBTG. There were two crucial issues. Firstly, the RPF “objected to a government proposal that included the CDR in government.” The RPF argued that the CDR was in actual fact “an extremist wing of the government party,” more of a “political *organisation*” rather than a political *party* and as such was “ineligible for membership in the transitional institutions.”⁴⁹³ However, the government delegation, including the third parties (the Tanzanians, Americans and the French), insisted on the inclusion of the CDR. They argued that it was better to have the hard-liners in government where they could be controlled, rather than outside where they could wreak havoc. Putting in bluntly, the Americans advised that “it was better to have the extremists *on the inside of the tent, pissing out, than on the outside of the tent, pissing in.*”⁴⁹⁴ In the end, the RPF prevailed, and the CDR was excluded from the BBTG. The RPF and MRND were allocated the most seats (five portfolios each) with the RPF getting the vice-Prime Minister and interior minister and the MRND defence and the presidency.

The exclusion of the CDR from the transitional government became a central element and sticky issue of the accords, eventually haunting the negotiations. The issue inevitably resurfaced in the negotiations dealing with the allocation of seats in the TNA. Expectedly, the RPF and MRND got the most, eleven each, and one seat was allocated to each of two political ‘parties’ outside the coalition government, the PCD and CDR. The CDR announced that it had no intention of taking up the seat.⁴⁹⁵

Despite keeping the ‘old guard’ in government, the eventual exclusion of the CDR from power, as a central part in the broader marginalisation of the hard-line Bashiru Hutu elements in Kigali, “was interpreted by most governments as a turning point away from constructive negotiations

⁴⁹² Bruce Jones, “The Arusha Peace Process,” in *The Path of a Genocide: The Rwanda Crisis from Uganda to Zaire*, eds. H. Adelman and A. Suhrke (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1999), 138.

⁴⁹³ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 81.

⁴⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁵ Jones, “The Arusha Peace Process”, 140.

over an effective transitional bargain, [and] in favour of a victor's deal which reflected RPF views much more than it did a true compromise."⁴⁹⁶

The Violent Reaction

Within days of the signing of the power-sharing agreement, the MRND and CDR organised violent demonstrations against the proposed settlement. On 21 January 1993 "the MRND secretary general declared that signature or no signature, his party had rejected the agreement."⁴⁹⁷ That same day, mass killings of Tutsi engulfed the whole northwestern region of Rwanda. Groups of armed extremist militia men, Interahamwe and Impuzamugambi, acting on their own with the support of the local people and the collaboration of FAR elements, "went on a mass murder rampage, raping, pillaging and burning houses."⁴⁹⁸

Africa Watch writes that in the MRND and CDR strongholds, local officials and FAR "*have instigated local residents to attack their Tutsi neighbours.*" Moreover, assailants "broadened the target to include Hutu who were opposed to the MRND and CDR." In the days that followed, the Interahamwe and Impuzamugambi organised massacres of Tutsi in both the Gisenyi and Kibuye prefectures. They led crowds "numbering up to 2,000 each in attacking Tutsi in their homes and in churches and centres where they had taken refuge." In all, "they killed more than 300 Tutsi."⁴⁹⁹ Subsequently, the talks in Arusha were suspended and on 8 February, the RPF decided to break the cease-fire and in launching a major offensive, renewed the civil war.

4.4.2. The 'February War' of 1993

Launched from positions in northwestern Rwanda, the RPF offensive against FAR positions was immediately successful, causing FAR to withdraw in disarray. Over the course of two weeks of fighting, "the RPF won victory after victory, doubled the territory under its control, and eventually moved to within 23 km of Kigali."⁵⁰⁰ The offensive provoked further French intervention. Two waves of paratroopers totalling 600 new troops were sent to Kigali to shore up

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid., 141.

⁴⁹⁷ Prunier, 173.

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid., 174.

⁴⁹⁹ Africa Watch, "Beyond the Rhetoric", 5.

⁵⁰⁰ Jones, "Civil War, the Peace Process", 70.

FAR's defences.⁵⁰¹ On the day after the second contingent of paratrooper reinforcements arrived, and under intense diplomatic pressure to hold off from outright military victory, Colonel Kanyarengwe of the RPF halted the RPF offensive and proclaimed a multilateral cease-fire."⁵⁰²

The offensive had five crucial effects. Firstly, it revealed that the expansion of FAR had done little to enhance its effectiveness. Many of the thousands of additional soldiers recruited into FAR proved to have no stomach for serious fighting and thousands of troops deserted in the face of the RPF offensive.⁵⁰³ Secondly, the success of the offensive demonstrated and confirmed that the RPF held the upper hand militarily. Within two weeks of fighting, the RPF had doubled the amount of territory under its control. The impact of the balance of strength was so significant that the Rwandan government had to "ask France to send reinforcements to bolster the army."⁵⁰⁴ Separate analyses by the French and Tanzanian intelligence services came to the conclusion that were it not for the presence of French troops in Kigali, the RPF would have very easily brushed aside FAR and taken Kigali.⁵⁰⁵

Thirdly, despite the RPF demonstration of overwhelming field superiority, it had displaced close to 1,000,000 Rwandans from the Ruhengeri and Byumba prefectures, intensifying and exacerbating the humanitarian crisis.⁵⁰⁶ An international study estimates the number of internally displaced people to have reached 1,000,000.⁵⁰⁷ The implication was that it had a negative psychological and political effect on the Hutu population. Since the war had not only grown in scale but also got closer to Kigali, the whole country was on a war footing and "everyone had to contribute, at first to the war effort, then to the war itself." The hard-line military leaders decreed "the war was everywhere, since the Tutsi, the enemy, were everywhere." Moreover, as in any war, but particularly this one, "there could be no neutrality."⁵⁰⁸

Fourthly, the RPF's great successes in military terms had significantly disappointed the Hutu opposition parties. The MDR, PSD and PL, who had co-operated more or less successfully with

⁵⁰¹ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 33.

⁵⁰² Prunier, 177.

⁵⁰³ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 33.

⁵⁰⁴ Jones, "The Arusha Peace Process", 141.

⁵⁰⁵ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 33-34.

⁵⁰⁶ Consistent with the political dynamics of the war, where the RPF failed to translate military victory on the battlefield into political gains within the population, when the RPF captured these new areas and established military control, the population fled.

⁵⁰⁷ Sellstrom & Wohlgemuth, 43.

⁵⁰⁸ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 195.

the RPF since May 1992, “felt betrayed by the resumption of violence.” Some of their members “began to question if the RPF really wanted a negotiated peace or if it was determined to coin an outright victory and impose its own control, replacing one repressive regime with another.”⁵⁰⁹ Africa Watch published credible charges that the RPF had not only assassinated a significant amount of Rwandan government officials and their families, but also executed about “50 persons thought to be supporters of the MRND.” In addition, they had killed at least 200 civilians in the course of its advance.⁵¹⁰

Fifthly, after the RPF offensive, Habyarimana advocated a civilian-armed self-defence force. CDR political activist and advisor, Professor Ferdinand Nahimana, urged all the young people, especially those displaced by the RPF advance, to be militarily trained as part of the self-defence program. Moreover, he argued that the population should be provided with arms “that could be used in defence of the population.” In Kangura, he wrote:

“We must remark to the Inyenzi that if they do not change their attitude and if they preserve their arrogance, the majority people will establish a force composed of young Hutu. This force will be charged with breaking the resistance of the Tutsi young people [literally children]. We should stop fooling around.”⁵¹¹

In addition, in a press release dated 25 February 1993, the CDR “warned that the RPF were planning a genocide of Hutu throughout the country in their pursuit of a Hima-Tutsi empire.” It demanded that the government provide the people with the means necessary to defend themselves.⁵¹²

4.4.3. The Political Settlement: Victors Deal for the RPF

The French-Tanzanian intelligence perception that the RPF would have overrun FAR was it not for the presence of French troops evidently filtered to Habyarimana. Subsequently, he personally called for a return to the Arusha process on 23 February, signalling the final and decisive round of negotiations. There were two issues: refugees and security. The refugee issue was settled quickly as the ‘Dar-es-Salaam Declaration on the Rwandan Refugees Problem’ had laid the framework

⁵⁰⁹ Des Forges, 109-110.

⁵¹⁰ Africa Watch, “Beyond the Rhetoric”, 23-24.

⁵¹¹ Ferdinand Nahimana cited in Des Forges, 110-111.

⁵¹² Des Forges, 111.

for the agreement. The security issue was more complex and involved the formation of a neutral military force to oversee the implementation of the agreement, and the integration and composition of the armed forces and its army command structure. The neutral military force was easily solved.⁵¹³

The most difficult issue was the integration of the two armies into a single national army, and the percentage split of army command positions. The Rwandan government began the negotiations by suggesting a "15 percent share of command for the RPF to reflect the percentage of Tutsi in Rwanda." The RPF rejected this outright and came with a counter-offer, which was a 50-50 split that the government delegation rejected outright. Negotiations took the number to "25 percent, then 30 percent, then 35 percent and then finally reached 50 percent." An eventual agreement was brokered wherein the command level was to be split 50-50 and the forces to be drawn 60 percent from the government forces and 40 percent from the RPF forces.⁵¹⁴

When this tentative agreement was taken back to Kigali, Habyarimana summarily rejected it. An American participant observed that such a division in the armed forces "would never be accepted by hard-line factions in the army, and threatened to collapse the talks." However, when the issue returned to Arusha, the RPF not only stood its ground but it "upped the ante in anger over the government's renegeing on the agreement; the RPF called for a 60-40 split weighed to it." After intervention by the third parties, the two sides eventually agreed on the original 50-50 split, extending all the way to field command positions. This represented a big new victory for the RPF in terms of its capacity to control the merged security forces.⁵¹⁵

On 4 August 1993, the RPF was winning the war on the battlefield and had won the peace talks. As Jones, a participant, observed: "its strength on the battlefield and around the negotiating table outweighed the very careful and sophisticated negotiating process." In addition, "because of RPF intransigence on the question of the CDR and on the army split, a well-conceived, neutral, and well-managed peace process produced an unsustainable result." The Arusha process, in its first stages "transformed a civil war into a political negotiation and succeeded in forging a transition

⁵¹³ See Amare Tekle, "The OAU: Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution," in *The Path of a Genocide: The Rwanda Crisis from Uganda to Zaire*, eds. H. Adelman and A. Suhrke (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1999), 111-130.

⁵¹⁴ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 84.

⁵¹⁵ Jones, "The Arusha Peace Process", 143.

bargain,” and in its final stages “produced a victor’s deal.”⁵¹⁶ The decisive variable, was the RPF’s superior position in the battlefield, demonstrated by the ‘February War of 1993’.

4.5. Skocpol Application: The Second Revolutionary Crisis

During the Rwandan Civil War, the structural conditions of Rwanda’s state and society exhibit all the signs of a social-revolutionary crisis. Recall that a revolutionary crisis develops when a regime fails to respond to the challenges it encounters in the international arena as the state is subject to security threatening international pressure. The failure to respond to such pressure is because the regime is constrained by its own internal institutional socio-political relations: institutional relations of the regime to the dominant classes and the rest of society. Therefore, caught in cross-pressures between constraining domestic structures and threatening international pressure, the regime and its armed forces breakdown opening the way for social-revolutionary transformation spearheaded by revolts from below.⁵¹⁷

As discussed, the origin of the state crisis that sparks the revolutionary crisis is located in the extraordinary international pressure applied to the state, such as war, that stretches to breakpoint the capacity of the state. Success in meeting this international pressure depends on the ability of the state to mobilise resources from the society and to implement in the process reforms requiring structural transformations. The state crisis emerges when the state fails to implement sufficiently basic reforms or to promote rapid economic development to meet and weather the particular intensity of military threats. As Skocpol states, it is “precisely because of the unsuccessful attempts to cope with foreign pressures.”⁵¹⁸ There are two reasons for this failure. First, in financial terms, the economic reforms could be insufficient to improve the states financial position. Second, the reforms could threaten the interests of the dominant class who may resist these reforms and express their opinion in hostile political actions.

Therefore, the state crisis emerges from the insufficiency of resources and loss of existing political support – consequences of the state’s reformist policies in the face of international pressure. The state is dissolved either through defeat in war with stronger powers, or deposed at home through the reaction of politically powerful dominant classes. The result is the disintegration of the central administrative machine. A distinct pattern is discernible in this

⁵¹⁶ Jones, “Civil War, the Peace Process”, 71.

⁵¹⁷ Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*.

analytical framework – *international pressure*, leading to *unsuccessful reform*, leading to *state crisis*. Rwanda during the civil war exhibits this pattern of an emerging social-revolutionary crisis.

4.5.1. International and Internal Pressure: The RPF Invasion and Democratisation

After 1990, Rwanda was subject to considerable international and internal pressure. This external pressure was caused by the RPF invasion and was twofold. Firstly, it involved the RPF's control of territory, particularly its strategic bases. The RPF was based along the northwestern border in the volcanic mountains of the Virunga National Park bordering Uganda. This location effectively crushed Rwanda's tourist industry, which had emerged as one of Rwanda's principal foreign exchange earnings after the coffee crisis of the 1980s.⁵¹⁹ Moreover, the RPF's location in the northern region blocked the government's least expensive sea route.⁵²⁰ Therefore, economic activity in the north was disrupted, and government revenue was strained.

The second involved the internal displacement of Rwandans. Every time the RPF advanced and gained territory, the population fled, multiplying the number of internally displaced. As discussed, from the 1990 invasion to the Byumba offensive, the numbers of internally displaced grew from 80,000 to 350,000.⁵²¹ After the February War, where the RPF doubled its territory, the number of internally displaced swelled to between 950,000 and 1,000,000. Thus, the RPF sought to "increase the political and financial costs of the war for the regime by displacing the local population and halting production" placing considerable pressure on the regime.⁵²²

The internal pressure was the outcome of 'non-military' external forces as the global winds of political liberalisation had swept through Rwanda. As political space opened, new political parties emerged, fragmenting the political class and challenging the Habyarimana regime. Their main objective was to weaken the ruling MRND's hold on power, and push for a power-sharing political arrangement. These actions applied further pressure to a resource stretched regime, which was in the process of losing a civil war with a rebel movement, and controlling a worsening humanitarian crisis. Thus, the simultaneous pressure from the civil war and

⁵¹⁸ Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, 50.

⁵¹⁹ See Uvin, *Aiding Violence*.

⁵²⁰ Reed, "Exile, Reform," 491.

⁵²¹ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 187.

⁵²² Reed, "The Rwandan Patriotic Front," 50.

democratisation process fits Skocpol's framework on the social-revolutionary crisis where states were "faced with *extraordinary dilemmas*" and involved in "*intensifying military competition*."⁵²³

4.5.2. Internal Reform and the Mobilisation of Resources

According to Skocpol, "success in meeting this foreign competition" depends on the ability of the state to "mobilise extraordinary resources from the society and to implement in the process reforms requiring structural transformations."⁵²⁴ Habyarimana's regime followed this strategy of mobilisation and reform implementation in dealing with both the internal and external pressure.

In dealing with the internal pressure, and the emergence of multiparty politics, Habyarimana, after massive demonstrations by opposition parties, opted for political negotiations with these parties, and formed a coalition government with the MDR, PSD, PL and PDC. The power-base of the Akazu had thus fragmented, and as a loosely allied coalition government, they confronted the RPF invasion.

In dealing with the externally sourced RPF pressure, the regime decided to pursue a strategy of terror to sacrifice the Tutsi in hopes of uniting all Hutu, subsequently enforcing a Hutu-Tutsi divide. This involved the mobilisation of state and societal resources to fight the 'internal enemy' (all Tutsi), perceived as collaborators of 'external enemies' (RPF), to weaken the RPF. This mobilisation was a three-fold strategy. Firstly, it involved the mobilisation of the state media machine to demonise the Tutsi as enemies of the state. Secondly, it involved the organisation of massacres of Tutsi civilians by local civil servants. And thirdly, it involved the use of the state security services in mobilising internally displaced youth into militias attached to the youth wings of the CDR and MRND, and into civilian self-defence units, all taking on paramilitary functions. These units were then used to mobilise the society to massacre Tutsi civilians with the objective of weakening the RPF, the external threat.

4.5.3. State Crisis: The Failed Reform

According to Skocpol, the state crisis emerges when the state fails to implement sufficient reforms to meet and weather the intensity of military threats. As discussed, this is due to either

⁵²³ Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, 50.

⁵²⁴ *Ibid.*

financial reasons or the fact that the reforms threaten the interests of the dominant classes. Habyarimana's regime failed to implement sufficient reforms or mobilise society enough to meet the RPF challenge. The process of reform weakened Habyarimana's regime consequently leading to an RPF 'political coup' and state crisis in the peace negotiations.

Despite the enlargement of FAR and the violence and terror against the Tutsi, the regime failed to dislodge the RPF on the battlefield. The RPF continued to gain territory after territory, growing from strength to strength. Consequently, the economic, financial, and humanitarian costs of the war on Rwanda became enormous and Habyarimana agreed to embark on a process of political negotiations with the RPF toward a peace settlement, thus buckling for further political reforms.

The peace talks at Arusha were the arena in which further reform was negotiated. For Habyarimana, the problem here was that the government delegation was fragmented and comprised of a 'coalition' delegation. This fragmented delegation consisted of different opposition parties, including the MRND and CDR, each with separate chains of command, responding to separate centres of power, and each pursuing their own political interests. Consequently, the government delegation weakened. Moreover, opposition parties wanted a quick resolution and compromise given the enormous economic and humanitarian costs of the war.

By contrast, the RPF delegation was disciplined and effective with a clear chain of command, and a seasoned negotiator in Dr Patrick Mazimhaka. Moreover, the RPF could afford a few more years fighting than could the government of Rwanda. Consequently, the RPF had an enormous negotiating advantage.

These differences were important for the outcome of the three crucial issues of the first few rounds of negotiations, as the RPF out-manoeuvred the government of Rwanda. Firstly, the RPF unwisely, but skilfully, muscled out the extremist and hard-line CDR (comprising important Bashiru Hutu and Akazu members) from any stake in the new negotiated institutional make-up of Rwanda. Secondly, the RPF, together with the MRND, were allocated most cabinet seats in the new BBTG, and similarly, in the new transitional assembly, effectively isolating and excluding the CDR. Despite keeping the 'old-guard' in government, the eventual exclusion of the CDR from power as a central part in the broader marginalisation of the hard-line elements represented more of a victor's deal which reflected RPF views than a compromise.

It was the violent reaction of the CDR, using FAR and the paramilitary detachments, which spurred the RPF to launch the massive offensive, the February War, which began the process toward a state crisis. French intelligence concluded that the RPF could have taken Kigali with ease, were it not for French paratroopers. The RPF had doubled its territory and confirmed its military superiority by moving 23km of Kigali. As the humanitarian crisis worsened, the February offensive effectively signalled an RPF victory on the battlefield.

The ultimate 'political coup' came when Habyarimana, suddenly aware of the RPF's superiority, called for a return to the peace process. Subsequently, the RPF's successful negotiations for a 50/50 split in a new integrated armed force signalled the victor's deal, effectively leading to the state crisis. As Jones observed, "its strength on the battlefield an around the negotiating table outweighed the sophisticated negotiation process [and] produced a victor's deal."⁵²⁵ Thus, the outcome of the February War and peace process, effectively signalling a victory for the RPF, produced a state crisis and facilitated for the emergence of a social-revolutionary crisis.

Therefore, Skocpol's framework does apply to this second revolutionary crisis as the Habyarimana regime failed to respond to the challenges encountered from the RPF invasion. The failure to respond to the RPF military pressure was because the regime was constrained by a fragmented political class and government coalition. Caught in the cross pressures between a constraining fragmented political class, and intensifying RPF military pressure, the regime and armed forces broke down via a major RPF offensive, and political coup in the peace process. This made the regime vulnerable to a crisis-from-below.

⁵²⁵ Jones, "Civil War, the Peace Process," 71.

V

The Social-Revolutionary Process

Mass Mobilisation for Genocide

The crisis-from-below, which was the reaction to the state crisis, involved the mass mobilisation and participation of society to commit genocide against the Tutsi, and Hutu thought to be Tutsi sympathisers. The genocide was the mass mobilisation for the defence of gains of the 1959 Revolution – the Second Hutu Republic. It was the consequence of a social-revolutionary crisis. The aim of this chapter is to provide an analysis on the violence of the genocide. The chapter uses Skocpol's analytical framework, and shows how the genocide was the outcome of the social-revolutionary process caused by the civil war. This chapter consists of three sections. The first discusses the immediate political context. The second discusses the actual genocide, and the third will show how Skocpol's analytical framework applies to Rwanda's genocide.

5.1. The Context: Reacting to the Victor's Deal

The hard-line forces in Kigali never accepted the Arusha Accords, as the Akazu military elements would have no authority or place in the proposed 'new' regime. Senior military figures in the army, members of the CDR, extremist elements of the MRND, all populated by hard-line Hutu extremists and members of the Akazu, perceived the accords as a victor's deal for the RPF.⁵²⁶ They protested against the political elements of the agreements that excluded the CDR from power. Moreover, the security agreements, especially the 50-50 split in the armed forces, caused a profound sense of insecurity within the most senior command in the military and security services, which were dominated by hard-liners. It denied them any control over the Rwandan security forces. What the hard-liners had lost at the military level, they had failed to make up at the political level. The exclusion of the CDR from institutions dominated by the new opposition parties "would leave the security forces controlled by political groups that were far from being allies to the hard-liners." This double-edge loss "gave urgency to hard-liners efforts to undermine the peace process before other forces could establish the institutions that would deprive them of their power."⁵²⁷

⁵²⁶ Jones, "Civil War, the Peace Process", 74.

⁵²⁷ Ibid.

For the hard-liners, the RPF had merely won at the conference table what it had not yet won with the population – the next step was to gear up for a major military escalation. With alternative institutional structures of war already in place (Interahamwe and Impuzamugambi), the hard-line elements in the CDR, MRND, and the FAR, accelerated the mechanical infrastructure for violent self-defence, and the final resolution of the civil war against the RPF and their Tutsi accomplices ‘inside’ Rwanda. Weapons were imported and distributed to civilian defence units as the Interahamwe and Impuzamugambi trained civilians in and around Kigali for their civilian defence roles. Their purpose was very clear: “to destroy the RPF by wiping out its power base in Rwanda – the Tutsi population.”⁵²⁸

5.1.1. ‘The Prophetic Lesson’: The Murder of President Ndadaye of Burundi

The genocidal tendency was born out of the state crisis, officially signed in Arusha, and its main source was the hard-line elements within the armed forces, the CDR and MRND. As the military defeat on the battlefield, and political settlement, disgraced it, “the army exploded, as if into so many fragments of a cluster bomb.” Rather than simply deflating the esprit de corps and sense of mission in the army, “defeat seemed to energise its parts such as the Presidential Guard, and its detachments, such as the Interahamwe and Impuzamugambi.” From confronting the enemy that seemed to advance relentlessly on the battlefield and diplomatic frontier, they turned around to face the enemy within. The Rwandan Army and its paramilitary detachments went on to purify the nation and rid it of all impurities that detracted from its strength.⁵²⁹

Two turning points fed to this conclusion. The first was the assassination of the first Hutu president of Burundi, President Melchior Ndadaye, and the second the assassination of Habyarimana, and the brutal murder of the new MDR Prime Minister, Agathe Uwilingiyimana. Ndadaye’s death was the prophetic lesson that the only alternative for the Hutu was between power and servitude and that there could be no power sharing between Hutu and Tutsi. Habyarimana’s death was the signal that the hour to choose between power and servitude had indeed struck.⁵³⁰

⁵²⁸ Ibid., 75.

⁵²⁹ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 207.

⁵³⁰ Ibid., 215.

For Rwandans, Burundi was some sort of accursed Siamese twin.⁵³¹ For Hutu in post-revolutionary Rwanda, Burundi presented the real life portrayal of what it would be like for Hutu to continue to live under Tutsi power.⁵³² The parallel, and at times common past histories, the comparable social structures and constant, almost obsessive, mutual scrutiny, “fated them to be natural mirrors of each other’s hopes, woes and transformations.”⁵³³

The political reform in Burundi under President Pierre Buyoya brought a universal franchise with one-person-one-vote in a multiparty system. In the ensuing election, Melchior Ndadaye was elected. For the first time in its post-independence history, Burundi had a Hutu president and a Hutu dominated government, but an all-Tutsi army.⁵³⁴ However, in October 1993, Burundi’s experiment in democratic power sharing collapsed when Tutsi hard-line elements in the armed forces launched an abortive coup. President Ndadaye and several members of the cabinet were brutally murdered. As expected, the rage and frustration of his Hutu fellow countrymen was boundless.⁵³⁵ Hutu civilians took their revenge directly on Tutsi civilians for his assassination, and in turn, the Burundian army retaliated on the Hutu with bloody force. The combination of anti-Tutsi pogroms and anti-Hutu army killings “caused about 50,000 deaths, roughly 60 percent Tutsi and 40 percent Hutu.” Moreover, an estimated “150,000 Tutsi fled to army controlled towns where they could feel safe and became internally displaced” while some “300,000 Hutu fled across the borders into neighbouring countries, 200,000 crossing into Rwanda.”⁵³⁶

The 200,000 refugees that streamed into southern Rwanda joined several thousands of their fellow Burundians who had sought refuge following earlier episodes of violence. Given that Rwanda was experiencing an enormous humanitarian crisis, with an estimated 1,000,000 internally displaced people, the additional 200,000 intensified the humanitarian pressure in a volatile and deteriorating political situation. By the misery of their existence in refugee camps, and the tales of horror they related, the refugees showed each other the damage committed by a Tutsi dominated army, and a Tutsi dominated ‘rebel group’. A new volatile constituent had thus entered the political arena and the Interahamwe and Impuzamugambi reached out to them. Consequently, the training of refugees by the FAR, Interahamwe, and Impuzamugambi, increased

⁵³¹ René Lemarchand, *Burundi: Ethnic Conflict and Genocide* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

⁵³² Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 215.

⁵³³ For more on the fundamentals of their relationship see Lemarchand, *Ruanda and Burundi* section on Burundi.

⁵³⁴ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 215.

⁵³⁵ Prunier, 199.

to such high levels that “a representative of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees wrote to the Rwandan authorities reminding them that such activities violated international agreements on refugees.”⁵³⁷ Despite this, killings of Tutsi had already begun: 40 Tutsi were killed in Cyangugu, 20 in Butare, 20 in Ruhengeri, 17 in Gisenyi, 13 in Kigali and many more were driven from their homes, joining the internally displaced.⁵³⁸

5.1.2. The Coup d'état: The Assassination of President Habyarimana

Rwandans, according to Prunier, rightly call the period between the Arusha agreements and the genocidal explosion *Igihirahiro* (the time of hesitation or uncertainty).⁵³⁹ The ideology of Hutu Power “kept harping ceaselessly on the same themes i.e. the intrinsically evil role of the Tutsi in Rwandan history, the errors of the deluded ‘ibiyitso’ [accomplices], and the need for vigilance.” The RTLMC consistently reminded listeners “soon *one would have to reach for the top part of the house* [i.e. the place where traditional weapons were hung], that the Tutsi were evil and that *we have learned about it at school*.”⁵⁴⁰ Rumours were rife and a sense of foreboding was in the air.

On 6 April, President Habyarimana had flown to Tanzania to meet his regional peers from Tanzania, Kenya, Burundi and Uganda. In what was to be a regional issue, with the situation in Burundi topping the agenda, “the discussion soon turned to Rwanda and became an indictment of Habyarimana’s refusal to implement the Arusha agreement.”⁵⁴¹ Afterwards, despite a rule imposed by his security service that he should not travel at night, Habyarimana insisted. The new Burundian president, Cyprien Ntaryamira, who had asked for a lift, accompanied him. On board the presidential jet were Habyarimana’s closest advisors including the chief of the army, General Nsabimana. As the plane approached Kigali airport, the airport suddenly plunged into darkness. After circling once, it came towards the airport and rocket fire lit up the sky. There was a flash and a streak of light – “two ground-to-air missiles had been launched. The second blew the plane apart. All on board were killed.”⁵⁴²

⁵³⁶ Ibid.

⁵³⁷ Des Forges, 136.

⁵³⁸ Ibid., 137.

⁵³⁹ Prunier, 210.

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid., 210-211.

⁵⁴¹ Ibid., 211.

⁵⁴² Melvern, 115. In the strangest irony the wreckage fell directly into the garden of the presidential palace.

There are many explanations about who assassinated Habyarimana, and little is known.⁵⁴³ What is known is who used the assassination as a pretext to begin the slaughter. The hard-line Hutu extremists had expected that killing the Tutsi would draw the RPF back into combat and give them a new chance of victory or at least for negotiations. That might allow them to win back some of the concessions made at Arusha. Their final hour had come.

5.2. Defending the Hutu Republic: The Genocide of the Tutsi

With the death of Habyarimana, Colonel Bagosora took charge and quickly assembled a 'Committee for Public Salvation', with sixteen high-ranking military officers, which was to assemble a transitional government. Initially, Bagosora, together with his close confidant Colonel Augustin Bizimungu, tried to take power in their own right by pushing hard for the military to take over the government.⁵⁴⁴ However, they lacked the support of senior ranking officers in the group. Bagosora's next move was to "install a regime of Hutu extremists" that would leave his group in the shadows where "they could go on pulling the strings, but which would be their creature and closely reflect their radical political option."⁵⁴⁵ This political move was a success.

Bagosora presented the interim government to the crisis committee and other high-ranking military officers on April 8. As they looked over the new authorities, "the military officers saw quickly that Bagosora had chosen these men himself and that this was not at all what the meeting the night before had decided." With the RPF already pursuing Kigali vigorously, nobody was in any position to start objecting.⁵⁴⁶

Théodore Sindikubwabo, the speaker of the assembly, assumed the vacant Presidency and his Prime Minister was the extremist and infamous Jean Kambanda.⁵⁴⁷ In a high level security meeting in Gitarama between President Sindikubwabo, Prime Minister Kambanda, Col. Bagosora, and Maj.-Gen. Augustin Bizimana, the regime "discussed FAR's support in the fight against the RPF and its 'accomplices' (understood to be the Tutsi and moderate Hutu)."⁵⁴⁸ Col.

⁵⁴³ See Prunier, 213-219; African Rights, 94-99; Des Forges, 181-185.

⁵⁴⁴ Des Forges, 186.

⁵⁴⁵ Prunier, 232.

⁵⁴⁶ Des Forges, 197.

⁵⁴⁷ Jean Kambanda was one of the first members of the regime to be tried and sentenced by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, after pleading guilty, for his responsibility as Prime Minister in the planning and execution of genocide.

⁵⁴⁸ United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, *The Prosecutor versus Jean Kambanda: Judgement and Sentence*, Case No. ICTR 97-23-5, Decision of 4 September 1998: 2.

Bagosora, as he had on various occasions, declared that “*the solution to the war was to plunge the country into an ‘apocalypse’ in order to eliminate all the Tutsi and thus ensure lasting peace.*”⁵⁴⁹ For the hard-line transitional regime, the final solution to the war with the RPF was to “unleash a countrywide terror whose objective was to annihilate the entire community of Tutsi so as to remove any trace of Tutsi presence from the soil of Rwanda.”⁵⁵⁰ The strategy was two-fold. It involved the elimination of political opposition, and clearing Rwanda of Tutsis.

5.2.1. Mass Killings and Genocide

Within hours of the crash of Habyarimana’s plane, Col. Bagosora, the de facto ‘coup leader’, Maj.-Gen. Bizimana, commander of FAR logistics (G4), Lt.-Col. Protais Mpiranya, head of the Presidential Guard, and Col. Aloys Ntabakuze, commander of the paratroopers, had well in advance prepared the institutional machinery of genocide. This included the Presidential Guard, the Interahamwe, the Impuzamugambi, the local-level ten-cell civil defence units, and the machinery of local government.⁵⁵¹ A list of those to be killed had already existed. Prior to the official announcement of the crash, the Interahamwe, Impuzamugambi and the Presidential Guard set up roadblocks in Kigali, checking the identity cards of passers by, searching for Tutsi, opposition members and any other activists who opposed the regime.⁵⁵² Anyone belonging to these groups was “set upon with machetes and iron bars.”⁵⁵³ Gourevitch graphically explains the course of events:

“The assassins’ first priority was to eliminate Hutu opposition leaders... After that, the wholesale extermination of Tutsi got underway... With the encouragement of messages and of leaders at every level of society, the slaughter of Tutsis and assassination of Hutu oppositionists spread from region to region. Following the militias’ example, Hutus young and old rose to the task. Neighbours hacked neighbours to death in their homes, and colleagues hacked colleagues to death in their workplaces. Doctors killed their patients, and schoolteachers killed their pupils. Within days, the Tutsi populations of many villages were all but eliminated... Radio announces reminded listeners not to take pity on women and children.”⁵⁵⁴

⁵⁴⁹ UNICTR, *The Prosecutor versus Jean Kamdanda*, 15.

⁵⁵⁰ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 217.

⁵⁵¹ Prunier, 240.

⁵⁵² Paul Magnarella, *Justice in Africa: Rwanda’s Genocide, its Courts, and the United Nations Criminal Tribunal* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 19.

⁵⁵³ Magnarella, 19.

⁵⁵⁴ Gourevitch, 114-115.

Haphazard and chaotic this description may seem, in fact, the genocide, as mentioned, followed a clear logic: it began with the elimination of political opponents and dissenters, and then finally the mass extermination of the Tutsi.

The Elimination of Political Opposition

Within hours of Habyarimana's death, the Presidential Guard began the selective assassination of opposition politicians. In every street in Kigali, roadblocks were set up and Presidential Guard units began hunting their targets for execution. The President of the Constitutional Court, Joseph Kavaruganda and the Minister of Information, Faustin Rucogoza, both were Hutu, were among the first politicians to be killed.⁵⁵⁵ The following morning, at about 7am, "a massacre was carried out in the Centre Christus, in which a number of prominent Jesuit priests were killed."⁵⁵⁶ At 11am, the Arusha appointed Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana was brutally murdered in her own home, and "it was only through the courage of her neighbours that her children escaped death."⁵⁵⁷ Moreover, the leaders of PL and PSD were also killed, and almost the entire PSD leadership murdered.

In the first two days of the killing, "the great majority of the victims who were targeted were prominent politicians, senior civil servants, wealthy businessmen with ties to the political opposition, critical journalists and human rights activists. Most were Hutu." The systematic assassination of all moderate Hutu "represented the ultimate coup [and] these murders were almost exclusively the work of the Presidential Guard." Therefore, being Hutu was no protection in the eyes of the extremists – politically moderate Hutus "presented a special threat to the ideology of extremism and had to be wiped out."⁵⁵⁸

Cleansing Rwanda of All Tutsi

Spurred by the propaganda that lamented the 'unfinished' business of 1959-1963, for the extremists, there were to be no half-measures in the effort to write Tutsi out of Rwanda's future. The Presidential Guard, Interahamwe, and tens of thousands of ordinary citizens "conducted house-to-house searches looking for Tutsi to kill." Many of the killings not only resembled

⁵⁵⁵ African Rights, 177; Prunier, 230.

⁵⁵⁶ African Rights, 863.

⁵⁵⁷ Prunier, 230.

⁵⁵⁸ African Rights, 178-179.

previous massacres where large numbers of people were killed in one place, but rather “the deliberate seeking out and murdering of people known, or suspected, to be Tutsi.”⁵⁵⁹ Moreover, the killers were not satisfied with the hundreds of thousands of Tutsi blown up in churches and hospitals, mowed down on the road and shot at countless roadblocks – hunters literally looked everywhere. Having hounded them out where they had sought sanctuary, their attackers “combed forests, plantations and swamps looking for Tutsi to terrorise, humiliate and kill in pursuit of that ferocious dream that inspired extremists – a Rwanda free of Tutsis.” The “tea plantations, coffee and sorghum fields, and banana and cassava plantations [were literally] turned into the killing fields and burial grounds of Tutsis.”⁵⁶⁰

The primary target of the extremists were Tutsi men, particularly what extremist propaganda portrayed as the “ultimate enemy” – “rich men, men between their twenties and forties, especially if they were well educated professionals or students.” The most hated of all were “well-educated Tutsi men who had studied in Uganda who were immediately expected of being members of the RPF.”⁵⁶¹ The systematic rape of women was also one of the instruments of instilling permanent terror and genocide against Tutsi women, and was used to devastating and cruel effect by the Interahamwe.⁵⁶² Young Tutsi children, including babies, were also particular targets on the basis that “they will be tomorrow’s RPF soldiers.” “Paul Kagame was also three when he left the country” was a common phrase that preceded the cold-blooded murder of thousands of young children.⁵⁶³ The killing were carried out with extraordinary cruelty – people were burnt alive, thrown dead or alive into pit latrines and often forced to kill their friends or relatives.⁵⁶⁴ In addition, the overwhelming amount of people killed in Rwanda was in large-scale massacres in parishes.⁵⁶⁵

Consequences: RPF Victory and Renewed Refugee Crisis

The civil war resumed after the killing began. The 600 strong RPF battalion in Kigali, initially stationed for the implementation of the peace agreement, left its headquarters on 7 April, and the

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid., 573.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid., 574.

⁵⁶¹ Africa Rights, 597-598.

⁵⁶² Human Rights Watch Women’s Project, *Shattered Lives: Sexual Violence during the Rwandan Genocide and its Aftermath* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1996).

⁵⁶³ African Rights, 798.

⁵⁶⁴ Sellstrom & Wohlgemuth, 52.

⁵⁶⁵ African Rights, 258.

forces in the north of the country launched an offensive on 8 April.⁵⁶⁶ Once the RPF launched the offensive, it progressed rapidly and after only a short time, “the major military base at Byumba was taken, allowing for the supply of arms and ammunition.”⁵⁶⁷ The RPF advanced throughout April and May, however not fast enough to halt massacres, and important advances were made “when the international airport at Kigali and the nearby Kanombe base were occupied.” Kigali was taken on July 6 and the RPF declared the war to be over on July 18. The RPF then formed a new government with “Pasteur Bizimungu as President and Faustin Twagiramungu as Prime Minister.” However, the real power rested in the hands of the RPF and RPA commander, General Paul Kagame, who became the Vice-President and Defence Minister, and then eventually the Rwandan President.⁵⁶⁸

Most sources estimate the killings conducted by the Rwandan regime as falling between 500,000 and 1,000,000. In the period immediately after the genocide, “the bulk of the estimates fell at the higher end of the spectrum.”⁵⁶⁹ Gerard Prunier gives an informed estimate of around 850,000.⁵⁷⁰ More recently, Des Forges shows conservative figures, leading to the conclusion that around 500,000 were killed.⁵⁷¹ Even the lower ends of the estimates are staggeringly large. It is this massive scale of killings that stands as the most critical and disastrous outcome of the Rwandan civil war, and the long-term effect of the social revolution.

5.3. Skocpol Application: The Revolutionary Process and Political Violence

As discussed, in the revolutionary process, the process of consolidating and defending the revolution is the most violent part of the revolution. The political violence involved in this period of the revolution is instrumental in defending and consolidating the revolutionary process. The violence has a ‘popular’ character and involves the mass mobilisation of society to defend the revolution in the face of a counter-revolution. The successful consolidation and defence of a social revolution depends on the ability of the revolutionary leadership to mobilise the society to defend the revolution. In France, as the threat of counter-revolution grew, the Montagnard Jacobins, through Committees on Public Safety and General Security, mobilised the society to defend the revolution against counter-revolutionary forces. Similarly in Russia, the Bolshevik

⁵⁶⁶ Sellstrom & Wohlgemuth, 53.

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁹ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*, 44.

⁵⁷⁰ Prunier, 265.

Party used the Cheka and Red Army to mobilise the society against counter-revolutionaries, and in China, the Chinese Communist Party successfully mobilised the peasantry. Therefore, what is characteristic of the revolutionary process is the mass mobilisation of society against counter-revolution, and the violence is characterised by popular participation.

5.3.1. The Mass Mobilisation for Genocide against the Tutsi

In Rwanda, the mass mobilisation for mass killing and genocide involved in the second revolutionary crisis created by the civil war fits this analytical description. The leadership of the government of Rwanda mobilised the society to defend the gains of the 1959 Revolution, the Second Hutu Republic. In Rwanda, the mass mobilisation for the violent defence of the Hutu Republic, which culminated into genocide, occurred in three crucial phases, and in each of these phases, the violence intensified with greater mass mobilisation and participation. In addition, each phase was a response to significant turning points in the unfolding social-revolutionary crisis.

The First Phase: Responding to the RPF Invasion

The first phase of violence was the outcome of a deliberate government strategy of terror aimed at sacrificing the Tutsi in order to unite all Hutu in the face of the RPF invasion. This strategy involved the mass mobilisation of all Hutu against all Tutsi and the RPF. Using the state propaganda machine, the government argued that the 1959 Social Revolution was *unfinished* because *“the Tutsi were allowed to escape abroad”* and their children were now returning.⁵⁷² Subsequently, the government labelled the RPF as Inyenzi and accused them of trying to re-establish the Tutsi monarchy in order to oppress the Hutu majority. Casimir Bizimungu, the foreign minister, even warned, *“The Rwandan people will not agree to reverse history”* and argued that the RPF had the aim of *“establishing a minority Tutsi regime embodying feudalism with a modern outlook.”*⁵⁷³

This identification of the RPF with the Tutsi leaders of the colonial era was precisely because the RPF's political history has its origins in the Tutsi political diaspora exiled by the 1959 Revolution. Soon, all Tutsi civilians were accused of supporting the RPF because of their ethnicity.

⁵⁷¹ Des Forges, 15-16.

⁵⁷² African Rights, 39.

Given the dynamics of the civil war, particularly the internal displacement, and the government's convincing interpretation of the reasons for the invasion, local authorities successfully invoked the civil war as a pretext to massacre Tutsi civilians. The massacres were organised and involved the mass mobilisation of Hutu civilians in order to massacre Tutsi civilians. Therefore, the state propaganda machine and the community were the effective instruments of mass mobilisation and mass killing.

The Second Phase: The Military Response to RPF Successes

The second phase of violence was the outcome of the deliberate and genocidal military strategy in the face of a more powerful and threatening RPF. The special military commission set up by Habyarimana, and chaired by Colonel Bagosora, had the objective of formulating a strategy to defeat the RPF. This involved identifying 'enemies of the state' which included all Tutsi who did "not recognise and have never recognised the realities of the Social Revolution of 1959."⁵⁷⁴

The strategy of defeating the enemy, the Tutsi, was a three-fold strategy of mass mobilisation. Firstly, it involved expanding FAR by massive recruitment and stocking up on arms to distribute to civilians loyal to the regime. The army bought US\$6 million worth of arms from Egypt and US\$5.9 million worth from South Africa.⁵⁷³ Secondly, it involved the creation and arming of civilian self-defence units in every commune and village. This formed the civilian core of the machinery to kill Tutsi in 'self-defence' of the Hutu Republic against the RPF. Thirdly, it involved the transformation of the youth wings of the CDR and MRND, the Interahamwe and Impuzamugambi respectively, into armed militia with paramilitary functions receiving training from regular soldiers. This also involved integrating internally displaced youth into militia as the RPF offensives intensified.

Soon, massacres against Tutsi were carried out by death squads, and better-organised and more military equipped civilians, and thus with more efficiency. There was thus greater participation in violence against the Tutsi as more civilians were incorporated into these civilian self-defence structures.

⁵⁷³ Cited in Kirschke, 25.

⁵⁷⁴ UNICTR, *The Prosecutor Against Theoneste Bagosora*, 13.

The Third Phase: Response to the Victor's Deal and State Crisis

The third phase was the most violent and took on the dimensions of genocide. The large-scale violence in this phase was a response to two important aspects of the peace settlement. The first was the response to the power sharing agreement in the new transitional government institutions – the TNA and BBTG. The MRND and CDR rejected this agreement outright. Subsequently, and in response to the transitional settlements, mass killings of the Tutsi engulfed the entire northern and western regions as the Interahamwe and Impuzamugambi mobilised Hutu masses and went on a mass murder rampage, raping, pillaging and burning houses.⁵⁷⁶ Over 300 Tutsi were massacred. The target broadened to include all those who did not support CDR or MRND, attacking churches and refuge centres. The ensuing February War and the RPF's doubling of territory led to greater internal displacement and thus, the Interahamwe and Impuzamugambi power-base grew substantially.

The second response was to the final settlement of the Arusha Process that signalled a victor's deal for the RPF. The hard-line forces in the Akazu, FAR, CDR and MNRD never accepted the peace settlement, which they perceived as a victor's deal for the RPF. The settlement had effectively excluded them out of any future power in the negotiated institutions and military.

Habyarimana's assassination provided the perfect opportunity for the hard-line elements in the Akazu and CDR to fill the political vacuum via a coup. Their objective was to step up a gear for a major military escalation against the Tutsi and civilian opposition. With alternative institutional structures of war in place, the Akazu and the CDR built and accelerated the mechanical infrastructure for violent self-defence, and the final resolution of the civil war with the RPF and their Tutsi 'accomplices' inside Rwanda. Their purpose was very clear: "to destroy the RPF by wiping out its power base in Rwanda – the Tutsi population."⁵⁷⁷

Thus, from confronting the enemy it could not defeat, they turned around to face the enemy within. The paramilitary detachments of the Interahamwe and Impuzamugambi went on to purify the nation and rid it of all its impurities that detracted from its strength.⁵⁷⁸ This involved the mass mobilisation of society, under the de facto leadership of Colonel Bagosora and the Akazu, using

⁵⁷⁵ Human Rights Watch Arms Project, 14-18.

⁵⁷⁶ Jones, *Peacemaking in Rwanda*.

⁵⁷⁷ Jones, "Civil War, the Peace Process", 75.

⁵⁷⁸ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 207.

the Interahamwe, Impuzamugambi, to defend the gains of the Revolution and what was left of the Hutu Republic ruled by the Akazu. Colonel Bagosora confirmed the significance of the mass mobilisation of society to commit genocide against enemies of the revolution: "*the solution to the war was to plunge the country into an 'apocalypse' in order to eliminate all the Tutsi and ensure a lasting peace.*"⁵⁷⁹ The final solution to the war with the RPF was to "unleash a countrywide terror whose objective was to annihilate the entire community of Tutsi so as to remove any trace of Tutsi presence from the soil of Rwanda."⁵⁸⁰

The genocide in Rwanda was born of the state crisis and revolutionary crisis created by the civil war and was a final attempt by the leadership of the Hutu state to defend the Hutu Republic, the gain of the 1959 Revolution. The popular character of political violence is explained by the political dynamics of the social-revolutionary crisis. This involved the mass mobilisation of society for the defence of the Hutu Republic. The genocide was thus a mass mobilisation of society for the final resolution of the Rwandan civil war, and the final resolution of the unfinished Hutu-Tutsi race and political relations produced by the Revolution.

5.3.2. The Social-Revolutionary Process: The Cause of the 1994 Genocide

Rwanda's 1994 genocide was thus the outcome of a second social-revolutionary process created by the civil war, with origins in the unfinished 1959 revolutionary process. The genocide was thus not an isolated event in Rwanda's political history. Rather it was a significant moment in a long-term cycle of violence in Rwanda. It was a flash point, one that shines much brighter than others, along a treacherous and violent path, formed by the constant political struggles between the racially polarised socio-political groups of the Hutu and Tutsi. As a recurrent pattern, it involved the mass mobilisation of the Hutu population in committing genocide against the Tutsi population. The causes of this pattern of violence, and its particular popular character, were the social and political dynamics of social-revolutionary processes in Rwanda. Therefore, the causes of Rwanda's genocide are located in the dynamics of Rwanda's two major social-revolutionary processes: the 1959 Social Revolution, and the 1990-1994 Civil War. Both these social-revolutionary processes reinforced the Hutu and Tutsi as bipolar, adversarial and antagonistic race identities, consequently leading to genocide.

⁵⁷⁹ UNICTR, *The Prosecutor Against Theoneste Bagosora*, 15.

⁵⁸⁰ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 217.

1959 Social Revolution: The First Genocide

The revolutionary achievement of the 1959 Social Revolution was the fundamental transformation of the class relations and state structures of colonial Rwanda. The Revolution transformed class relations between Hutu and Tutsi, where Tutsi landowners in the Native Authority lost out to the benefit of a newly triumphant Hutu revolutionary class. Thus, the Tutsi-Hutu hierarchical colonial relationship was abolished. The Revolution also transformed state structures as the Belgian administered colonial state gave way to a mass incorporating Hutu Republic more powerful, centralised and potent in society. The major limitation of the Revolution was its failure to transform the fundamental institutional pillars of social organisation in colonial Rwanda – the *race* distinction between Hutu and Tutsi. The socio-political dynamics of the social-revolutionary process reinforced and inflamed the race differences constructed by colonialism. Subsequently, race relations between Hutu and Tutsi became politicised, polarised, and radicalised eventually emerging as bipolar, adversarial and antagonistic race identities locked in a zero-sum political game. This occurred in three stages.

The first stage involved the politicisation of Hutu and Tutsi. The limitations of the political reform brought by international pressure, decolonisation, led to the realisation of the Hutu elite stratum that nothing short of pursuing political objectives, *as Hutu*, would break the chains of colonialism. This occurred in two developments. The first was the articulation of a revolutionary Hutu ideology in the form of the Bahutu Manifesto. The Manifesto understood the Hutu-Tutsi problem in 'racial terms'. This position was reinforced by the emergence of an extremist Tutsi ideology articulated by the so-called *bagaragu b'ibwami bakuru*, in the document *Mise au Point*. These two extremes competed for political power in the unfolding revolutionary drama. The second development was the political organisation of these ideologies. This institutionalised and politicised Hutu and Tutsi extremism in political parties, and transformed them into the basis for political competition. Therefore, PARMEHUTU advocated for a 'majoritarian' and popular Hutu nationalism. In contrast, UNAR advocated for the maintenance of Tutsi privileges and an elite Tutsi nationalism.

The second stage involved the polarisation of Hutu and Tutsi. The political violence involved in the crisis-from-below, the peasant revolt, polarised the Hutu-Tutsi race distinction. The violence was particularly brutal and widespread, and took on the dimensions of Hutu versus Tutsi political violence, that in turn reflected a PARMEHUTU versus UNAR difference, respectively. The

subsequent state crisis involved a Belgian initiated political revolution that replaced Tutsi with Hutu chiefs, and augmented a Hutu administration in the place of the Tutsi Native Authority. This inaugurated a profound period of instability as PARMEHUTU, based on the Bahutu Manifesto, consolidated their assisted political revolution leading to the killing and exodus of over 22,000 UNAR Tutsi chiefs and supporters into political exile. The third stage involved the radicalisation of the Hutu-Tutsi race relations. This was the outcome of a counter-revolution launched by UNAR Tutsi exiled in Burundi. The response to this counter-revolution was the mass mobilisation of the Hutu population by PARMEHUTU against the counter-revolutionaries and all Tutsi (perceived to be supporters of the Inyenzi). This mass mobilisation led to the genocide of the Tutsi where over 20,000 Tutsi were killed and the number of exiled reached 336,000.

Therefore, the political violence and subsequent genocide of the Tutsi was an outcome of the socio-political dynamics of a social revolution. These dynamics involved the politicisation, polarisation and radicalisation of the Hutu-Tutsi race difference, as Hutu and Tutsi emerged as adversarial and antagonistic race identities locked in a bitter zero-sum political game. This factor left the revolutionary process incomplete and laid the foundations for the emergence of a second social revolutionary crisis.

1990-1994 Civil War: The Second Genocide

The Rwandan Civil War, and the subsequent social-revolutionary crisis, was the outcome of a major-armed repatriation of Rwandan refugees exiled by the 1959 Revolution. The civil war created a second social-revolutionary crisis, and similar to the 1959 revolutionary crisis, Hutu and Tutsi re-emerged as bipolar, adversarial, and antagonistic race identities engaged in a zero-sum political game. Like the 1959 Revolution, this involved a political process of polarisation and radicalisation, culminating into a 'popular' genocide of the Tutsi. This occurred in two stages.

The first stage was the polarisation of the Hutu and Tutsi. This polarisation was the outcome of three developments. The first was the consequences of the RPF invasion. This led to the internal displacement of the Hutu peasantry and the subsequent transformation of the RPF from an army of liberation into an army of occupation. The result was the formation of a relationship of mutual distrust between the RPF and the Hutu peasantry, effectively polarising the two as Tutsi versus Hutu. The second was the re-emergence of Hutu extremism in the form of the CDR, thus creating two bipolar political organisations in Rwanda, RPF and CDR, representing Tutsi and

Hutu respectively.⁵⁸¹ The third development was the outcome of the government response to the invasion. The strategy was one of sacrificing the Tutsi by uniting and mobilising all Hutu against the RPF and Tutsi. This reinforced the process of polarisation.

The second stage was the re-radicalisation of Hutu and Tutsi. This was the outcome of three developments. The first was the organisation of state-sponsored violence. Local civil servants began to organise Hutu in communities to massacre Tutsi civilians, and these killings of Tutsi were referred to as obligatory communal work to 'cleanse society' of Tutsi. As the civil war intensified so did the massacres, subsequently radicalising Hutu against Tutsi. The second was the creation of civilian self-defence units by the state security services. This involved the organisation of the Hutu extremist youth wings of the CDR and MRND, the Interahamwe and Impuzamugambi, into armed militias with paramilitary functions. These Hutu extremist militias began operating as death squads, and the killings of Tutsi became better organised and more efficient. The third and final development was the military and diplomatic defeat of the government by the RPF, and the ensuing state crisis, signalling a profound social-revolutionary crisis. Out of this, the genocidal tendency was reborn, as the defeat and state crisis energised and further radicalised the Hutu hard-line elements in the CDR and FAR, and their paramilitary detachments in the Interahamwe and Impuzamugambi. The hard-line elements and their paramilitary detachments went on to purify the Rwanda nation and rid it of all its impurities that detracted from its strength. This was the final solution to the Hutu-Tutsi problem of 1959, and the final resolution of the war with the RPF.

Therefore, genocide in Rwanda, and its popular character, was the outcome of the social and political dynamics of two social-revolutionary processes in Rwanda: the 1959 Social Revolution, and the 1990-1994 Civil War. These dynamics involved the emergence and re-emergence of Hutu and Tutsi as bipolar, adversarial and antagonistic race identities, engaged in a genocidal zero-sum political game. The dynamics of these social-revolutionary processes, characterised by processes of polarisation and radicalisation of Hutu and Tutsi, involved the mass mobilisation of the Hutu population against the Tutsi population, in defence of the Hutu Revolution, and the Second Hutu Republic born of it.

⁵⁸¹ The RPF was not a Tutsi organisation. However, because of the large numbers of Tutsi in its ranks and the links with the 1959 Tutsi diaspora, the perception was that they represented Tutsi interests.

Conclusion

The central question raised by this dissertation was *why hundreds of thousands of Hutu citizens in Rwanda joined their government and participated in the genocide of their fellow Tutsi, and in the mass killings of Hutu thought to be Tutsi collaborators*. The dissertation was concerned with the causes of this type of genocide, which was characterised by the *mass mobilisation and mass participation* of Rwandan society. The objective of the study was to provide an in depth analysis and comprehensive answer to this troubling question. In answering this question, and using existing primary and secondary literature on Rwandan politics and history, the study provided an alternative and comprehensive explanation to the causes of this type of genocide.

The analytical framework developed by Theda Skocpol in her Book *States and Social Revolutions* informs the alternative answer presented this study. The study argued that the 1994 genocide was the outcome of two interrelated social-revolutionary processes in Rwanda. This was the revolutionary processes created by the politics of decolonisation in Rwanda, between 1959 and 1964, and the revolutionary process created by the civil war, between 1990 and 1994. The causes of the genocide are located in the social and political dynamics of social-revolutionary transformation in Rwanda. These dynamics involved the politicisation of the Hutu and Tutsi difference, and the emergence of Hutu and Tutsi as bipolar and adversarial race identities. Therefore, the central argument was that the *social-revolutionary process* was the cause of genocide in Rwanda, and the violence of the genocide resembles the type of violence that is characteristic of social-revolutionary transformation.

The 1959-1964 Revolutionary Process

Using Skocpol's analytical framework, the study established that Rwanda was in the process of social-revolutionary transformation between 1959 and 1964. As discussed, Skocpol defined social revolutions as rapid and basic transformations of a society's state and class structures carried through by class-based revolts from below.⁵⁸² Similarly, in Rwanda, there occurred a basic transformation in state and class structures as Rwanda transformed from a Belgian colonial state administered by a Tutsi Native Authority into a republican state administered by an elected Hutu leadership. There also occurred a transformation of *class structure* as the colonial class relationship

⁵⁸² Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, 4.

between Hutu 'subjects' and Tutsi 'chiefs' was abolished. This was carried through by a Hutu *peasant revolt* against the Tutsi Native Authority.

Moreover, the Rwanda Revolution involved the *coincidence of a crisis-from-below*, in the form of a Hutu peasant revolt, and a *state crisis*, in the form of a Belgian coup in the local state. Concerning the sequence of the state crisis and crisis-from-below, the case of Rwanda was not a perfect fit as the crisis-from-below facilitated the state crisis, whereas for Skocpol the sequence is vice versa.

In addition, the nature of political violence and its significance in the social-revolutionary process is similar. According to Skocpol, what characterises social-revolutionary interregnums is the politico-military mobilisation of popular support in wars against domestic counter-revolutionaries and competitors, and against foreign invaders.⁵⁸³ Political violence, involved in this interval, is instrumental in defending the revolution and is characterised by mass mobilisation and participation. Success in defending the revolution is determined by the ability of the revolutionary leadership to mobilise in mass the society against a counter-revolution. In Skocpol's cases of France, Russia and China, the instruments of mass mobilisation for revolutionary defence were the new structures created by the radical revolutionary parties. In France, the Jacobins created 'Committees of Public Safety' and 'General Security' as essential instruments and political structures for defending the revolution against counter-revolutionaries. In Russia, it was the Bolshevik Party that created Cheka for internal political policing and organised coercion, and the Red Army for the mass mobilisation of the peasantry against counter-revolution. Moreover, in China, the Chinese Communist Party mobilised the peasantry for guerrilla warfare and land revolution.

Rwanda had similar developments, as mass participatory political violence was central to, and instrumental in, defending and consolidating the revolution under the leadership of PARMEHUTU. The context, similar to the cases of France, Russia, and China was a counter-revolution. However, in Rwanda, it emerged out of a refugee crisis caused by the peasant revolt. The violent political and social crisis caused by the peasant revolt led to the killings and deposition of Tutsi chiefs who, together with their families and other Tutsi, went into exile in neighbouring countries. As discussed, PARMEHUTU's chief political opposition, UNAR (whose leadership was primarily Tutsi chiefs) made political capital out of the situation and organised the refugees into armed

guerrillas for counter-revolution. Armed raids from neighbouring Burundi, which targeted Hutu officials, usually assumed a standard form: "it targeted the local population as active or potential supporters of the Inyenzi."⁵⁸⁴

The Bugesera Invasion took place when the number of Tutsi refugees had soared to 130,000. The response of the PARMEHUTU government to this counter-revolutionary invasion resembled that of the Jacobins, Bolshevik Party, and Chinese Communist Party: *the mass mobilisation of society to defend the revolution*, against the Inyenzi. This mass mobilisation involved assigning one minister to each of the ten prefectures, converting each prefecture into an emergency region, and organising society into armed civilian self-defence groups (i.e. Committees of Public Safety) within each of these emergency regions. In this organisational context, the retaliation against the Inyenzi was a two-fold strategy: the elimination of political opposition to PARMEHUTU, and the methodical extermination of all Tutsi. Thus, the mass mobilisation of society to commit genocide against the Tutsi was the chief instrument of defending the revolution against a counter-revolution.

Therefore, the mass mobilisation for genocide against the Tutsi population, seen as active or potential supporters of the counter-revolution, led to the successful defence of the revolution and the subsequent strengthening and unification of the new post-colonial state of Rwanda. The genocide of the Tutsi was thus an outcome of, and caused by, the social and political dynamics of the social-revolutionary process in the 1959 Rwandan Revolution. These socio-political dynamics involved the transformation of Rwanda's state and class structures, and the politicisation of Hutu and Tutsi as race identities, where Hutu and Tutsi emerged as bipolar and adversarial race identities engaged in a zero-sum political game. The mass mobilisation for violence was thus instrumental, like in the cases of France, Russia, and China, in defending and consolidating the Revolution.

The revolutionary process in Rwanda, however, was incomplete. This is primarily because of the lack of transformation in race relations between Hutu and Tutsi. Recall that Hutu and Tutsi were essential factors in the institutional and structural make up of colonial Rwanda. Since a complete social revolution requires the successful transformation of social and political structures, i.e. of state *and* society, the transformation of Hutu and Tutsi as institutionalised and politicised race identities would be necessary to complete the social-revolutionary process. Rather, the revolutionary process changed class but not these Hutu-Tutsi relations. Subsequently, Hutu and

⁵⁸³ Ibid., 283.

⁵⁸⁴ Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 129.

Tutsi emerged as bipolar, adversarial, and antagonistic race identities locked in a zero-sum political game.

The mass mobilisation for the genocide of the Tutsi reproduced the Hutu and Tutsi as bipolar and antagonistic racial identities. The identity of Hutu became synonymous with 'indigenous Rwandan' and Tutsi with 'counter-revolutionary', with the Tutsi demonised as colonial agents and enemies of the revolution and of all Hutu. This made the revolutionary process permanent as it institutionalised political opposition between Hutu and Tutsi.

Reinforcing this permanence was the externalisation of Tutsi political opposition. After the genocide, the number of Tutsi refugees created by the Revolution reached 336,000 by late 1964. Thus, the institutionalisation and externalisation of political opposition between Hutu and Tutsi made the revolutionary process *incomplete* and *permanent*. The race identities, consolidated in the revolutionary struggle, were able to persist in a changed context, thereby subverting the possibilities opened by that struggle. The implication was that the seeds for a second social-revolutionary crisis were planted, as Rwanda became the only country in the region that violently drove an entire group from its population into political exile.

Therefore, the incomplete and unfinished 1959 social-revolutionary process laid the foundation for the emergence of a second social-revolutionary crisis, as the Tutsi who were expelled and exiled by the revolution staged an armed repatriation campaign into their ancestral home of Rwanda.

The 1990-1994 Revolutionary Process

In this historical context, and using Skocpol's framework, the study established that Rwanda experienced another process of social-revolutionary transformation between 1990 and 1994. During this period of civil war, the social and political conditions in Rwanda exhibited all the patterns of a state crisis and social-revolutionary crisis. More importantly, there is a close relationship between the civil war and the 1959 Revolution. The unfinished 1959 revolutionary process caused the revolutionary crisis that was the civil war. Moreover, the major participants, the RPF and Hutu government, were descendants and heirs, respectively, of old foes, UNAR and PARMEHUTU. However, there was one difference: this time, the Hutu political elite was internally fractured, while their Tutsi counter-parts showed greater political and ideological cohesion.

The state crisis, however, unfolded along Skocpol's social revolutionary lines: the Habyarimana regime failed to respond to the challenges encountered from the RPF invasion. The failure to respond to the RPF military pressure was because the regime was constrained by a fragmented political class and government coalition. Caught in the cross pressures between a constraining fragmented political class, and intensifying RPF military pressure, the regime and armed forces broke down via a major RPF offensive, and political coup in the peace process. This made the regime vulnerable to a crisis-from-below.

Need = identification

Moreover, violence in the social-revolutionary process, instrumental in consolidating and defending the revolution, also unfolded along Skocpol's social-revolutionary lines: it involved the politico-military mobilisation of popular support in wars against domestic counter-revolutionaries and competitors, and foreign invaders.⁵⁸⁵ Therefore, the leadership of the government of Rwanda mobilised the society to defend the gains of the 1959 Revolution, the Second Hutu Republic. The genocide in Rwanda was born of the state crisis and revolutionary process created by the civil war and was a final attempt by the leadership of the state to defend the Hutu Republic, the gain of the 1959 Revolution. The 'popular' character of political violence is explained by the political dynamics of the social-revolutionary process – they involve the mass mobilisation of society for revolutionary consolidation and defence. The genocide was thus a mass mobilisation of society for the final resolution of the Rwandan civil war, and the final resolution of the unfinished Hutu-Tutsi race and political relations produced by the Revolution.

Skocpol and the Rwandan Genocide

Skocpol's *States and Social Revolutions* is significant, and useful, as the analytical framework, and when applied to Rwanda, takes into account the three main weaknesses of the existing paradigms that explain the causes of Rwanda's genocide. Firstly, Skocpol's framework takes into account the historical perspective and adopts a structural mode of political analysis. She is thus primarily concerned with embedded *patterns*, and since patterns take time to develop, her method of analysis is historical. She looks for the relationships between things in history such as how the state relates to society, how one class relates to others, and how one society relates to others in the international arena. In applying this approach to the causes of genocide in Rwanda, the method of investigation has been historical and primarily concerned with identifying socio-political

processes, in which patterns of violence, leading to genocide, occurred. The study identified two such interrelated socio-political processes, in which patterns of social-revolutionary transformation occurred: the 1959 Revolution, and the 1990-1994 Civil War. The study argued that genocide *was the outcome of, and caused by, these two socio-political processes.*

Secondly, Skocpol's framework successfully deals with the issue of mass participation in such socio-political processes, and takes into account both the state and society-centred explanation. She explains social revolutions as the transformation of both state *and* society. Social revolutions are caused by the simultaneous development of two crises – a state crisis and crisis-from-below. These two crises serve as independent variables. She explains social revolutions in a holistic sense, both from a state and from societal perspective. In applying this to the case of Rwanda, the study provided a complete picture of the genocide, and showed how it was the outcome of the political dynamics of both state and society during the social-revolutionary process.

Thirdly, Skocpol's study is one of 'social revolutions', and the important assumption in this study is that the violence of the genocide, together with previous patterns and processes of violence in Rwanda, resemble that of a social revolution. In using Skocpol's conception of social revolution, and applying her framework to the case of Rwanda, the study contextualised the Rwandan genocide within social-revolutionary transformations, and understood it as an outcome and consequence of such socio-political processes. As mentioned, genocide in Rwandan occurred in two political processes: the 1959 Revolution and the 1990-1994 Civil War. In both incidences, Rwanda experienced profound social-revolutionary crises. More importantly, in both these social-revolutionary crises, the social and political dynamics meet Skocpol's expectations and definition of social revolution, although not perfectly.

Therefore, locating the explanation on the causes of Rwanda's genocide within Skocpol's analytical framework in *States and Social Revolutions* is of great value. It provides for a complete and comprehensive answer to the troubling question concerning Rwanda's genocide: Why so many Hutu citizens joined their government and committed mass murder. Therefore, applying the analytical framework developed by Skocpol in *States and Social Revolutions* provides for a comprehensive interpretation, and in depth analysis, to the causes of the type of violence involved in Rwanda's 1994 genocide.

⁵⁸⁵ Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, 283.

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