Utgivna av
Historiska institutionen vid Uppsala universitet
genom Margaret Hunt och Maria Ågren
Olov Simonsson

God Rests in Rwanda

The Role of Religion in the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda
Abstract


This study analyses the role of religion in the Rwandan genocide, providing new explanations to the complex dynamics of devaluation and victimisation processes in genocidal violence. The thesis explains how religion was used in different contexts prior to, during, and after the 1994 genocide. The following questions guide this study: What kinds of religious concepts and arguments were used in the context of the Rwandan genocide, and how? Why were they used and what did these concepts and arguments mean? Finally, did the meanings of the religious arguments change over time and between different contexts, and if so why?

Texts from three sources were analysed: the Hutu extremist propaganda in Kangura magazine and in RTLM broadcasts, and testimonies from the ICTR trials. The analysis was guided by Roger Dale Petersen’s theory on Fear, Hatred, and Resentment, as well as theories on devaluation, social identity, self-victimisation, and competitive victimhood. This thesis utilises the computer software MAXQDA to search for concepts and arguments, which are analysed through the contextual approach developed by Quentin Skinner.

This thesis demonstrates that the Hutu propagandists used religious mythology to argue that the Tutsis were not of Rwandan origin and therefore had no rights in Rwanda. The devaluation of the Tutsi was not only or even primarily done through downgrading animalistic epithets, but through the elevation of Tutsis with emphasis on the historical, and allegedly divine, superiority of the Tutsi. This devaluation allowed the Hutu extremists to claim victimhood, a necessary conviction to argue that violence committed by the Hutus were acts of self-defence. In the deeply Christian context of Rwanda, the extremist Hutu propagandists constructed a Hutu God, while claiming that the Tutsis were non-Christian, irreligious, or atheists, in order to create different religious identities for the two groups.

This study also assesses the judicial aftermath, and argues that religious concepts were used in similar ways in ICTR testimonies to claim innocence, credibility, and victimhood. This thesis thus sheds new light on the importance of religious belief systems in genocidal violence, highlighting the crucial role of religion prior to, during, and after the genocide in Rwanda.

Keywords: Rwanda, Genocide, Religion, Christianity, Catholicism, Church, Propaganda, Dehumanisation, ICTR

Olov Simonsson, Department of History, Box 628, Uppsala University, SE-75126 Uppsala, Sweden.

© Olov Simonsson 2019

ISSN 0081-6531
ISBN 978-91-513-0655-1
urn:nbn:se:uu:diva-380153 (http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=nbn:se:uu:diva-380153)
Contents

Acknowledgements ............................................................................................ 7
Acronyms and Abbreviations .......................................................................... 9
Glossary .............................................................................................................. 11
Map of Rwanda ................................................................................................. 15
Introduction ...................................................................................................... 17
  1.1 Aim and research questions ................................................................. 19
  1.2 Previous Research ............................................................................. 20
Theory, Sources, and Method ........................................................................ 53
  2.1 Theory ..................................................................................................... 53
  2.2 Primary Sources .................................................................................. 65
  2.3 Method .................................................................................................... 79
Background and outline ................................................................................... 87
  3.1 Historical background ........................................................................ 87
  3.2 Thesis outline .................................................................................... 102
The dividing God: The separation of Hutu and Tutsi through mythology .......... 104
  4.1 Introduction ........................................................................................ 104
  4.2 The origins of the Rwandans ............................................................ 105
  4.2 The use of origins ............................................................................... 111
  4.3 Royalty and Nobility .......................................................................... 122
  4.4 The race of God ................................................................................. 129
  4.5 Dividing the Church .......................................................................... 137
  4.6 Conclusions ......................................................................................... 150
The Rwandan gods: The separation of Hutus and Tutsis through faith ..... 153
  5.1 Introduction ........................................................................................ 153
  5.2 A Rwandan God ................................................................................ 154
  5.3 The Religiosity of the Tutsi ................................................................ 164
  5.4 The Strategic Faith of the Hutu ....................................................... 183
  5.5 Conclusions ......................................................................................... 192
Between the Devil and the deep blue sea: The use of religion in the genocide tribunal ................................................................. 195

6.1 Introduction ...................................................................................................................................................... 195
6.2 The influence of God ...................................................................................................................................... 196
6.3 The Influence of the Devil .............................................................................................................................. 211
6.4 Truth and Forgiveness .................................................................................................................................. 225
6.5 Father Seromba and the importance of faith ................................................................................................. 239
6.6 Conclusions ..................................................................................................................................................... 247

Concluding remarks .................................................................................................................................................. 250

Sammanfattning på svenska ........................................................................................................................................... 263

Appendices .............................................................................................................................................................. 277

Appendix I: Concepts ................................................................................................................................................. 277
Appendix II: The Hutu Ten Commandments ............................................................................................................ 282
Appendix III: ICTR Cases and Number of Transcripts ............................................................................................... 285
Appendix IV: Chronology of Events 1884-2017 ......................................................................................................... 287

Sources .................................................................................................................................................................... 298

Literature.................................................................................................................................................................. 306
Acknowledgements

I was fifteen years old when I saw the news of a murdered president and the massacres that followed. Being the grandson of a Jewish refugee, I had grown up with the Holocaust, and now, in 1994, another genocide was being committed. It never left me. Twenty-five years later, I am writing the acknowledgements section for my finished doctoral thesis, a section that could go on for many pages but that I will try to keep short.

I would not sit here, writing this, had it not been for my supervisors, Lars M. Andersson and Karen Brounéus. They have always pushed me when I needed pushing, encouraged me when I needed encouragement, and believed in me when I failed to believe in myself. I will never be able to express my gratitude to them for helping me make my thesis what it is. I also owe a great deal of gratitude to Professor Maria Ågren, whose comments and suggestions have been invaluable. Thanks also to Margaret Hunt, and Jan Lindegren, for their support over the years. Malin Thor Tureby accepted the invitation to be the external reader at my final seminar. Her insights and comments gave me a clear direction for the final months. Charlotte Merton went above and beyond to make sure that my English is correct.

When first arriving at the history department in Uppsala in 2013, I felt quite lost and confused. I found help in the administrative staff, in particular Elisabeth Brandberg, Lovisa Svantesson, and Sandra Olsson. From the first day, they have pointed me in the right direction and answered every single one of my stupid questions without hesitation. You are the glue that keeps the department together.

While I have grown close to so many at the history department, especially among fellow PhD candidates, there are a few in particular that I would like to thank. Katarina Nordström, thank you for keeping me on track, for the Pilates, the potato chips, and above all, your friendship. Christoffer Åhman, I often feel like we grew up together over these few years. Alexander Engström, I secretly love your stupid jokes, but more than that, I love that you love them so much. Gustaf Johansson, Chris Thompson, and Francisca Hoyer, these years would have been tough and boring had it not been for your kindness and humour.
The Director of the Hugo Valentin Centre, Tomislav Dulic, one day suggested that I should have an office at the HVC rather than the history department, considering my topic of research. I gladly agreed. As the adopted child of the centre, I have gotten support, feedback, and gained many friends, and in spite of the often tragic topics studied there, not one day has passed without laughter. A special thanks to Tomislav and Roland Kostic for welcoming me into the family. A special thanks also to Holly Guthrey who, unknowingly at first, would follow my writing process from beginning to end, and cheer me up with her unswedish cackle. Michelle Gordon came in later to the process, and only with her help and unwavering support did I manage to submit a finished manuscript on time, with my mental health somewhat intact. Tack!

My mother, Annakarin Simonsson, once told me that I should do whatever I want, as long as I know what I am doing. If I had taken her advice, I would not have been where I am today. Even though I seldom have any idea of what I am doing, she has always supported me. So did my father, who saw the beginning of this process but sadly not the end. My brother Per and my sister Märit are, and have always been, great inspirations in all aspects of life! Thank you.

Annika Simonsson has given up much for me to be here and no words will ever suffice to express my gratitude. And most importantly, my son Julian: Jag ska göra allt jag kan för att göra denna värld bättre för dig.

Olov Simonsson
Uppsala, April 2019
Acronyms and Abbreviations

BBTG  Broad-Based Transitional Government. The government meant to rule in the transition to democracy after the Arusha Peace Agreement.

CDR  Coalition pour la Défense de la République. Hutu nationalist party founded in 1992. Responsible for several massacres during the war. Involved in organising the genocide.

FAR  Forces Armées Rwandaises. The Rwandan army under the Habyarimana regime.


IRMICT  International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals. Established in 2010 to take over certain duties from UN genocide tribunals, such as handling archives and the arrest, and prosecution of, fugitives when the tribunals close. The Arusha branch for the ICTR opened in 2012.

MDR  Mouvement Démocratique Républican. Founded in 1991. Adopted the politics of Parmehutu, the party of the first Rwandan President.

MRND  Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour la Développement. Ruling party from 1975 to 1994, founded by President Juvénal Habyarimana. The only
legal party until the democratisation process in 1991. Several of its leading members were involved in organising the genocide. (In 1991, the party added ‘et la Démocratie’ to its name, becoming the MRNDD. This later addition is omitted from this thesis to avoid confusion.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNAR</td>
<td>Pro-monarchy party in Rwanda prior to the 1959 Hutu revolution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNAMIR II</td>
<td>Authorised by UN Resolution 918 in May 1994. Established by Resolution 925 in June 1994, with an expanded mandate. Unable to launch until after the genocide had ended because member states were unwilling to contribute to the mission.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Glossary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akazu</td>
<td>Lit. ‘little house’. The group closest to the mwami in precolonial Rwanda. After 1985, the akazu was reformed as a group of Hutu extremist politicians, businessmen, and military officers closely connected to the Habyarimana family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banyarwanda</td>
<td>‘Rwandans’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>benezebahinzi</td>
<td>‘Sons of labourers’ or ‘Sons of the hoe’. Used by Hutus to refer to themselves and their heritage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bourgmestre</td>
<td>Mayor or head of commune in Rwanda. Rwanda was divided into eleven prefectures, which were further divided into communes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gacaca</td>
<td>Approx. ‘justice on the grass’. The traditional system of conflict resolution, renewed to handle genocide trials in 2001.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gendarmerie</td>
<td>A paramilitary police force trained by the French military.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>génocidaire</td>
<td>Person who commits genocide. Mainly those who organise and orchestrate the genocide, but sometimes also used for all perpetrators of genocide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ibimonyo</td>
<td>Lit. ‘ant’. Derogatory term for Hutus in pre-revolution Rwanda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imana</td>
<td>God, in both pre-Christian and Christian Rwanda. As they had similar attributes, missionaries never replaced the indigenous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inkotanyi  Lit. ‘Invincible fighter’ or ‘tough warrior’. RPF soldiers referred to themselves as inkotanyi, which later became one name for the RPF in Rwanda.

Interahamwe  Lit. ‘Those who work together’. Civilian youth militia created by the MRND. Officially meant to patrol and keep the capital safe. Unofficially they were trained to commit genocide.

inyenzi  Cockroach. Name adopted by Tutsi guerrilla in the 1960s. Adopted by Hutu extremists in the 1990s in reference to the RPF, and later also to Tutsi in general.

ibipinga  Someone who rejects what another says, adopted and adapted from the Swahili.

kalinga/karinga  The Royal Drum of the mwami. Decorated with the genitals of fallen enemies. It was said to hold the power of Imana.

Kanguka  ‘Wake up!’ Magazine established in 1998 by a Tutsi businessman and member of the RPF. Critical of the Habyarimana regime.

Kangura  ‘Wake them up!’ Hutu nationalist magazine established in 1990 to counter Kanguka. Loyal to the Habyarimana regime.

Kinyamateka  A Rwandan Catholic newspaper.

Kinyarwanda  The indigenous language of Rwanda.


mwami  Often translated as ‘king’. Leader of Rwanda in the colonial and pre-colonial eras.

préfet  Head of a prefecture.

salama  Peace.

ubumwe  Unity.
ububake The precolonial social order of Rwanda. A class system of patrons and clients. Often compared it to European feudal systems, but that is an anatopism.

ubwoko/bwoko ‘Group’/’Type’/’Species’, although often translated as ‘Race’ in the sources.

Umurava A popular Hutu nationalist magazine, although it could not compete with Kangura.

umutabazi The ritual sacrifice of the mwami for the protection of Rwanda.
Map of Rwanda

Map 1. Rwanda, with some of the places featured in this dissertation. Drawn by the author.
CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Come friends, the Inyenzi are all dead.
Come friends, rejoice, God is just.¹

Father Straton was a priest in Nyange parish, in Kivumu commune, in western Rwanda. He was a Tutsi, and for that reason he had allegedly received death threats in the days preceding the start of the genocide in 1994. He had been accused of other wrongdoings, such as distributing food from aid organisations to his friends instead of the poor in his parish, but the reason why he finally decided to throw the keys to the church at the feet of his colleague, Father Athanase Seromba, was said to have been the ethnic animosity between the two. Father Straton left the parish, never to be seen again, while Father Seromba took his place.²

When the genocide commenced, Tutsis fled to churches and other public buildings to seek shelter. The local authorities drove around in trucks, gathering refugees, saying they would bring the threatened Tutsis to safety. Nyange parish was no exception. Between 6 and 16 April, approximately 2,000 people had gone there seeking the protection of Father Seromba and the Church.³ However, the church would offer no sanctuary.

On 11 April, when there was no more room for refugees in the church, which now held far more than the 1,500 people it was built for, the gendarmerie, the Interahamwe militia, and other Hutu extremists began to gather outside, but they did not attack immediately, which led to a stalemate during which time Father Seromba refused to say mass for the frightened Tutsis, and removed all the sacred objects from the

---

¹ RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0300, 23 June 1994
² ICTR-01-66 (Seromba), Transcript, 31 March 2006. Stratton’s name is sometimes spelled Stratton in the transcripts.
³ ICTR-01-66 (Seromba), Judgement and sentence, 13 December 2006, p. 19.
church. He stopped the refugees from going out to the nearby banana plantation to get food, and gave the order that anyone who attempted to leave the church should be shot. On April 15 the Hutu extremists launched several attacks, attempting to get into the church, but the refugees fought back and managed to keep the assailants at bay, in spite of guns being fired and grenades thrown, which killed many of the refugees. The extremists even made an unsuccessful attempt to set the church on fire. At that point, Seromba ordered the assailants to stop their attack – not for the sake of the Tutsis, but in order to get rid of the bodies that were now blocking the church doors, before continuing the attempts to kill the Tutsis inside.

For a while, Seromba and other local authorities withdrew to hold a meeting. When they returned, on 16 April, they seized a construction worker named Anastase Nkinamubanzi who had been working on a road nearby and ordered him to bring his bulldozer to the church. Once there, he was ordered to demolish the church, and Father Seromba told him which wall was weakest and therefore the best place to start. Anastase Nkinamubanzi was a Christian, like most people in Rwanda, and although he never showed any reluctance to kill the Tutsis inside, he was unwilling to destroy the House of God, and said as much to Seromba, asking him three times if the priest really wanted him to demolish the building. He even noted that it would be a crime against God, but Father Seromba did not agree. Instead, the priest replied that demons had got into the church, and that the only way to get rid of them was the complete destruction of the building, and he assured Nkinamubanzi that the Hutus were numerous and thus the church would be rebuilt.

At three o’clock in the afternoon on 16 April 1994, the bell tower fell over Nyange’s church, completing the destruction of the building and the murder of 2,000 men, women, and children.

How are we to understand these events? I would argue that religion played a far greater role than accounted for in previous research, and that the religious beliefs of the Rwandan population must be taken into consideration if we are to better understand the 1994 genocide. Given that over 90 per cent of Rwandans were Christians, and the Hutus and

---

4 ICTR-01-66 (Seromba), Judgement and sentence, 13 December 2006, pp. 28–34.
5 ICTR-01-66 (Seromba), Judgement and sentence, 13 December 2006, p. 31.
7 ICTR-01-66 (Seromba), Judgement and sentence, 13 December 2006, p. 48.
8 ICTR-01-66 (Seromba), Judgement and sentence, 13 December 2006, p. 54.
9 ICTR-01-66 (Seromba), Judgement and sentence, 13 December 2006, p. 75.
10 ICTR-01-66 (Seromba), Judgement and sentence, 13 December 2006, p. 61.
11 ICTR-01-66 (Seromba), Transcript, 2 November 2005.
the Tutsis often belonged to the same congregations and worshipped in
the same churches, I argue that Rwandan Christianity had to be
mobilised and adapted in order to become a tool in Hutu extremist
propaganda, powerful enough to convince the Christian population to
take part in the genocide. In this thesis, I will show and analyse how this
was done.

1.1 Aim and research questions

The aim of this study is to explain the complex dynamics of
dehumanisation, devaluation, and victimisation that were central to the
genocidal violence, by analysing the role and function of religion and
religious beliefs in these processes in Rwanda prior to, during, and after
the genocide. More specifically, I focus on the use of religious concepts
and arguments in Hutu extremist propaganda during the civil war in
1990–1994, the genocide in 1994, and by participants in the trials of the
International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in 1995–2015. In
these various contexts, I search for patterns of meaning and intention
behind the use of these concepts and arguments, to understand how
religion was used to victimise or claim victimhood, and to mobilise
people against their co-religionists.

History and religion tend to be entangled to the extent that one can
hardly be studied without considering the other. However, among those
who study the religious aspects of historical events, and especially
genocide, there is a tendency to focus exclusively on the actions of
churches and church representatives, disregarding the role of religion as
a system of belief.12 I argue that if we are to understand how genocides
can happen we need to take the role of religion into account, not only or
even primarily through a study of religious institutions, but by
investigating religious beliefs and conceptions in their context. Once
these are known, it becomes possible to learn how they were used in
devaluation processes in order to make it morally acceptable for a
religious population to commit genocide.

Although it is not possible to know what a person actually believes,
we do know that religion is communicated through language and
imagery. Thus, through analyses of the religious language and imagery
used by Hutu extremist propagandists and participants in the ICTR trials
we can learn a great deal of the role of religion in the processes of
‘othering’ and devaluation, as well as in claims to victimhood, both
during the genocide and in the judicial aftermath.

12 See, for example, Longman 2010, and Thompson 2007.
In this thesis, I analyse the role of religion in dehumanisation and devaluation, and in claims to victimhood, in the genocide in Rwanda. I use three groups of primary sources, analysing how religious concepts and arguments were used in Hutu extremist media, specifically in (i) the Kangura magazine and (ii) the broadcasts of Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM), along with (iii) ICTR documents and transcripts: a range of sources that offer a better understanding of the importance and strategic use of religion prior to, during, and after the genocide to devalue others or to claim victimhood.

The key question in this thesis concerns the use of religiously influenced rhetoric by Hutu extremists, as well as survivors and witnesses. How and why was such rhetoric used during the civil war and the genocide, and in the judicial aftermath? Using the sources, consisting of propagandist media, trial documents, and transcripts, I chart the religious concepts and arguments used by Hutu extremists in their propaganda, and by witnesses, survivors, perpetrators, and victims during the ICTR trials, in order to answer the following questions: what kinds of religious concepts and arguments were used in the context of the Rwandan genocide, and how? Why were they used and what did these concepts and arguments mean? And did the meanings of the religious arguments change over time and between different contexts, and if so why?

1.2 Previous Research

I will begin by considering the fields of research that are most relevant for this study: research on the Rwandan genocide; propaganda; devaluation; definitions of religion; Christianity in Rwanda; and finally religion and violence. The literature on each is extensive and has developed over a long period of time, and it is thus not possible to present a full historiography of each. I will thus limit my remarks to the research that is of immediate relevance to the questions posed in this thesis.

I have treated the previous research thematically, and thus begin with the literature that addresses the various phenomena on a more general level, before turning to the specific example of Rwanda. The first subsection considers different explanations for the Rwandan genocide. The second subsection looks at propaganda, both generally and in Rwanda, and then the gendered dimensions of Hutu extremist propaganda. The third subsection addresses the processes of devaluation in Rwanda. The fourth subsection moves from propaganda and devaluation to definitions of religion. The fifth subsection is divided into
two, focusing on Christianity in Rwanda before and after the genocide. The sixth and last subsection also has two parts, providing a brief overview of religion and violence in different times and contexts, followed by a discussion of religion and violence in Rwanda.

Some of the names and concepts important for an understanding of Rwandan history, politics, and religion necessarily appear in this section, prior to the proper overview of Rwandan history (Chapter 3). For readers unfamiliar with Rwandan history, all the terms are listed alphabetically at the start of the book.

**Explaining the genocide in Rwanda**

The question of how the Rwandan genocide could happen has been the topic of much research. This subsection will present some of the most relevant attempts to explain the genocide. They are in many ways similar, but place their emphasis differently, some stressing the material and political aspects, whereas others emphasise the ethnic problems caused by colonial conflict, segregation, and oppression. It should be underlined that the different explanations are not necessarily mutually exclusive; rather, they should be regarded as complementary.

Mahmood Mamdani attempts to explain the genocide using a theoretical framework, rather than by discussing Rwandan history and politics. He argues that there are genocidal impulses ‘as old as organized power,’ and claims that colonialism led to two types of genocidal impulses; the settlers’ genocide and the natives’ genocide – the former being the extermination of natives in extreme attempts at pacification, and the latter being the natives’ attempted extermination of the settlers. Referring to the works of Frantz Fanon, Mamdani argues that the natives’ genocide is less despicable than the settlers’, because when the natives turn on the settlers it is ‘yesterday’s victims who have turned around and decided to cast aside their victimhood and become masters of their own lives.’ This is the main point of Mamdani’s book: that the Hutus turned on the settlers, but rather than turning on the colonists, as many other colonised groups did, the Hutus turned on the Tutsis. Mamdani claims that the reason for this was that the colonists never imposed direct rule, but used the Tutsis to rule Rwanda, which caused the blame for the wrongdoings of the colonists to be placed on the Tutsis too.

In the creation of what Mamdani refers to as political identities – the racialised categories of Hutus and Tutsis – and in turning the Tutsis into

---

13 Mamdani 2001, p. 9.
foreign invaders, the reoccurring violence against the Tutsis after the 1959 Hutu revolution, and the 1994 genocide is explained as the natives’ genocide against settlers. While I agree that the racialised categories created by the colonists were of paramount importance, and also, to some extent, that yesterday’s victims became killers, as the title of his book suggests, I cannot agree that the Hutus cast aside their victimhood. Instead, I would argue that they embraced and emphasised it. They had been victims under the Tutsi monarchy, and the invasion by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) in October 1990 served as proof that they still were victims.

Mamdani’s theoretical framework obscures parts of Rwandan history that do not fit the model, such as the role of the Catholic Church in the 1959 revolution, overpopulation leading to scarcity of land, food, and other resources, and the financial crisis in the late 1980s resulting in unemployment, poverty, and even starvation. He argues that these factors would not necessarily have led to violence, and therefore he chooses to focus on the establishing of the RPF in Uganda, and implies that the genocide would not have happened had it not been for the invasion, as it rekindled the notion of Tutsis as settlers.15

Alison Des Forges focuses more on the political aspects and less on material concerns. Although mentioning the estimate that 800,000 Rwandans would have needed food aid to avoid starvation in 1994, she claims that the genocide was not the result of poverty and overpopulation, but the direct result of the ‘choice of a modern elite to foster hatred and fear to keep itself in power.’16 Des Forges argues that the Hutu elite began turning the Hutu majority against the Tutsi minority in order to keep the opposition parties in check during democratisation in the early 1990s. Due to the advance of the RPF in the war, the Hutu elite turned from ethnic divide to genocide, believing that they could unite the Hutus under their rule in the absence of the Tutsis.17

Rui de Figueiredo Jr. and Barry R. Weingast arrive at a similar conclusion. They argue that the genocide happened because the Hutu regime was losing power in the democratisation process, and that they saw the biggest threat being not the RPF but the RPF’s supporters. Had the RPF been allowed political influence, they would likely have won not only the support of the Rwandan Tutsis, but also of moderate Hutus. Exterminating the Tutsis and moderate Hutus would have secured the political position of the Hutu regime.18

Like Mamdani, Gérard Prunier argues that the foundation for genocide was laid long before in the divisions created by colonists and the Catholic Church in their failure to understand the complexities of Rwandan society. The colonists reorganised it to resemble European societies, and in doing so, they exacerbated the already existing oppression and segregation, by turning a wealth-based social hierarchy into a racially based one, and by favouring the Tutsi. In line with the notion of the natives’ genocide, Prunier argues that this favouring of the Tutsis resulted in the Hutus’ hatred, and not against the colonists, but against the Tutsis. Prunier emphasises the uniqueness of the 1959 revolution, in that it was a revolution against the African leadership – the Tutsis – rather than against the European colonists, as in most other colonised African countries. He also claims that this led to the principle of majority rule in Rwanda, which entailed that the Hutus as a matter of principle should be in power.

Unlike Mamdani, however, Prunier focuses less on the ethnic division and ethnically based conflicts, and emphasises instead the role of leadership. He claims that in many African countries where illiteracy is high, the population see little else than their own village, and ideology is a foreign word used only by intellectuals, solidarity is often restricted to one’s own close community. Prunier argues that the ruling elites use this solidarity to control financial, cultural, and political resources. He sees Rwanda as the prime example, where the ruling elite ‘manipulated the existing “ethnic” raw material into an attempt at political survival.’19 The population, according to Prunier, was convinced to commit genocide, through a culture of obedience to authority that was embedded in Rwandan politics, dating back to the precolonial dynasties, and maintained throughout the colonial era and the Hutu republics, leading to a point where the political leaders ordered the population to exterminate the Tutsis, with promises of material gains.20

Using interviews with Rwandans after the genocide, Scott Straus focuses on what motivated the perpetrators. He corroborates several of Prunier’s claims, as he demonstrates that there was very little animosity between Hutu and Tutsi prior to the genocide; what motivated the Hutus to participate in the genocide was mainly intra-Hutu coercion and obedience.21 On the question of whether they had ever disobeyed the authorities, 90.9 per cent answered no.22

Straus’s study thus demonstrates that it was not a matter of hatred of Tutsis, as most of the respondents claimed to have had Tutsi family

---

21 Straus 2006, p. 139.
22 Straus 2006, p. 149.
members and did not disapprove of intermarriage between the groups. Nor was it material gain, or deprivation, or difficult circumstances, as is sometimes argued. Instead, Straus demonstrates, Rwanda was ethnically highly integrated, with intermarriage, a shared language, shared religions, and shared communities. He argues that it was the war that legitimised violence and created the conditions for fear, while the ethnic categories provided an enemy and undermined any argument that all citizens were Rwandans. Finally, it was a matter of power, as the Hutu extremists’ control of the state apparatus allowed them to use fear and ethnic categories to mobilise the Hutu population against the Tutsi. The reason for this, given by Straus, is the declining political power of the Hutu elite. Having realised that they could not win by conventional means, they resorted to extreme tactics, which culminated in the genocide.

Previous research on the political aspects of the genocide and role of the political elite are of vital importance. However, regardless of which issue the scholars focus on, be it political, material, or ethnic, they all contribute to a deeper understanding of the factors that came into play in Rwanda in the early 1990s. The next subsection looks at another key factor that contributed to the killings, namely propaganda.

*Explaining propaganda*

This subsection considers, in order, the literature on propaganda in a general sense; the research on propaganda in Rwanda; and research on the gendered dimension of propaganda in Rwanda.

*Propaganda in general*

This thesis analyses the use of religious concepts and arguments in Hutu extremist propaganda. It is the propaganda as such that is studied, not its impact. The analysis starts from the assumption that religious concepts and arguments were used because the propagandists (as well as the witnesses and the accused) regarded them as important and efficient. Otherwise, they would not have used them. The discussion in this section therefore focuses on propaganda from the perspective of the propagandists, that is, on propagandist strategies rather than the impact of propaganda.

23 Staub 2011.
26 Straus 2006, p. 238.
Political scientist Harold Dwight Lasswell, was one of the first to extensively study propaganda. He defined it as ‘the management of collective attitudes by the manipulation of significant symbols.’

Elaborating on this rather vague definition, Lasswell argues that propaganda is a slow process, in which the propagandists identify themselves with those they want to influence – a target group – and over a long time create symbols that come to be significant for that group. No matter how targeted it may be, a propagandist message will not influence anyone unless the target group has been conditioned over a period of time to understand the meaning of the message. The propagandists therefore need to place themselves figuratively in the lives of their target group, and slowly introduce symbols associated with certain emotions, stimulate attitudes they wish to strengthen, and restrict anything that does not promote their interests.

In the present instance, I would argue that the Hutu extremists in their propaganda were able to build upon concepts, categories, and arguments already established by missionaries and colonisers.

Although propagandists can alter their methods, their message, and their means of communication, they must adapt to the context, or as Lasswell puts it, the propagandist ‘must adjust himself to traditional prejudices, to certain objective facts of international life, and to the general tension level of the community.’ According to Lasswell, there are four main objectives that propagandists follow: ‘(1) To mobilise hatred against the enemy; (2) To preserve the friendship of allies; (3) To preserve the friendship and, if possible, to procure the cooperation of neutrals; (4) To demoralize the enemy.’

Today, Lasswell’s definition, formulated in the 1920s, seems oversimplified. However, it provides an understanding of the basics of propaganda. Furthermore, it has inspired much of the subsequent literature in the field. It was the case with the definition formulated by Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O’Donnell:

Propaganda is the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behaviour to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist.

---

27 Lasswell 1927a, p. 627.
28 Lasswell 1927a.
29 Lasswell 1927b, p. 185.
30 Lasswell 1927, p. 195.
What this entails is a well-thought-out, well-planned, methodical attempt to use language and images to influence the information given to a target audience, and to achieve the desired response. While most of the early definitions of propaganda, including Lasswell’s, tried to encompass all forms of propaganda, contemporary research differentiate between different forms of propaganda. Inspired by the likes of Leonard Doob, Jowett and O’Donnell then discuss the differences between ‘black’ and ‘white’ propaganda, where the former refers to outright lies and deceptions peddled by a concealed source. The latter, the ‘white’ propaganda, comes from an official source, and the content is generally accurate, albeit presented in a biased manner. The sociologist Siniša Malešević further elaborates on the differences between ‘black’ and ‘white’ propaganda, claiming that ‘black’ propaganda seldom is successful. The lies in ‘black’ propaganda are often too easily debunked, whereas ‘white’ propaganda has the advantage of being based on fact. However, the facts do not have to be presented in an objective manner. ‘Black’ propaganda, Malešević argues, only works to bolster existing values; it cannot change public attitudes.

This is the core of Malešević’s argument. Propaganda is not an omnipotent force, capable of converting minds or public opinion. Even in peacetime, people in general do not allow news to alter their viewpoints. The same is the case in wars and violent conflicts: most individuals only embrace that which validates their beliefs. Indeed, the most effective war propaganda, especially when it is ‘white’ – based on truths, facts, and genuine sources – is the one that confirms existing attitudes and beliefs.

Malešević disputes the notion of propaganda turning people into willing killers. He demonstrates how dehumanisation works only until soldiers stand face to face with the enemy, realising at that point that they are not facing monsters, but humans like themselves. Malešević argues that propaganda is meant to speak to those who are not directly involved in the killing, the ‘broader audience of battlefield spectators’. Furthermore, he shows that individuals who stress that the enemy must be killed and express a willingness to personally take part in the killing

35 Malešević 2010, p. 208.
38 Malešević 2010, p. 208.
seldom do the actual killing; however, they might be involved in the propaganda.40

Propaganda in Rwanda
The studies presented above provide insight into how propaganda in general works, why it works, and when it does not. The Rwandan case differs as it was not a matter of war propaganda, but of genocide propaganda. Nor does it fit in the categories of ‘white’ or ‘black’ propaganda, since the propagandists were undisguised and often presented a mix of biased truths and outright lies, and employed concealed sources. Furthermore, as will be argued, they did not have to start from scratch but could use concepts, categories, and arguments constructed by the missionaries and colonisers. In looking at the Rwandan case, I first present the most common themes found in the literature and in the Hutu extremist propaganda, and then discuss the gendered dimensions of this propaganda. One of the key features of propaganda in Rwanda, devaluation, as will be seen.

In a study of Kangura, the Rwandan historian Marcel Kabanda argues that the Hutu extremist propaganda focused on history. Claiming that the RPF intended to reinstate the pre-independence Tutsi monarchy, Kangura’s journalists urged their readers to fight for the threatened democracy—meaning Hutu rule—that had been the result of the 1959 revolution.41

The French historian Jean-Pierre Chrétien follows a similar line, stressing that Hutu extremist propagandists used a well-thought-out strategy in posing as defenders of democracy, tolerance, and human rights. This ‘democratic alibi’ was not only used to mobilise Hutus, but also presented the Hutus in a favourable light before the international community, and especially the French, who had forced President Habyarimana to democratise his rule.42 Chrétien’s analysis thus lends support to Lasswell’s notion of propaganda serving the purpose of preserving the friendship of allies or procuring the cooperation of neutrals.43

Prior to the genocide, propaganda mainly focused on the war, on RPF atrocities, and alleged conspiracies.44 This changed with the genocide, when the propaganda instead focused on the extermination of Tutsis as an act of self-defence. David Yanagizawa-Drott, in his studies of the effects of RTLM broadcasts on the genocide, notes that the

40 Malešević 2010, p. 225.
41 Kabanda 2007.
42 Chrétien 2007.
43 Lasswell 1927, p. 195.
44 Kimani 2007.
government’s endorsement of RTLM legitimised both the radio station and its message. Therefore, the messages it broadcast may have been perceived as the official policy of the government.\textsuperscript{45} Yanagizawa-Drott argues that Hutu extremist propaganda served not only to mobilise Hutus against the Tutsis under the banner of self-defence, but also to convey a very real threat against those Hutus who resisted extremism or refused to take part in the killings.\textsuperscript{46}

Yanagizawa-Drott claims that one-tenth of the overall participation in the genocide was the direct result of media broadcasts, and that nearly one-third of the violence of militia and other armed groups can be attributed to media incitement.\textsuperscript{47} He also addresses the role of education and argues for the importance of literacy – in villages where literacy was high, the RTLM propaganda broadcasts seems to have had no effect, indicating that propaganda in Rwanda worked better on the parts of the population that lacked a basic education.\textsuperscript{48}

What is evident here are the two sides of the propaganda in Rwanda, where one spoke of self-defence against the threat from the Tutsis – a threat both to democracy and the Hutus – and the other of the threat against those who did not participate in the killings. There were, in other words, two ways in which the Hutu extremist propagandists attempted to mobilise the Hutus. There were also gender-specific methods of mobilisation, as will be seen.

\textit{Gendered propaganda in Rwanda}

Propaganda in Rwanda during both the war and the genocide was highly gendered. While primarily focused on ethnicity, men and women were represented differently within the ethnic groups.

In a study on women as rescuers and perpetrators, Sarah E. Brown has examined the role of gender during the genocide. Through extensive interviews, she gives an insight into how women came to participate. Highly relevant for this thesis is Brown’s analysis of the mobilisation of women and how they were represented. She demonstrates how female Hutu rescuers viewed Tutsi women not as Tutsis, but as women with whom they shared a female identity.\textsuperscript{49} Based on this finding, Brown notes that Hutu extremist propaganda was often deliberately gender

\textsuperscript{45} Yanagizawa-Drott 2014.
\textsuperscript{46} Yanagizawa-Drott 2014. It should be noted that one of the most popular songs played on RTLM was ‘Niyewe nanga Abahutu’ (‘I hate the Hutu’) by Simon Bikindi, in which hatred was aimed at moderate Hutus.
\textsuperscript{47} Yanagizawa-Drott 2014.
\textsuperscript{48} Yanagizawa-Drott 2013.
\textsuperscript{49} Brown 2018, p. 40.
specific in order to ‘sow intra-gender divisions by othering Tutsi women in particular.’

Brown also demonstrates how Hutu extremist propaganda relieved Hutu women of the constraints of the patriarchal Rwandan society and not only permitted them agency, but also incited them to act, and assigned them responsibilities to keep Hutu men on the right path – of Hutu extremism – and to save them from the allegedly alluring Tutsi women. Many women took advantage of this ‘opportunity’ to achieve social mobility. In her analysis, Brown focuses on the Hutu Ten Commandments, a key formulation of Hutu extremist ideology. According to Brown, it is no coincidence that the first three of the Hutu commandments focused solely on the roles of women, whereas the three first commandments of the Bible concern man’s relationship to God. Not only is the content and the fact that they are referred to as the Ten Commandments important, but the order in which they are presented have symbolic value, Brown argues.

Lisa Sharlach, in her study of women as the agents and objects of genocide, also demonstrates how Rwandan Hutu women were relieved of social constraints, were encouraged to take an active part in the genocide, and that their ethnic identity ‘overrode any sense of sisterhood with Tutsi women’. She argues that Tutsi women often presumed that Hutu women would protect their children and therefore left them with Hutu mothers, who subsequently handed the children over to the Interahamwe to be killed. Due to this and other findings about the actions of Hutu women, Sharlach argues that the Rwandan genocide disproves the notions found mainly among essentialist feminists of a maternalist pacifism, and of women as inherently less belligerent and prone to violence than men.

Although Sharlach attempts to strengthen her arguments by exaggerating the findings of a 1995 African Rights report on women’s participation, her arguments still bear consideration, especially when discussing rape as a weapon of genocide:

---

50 Brown 2018, p. 43.  
51 Brown 2018, p. 44.  
52 Brown 2018, p. 45.  
54 Sharlach 1999, p. 392.  
56 Sharlach 1999, p. 392 claims that women were ‘among the core group that plotted the genocide’, and that ‘some of the most racist Mille Collines broadcasters were women.’ The core group that plotted the genocide was the akazu, of which the only female member, to the best of my knowledge, was Agathe Habyarimana, who is mentioned only once in the African Rights report (1995), and then only as being related to another female.
The pre-existing stereotypes and ethnic jealousies, exacerbated by the government propaganda campaign denigrating and sexualizing Tutsi women, created a climate in which the mass rape of Tutsi women appeared to be an appropriate form of retribution for their purported arrogance, immorality, hyper-sexuality, and espionage.57

One important point brought out by Sharlach and Brown is thus the agency given to Hutu women to further the genocide, and the propagandists’ attempts to create divisions between ethnicities within gender groups.

Similar to Sharlach, Christopher C. Taylor was one of the first scholars to analyse gender in Hutu extremist propaganda. Shifting focus from the mobilisation of Hutu women to the representation of Tutsi women, he argues that the reason why Rwandan women were more often targeted in 1994 than in previous conflicts was the perception that Tutsi women were symbols of societal decline.58 This, Taylor argues, was the result of President Juvénal Habyarimana’s attempts to improve public morality, in the name of Christian values.

Habyarimana had had hundreds of women arrested and placed in re-education camps in the early 1980s. They were accused of being prostitutes, and although some of them may have been, most were not. Many of these often well-educated Tutsi women employed in both the private and public sectors were publicly humiliated, and some of them were raped while in the camps.59 Although these re-education camps were abolished, their legacy was the notion that Tutsi women were prostitutes.60

Traditionally, Tutsi women were perceived as more beautiful than Hutu women, an idea dating back to the colonial era, when European colonists praised their beauty. This notion lived on and was present in Hutu extremist propaganda, where Tutsi women were represented as prostitutes. In Kangura, they were depicted as using their sexuality to attain Western support for the RPF. These drawings often show Tutsi women having sex with several men at once, which according to Taylor was repugnant to many Rwandans since Catholicism influenced their moral values. These representations were another way of separating the allegedly immoral Tutsis and westerners from the pious and moral Hutus.61

57 Sharlach 1999, p. 394.
58 Taylor 1999, p. 43.
59 Taylor 1999, p. 44.
60 Taylor 1999, p. 44.
Taylor further notes that the idea of Tutsi women as beautiful also came across in Hutu extremist media in other ways, most notably when speaking of Hutu women. One of the tasks ascribed to them was to keep their men and husbands in check, since the latter were supposedly unable to resist the attraction of the seductive Tutsi women. Furthermore, a number of qualities of Hutu women, such as reliability and honesty, were also stressed, not least by contrasting them to the alleged immorality of their alluring female counterparts among the Tutsi, and it was frequently asserted that Hutu women were also pretty. Taylor also notes that Hutu women towards the end of the genocide were told that they had their chance now that the Tutsi women were dead.62

Georgina Holmes’ extensive study of gender representations in Rwanda and Congo in the early 1990s provides empirical examples of how men and women were militarised during the Rwandan civil war, concluding that it became imperative for the Hutu elite to redirect the focus of both men and women against the Tutsi.63 Holmes emphasises the representation of Tutsi women not only as hypersexualised or prostitutes, but as cunning agents and spies of the RPF, using their sexuality as a weapon against the Hutu. Therefore, as Taylor also notes, in militarising Hutu women, they were represented as honest and responsible, and given the important task of keeping their men from the seductive Tutsi women. More importantly, Hutu women were often represented as equal to men, often depicted side by side with Hutu men, in spite of the patriarchal structure of Rwandan society.64

When it came to militarising men, Holmes argues that the aspects stressed were ethnicity or ethnic heritage and stereotypical manliness, the latter through public displays of weaponry. Holmes also notes that men were represented as weak, as in the call to Hutu women to keep their men in check, but also through provocation, citing colonial stereotypes about Hutu men as naturally inferior.65 This way of establishing that the Hutus were the underdogs, I will argue, was of vital importance in Hutu extremist propaganda, and religious concepts and arguments were important in establishing this picture. The duality found in the representation of Hutu men also appeared in the image of Hutu women, as indicated above. They were represented as honest, moral, and responsible, and at the same time less attractive and less sexually desirable than Tutsi women.66 To conclude, Holmes underlines that the roles of women were more important than is often assumed. Hutu

63 Holmes 2014, p. 110.
64 Holmes 2014, p. 118–119.
women had to be elevated from their subordinate roles in a patriarchal society to political subjects in order for the genocide to be possible. Holmes’s use of drawings published in Kangura is quite sparse, and yet her analyses are hard to dispute. Her research provides ample examples on how to discern and approach gender specific propaganda and will be helpful when analysing the religious references in these pictures. In general, the works on gender and the Rwandan genocide provide a better understanding of how Hutu extremist propagandists disregarded, emphasised, and reinforced traditional gender roles in order to mobilise the Hutus as a group against the Tutsis.

**Explaining devaluation in Rwanda**

Most researchers analysing propaganda in Rwanda agree that the Hutu extremist propagandists claimed there was a threat of the return of the Tutsi monarchy and the oppression, and possibly extermination, of the Hutus. As for the dehumanisation or devaluation of the Tutsis in this propaganda, most scholars also agree that the dehumanisation process was centred on the application of animalistic labels and epithets to the Tutsis.

Ervin Staub has done extensive research on the many processes that led to the genocide in Rwanda, and has spent a significant amount of time in the country after the genocide. While he notes that the devaluation processes were initiated in the colonial era, and that derogatory language aimed at Tutsis became a part of everyday life, the examples he stresses are cockroaches and snakes. However, Staub emphasises that the use of such epithets was a part of a larger process of segregation and discrimination over a long period. As the civil war commenced, the use of animalistic dehumanisation, as well as the long history of discrimination and segregation, was used by the Hutu leaders to create fear of the Tutsis.

Jean-Damascène Gasanabo has looked at one aspect of the long period of discrimination mentioned by Staub, as he studies history textbooks used in Rwandan primary and secondary education between 1962 and 1994. Gasanabo demonstrates how even in 1987, the Tutsis were represented as a white group originating in the Caucasus region, interbreeding with black Africans who came to populate Abyssinia. This notion was inspired by the Hamitic Hypothesis established by the

---

67 Holmes 2014.
68 Staub 2011.
69 Gasanabo 2015.
70 Gasanabo 2015, p. 106.
colonisers, in which the origin of the Tutsis was explained in a similar manner. In the textbooks, the Tutsis are thus depicted as foreign conquerors. The Hutus, on the other hand, are represented as natives, in spite of the books claiming the Twas were there long before the Hutus – the difference being that the Hutus allegedly settled in the area without conflict.71

Gasanabo thus emphasises the representation of the Tutsis as ruthless invaders. Furthermore, he claims that the textbooks referred to the Tutsi guerrillas who attacked Rwanda in the 1960s as *inyenzi* (‘cockroaches’). However, his claim is not corroborated by his own evidence. On the contrary, the quotations he refers to show that the authors (correctly) state that the guerrilla movement adopted that name for themselves.72

The fact that the Hutu extremists used the word *inyenzi* when referring to the RPF and later to the Tutsis in general, has seemingly led to the assumption that this was the main form of dehumanisation, which presumably is the reason why Gasanabo emphasises it in his article. Nick Haslam, to provide another example, makes the same assumption in his theory of dehumanisation, and so does Christian P. Scherrer, who argues that the dehumanisation of all Tutsis, through words such as cockroaches and snakes escalated after a massacre in Bugesera in 1992.73

Jean-Marie Vianney Higiro delves more specifically into dehumanisation, concluding that the use of media as proxies for the political parties made the political discourse increasingly hateful. As the director of the Rwandan Information Office between 1993 and 1994, he noted that the use of drawings depicting politicians as animals escalated in vindictive satirical illustrations by opposition political media.74

Higiro claims that the word *inyenzi* was not initially dehumanising, but an acronym originally applied to members of a division of Mwami Kigeli Rwabugili’s army. The guerrilla force, made up of exiled Tutsis that attacked Rwanda in the 1960s, chose to refer to themselves as *inyenzi*. Subsequently, the RPF, as an extension of the guerrilla, were given the same epithet. It then became a generic label applied to all Tutsis. Higiro also emphasises that the use of devaluing names cannot be ascribed only to Hutu extremists, and not only to the time of the war and the genocide.75

---

72 Gasanabo 2015, p. 108.
73 Haslam 2006, p. 254; Scherrer 2002, pp. 88–9. While I agree with Scherrer that early 1992 marked a turning point, I would not say that the use of such words increased, rather that the organisational plans were being conceived and there was an increase in ethnic violence.
74 Higiro 2007.
75 Higiro 2007.
Before the 1959 revolution, Tutsi aristocrats referred to Hutus as *ibimonyo*, which is a type of large ant, living in colonies of thousands, hard-working, but useless to humans. The name Sekimonyo – a name that existed only among the Hutu – meaning son of an ant, has also come to mean son of a Hutu, which shows how this type of rhetoric was internalised by the Hutus. Even today in Rwanda, there are words used for people in opposition to the RPF, such as *ibipingsa*, which means to reject what someone says. Although not animalistic, it serves the same purpose, as – according to Higiro – it has become a generic word for Hutus.76

Jade Munslow Ong focuses solely on animalistic dehumanisation in her analysis of graphic novels, based on testimonies depicting the genocide in Rwanda. In exploring a previously unexplored field, Munslow Ong makes no claim to study methods of dehumanisation other than animalistic dehumanisation. She argues that it played a vital role in instigating the outbreak of the genocide in 1994, and was a prominent feature of the language used by the hate media and genocidaires to describe Tutsis, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), moderate Hutus, and others who did not promote genocidal aims.77

Though brief, Munslow Ong’s article is one of the most specific analyses of animalistic dehumanisation in the Rwandan genocide, although based upon testimonies in previous research rather than on primary sources. She claims that references to Tutsis as animals were prominent in hate media, and while this is true, as this study will show, it was not the only means of dehumanisation. This is also indicated already by Munslow Ong; she is one of the few scholars to include representations of humans as vegetation in her study. For example, she notes that Tutsis were compared to tall trees, that killing Tutsis was referred to as ‘bush clearing’, and that the killing of Tutsi children was described as ‘pulling the roots of the bad weeds’.78 While these expressions were used when the genocide was already ongoing, and thus could be understood as codes for mass murder rather than as a way of dehumanising, it shows the importance of language and context when deciphering the codes.

Unlike the other scholars discussed in this subsection, David J. Simon argues that the use of epithets is not enough to dehumanise. He underlines that it would be a ‘severe mistake simply to equate the process of dehumanization – in Rwanda or anywhere else – with the litany of

76 Higiro 2007.
77 Munslow Ong 2016, p. 215.
78 Munslow Ong 2016.
slurs and name-calling that are recorded’, referring to the use of *inyenzi* as the main form of dehumanisation in the case of Rwanda. 79 Simon argues that the ‘name-calling’ simply contributed to broader strategies of dehumanisation. 80 The broader strategies he mentions are: ‘framing the context of war, and depriving the Tutsis of political rights.’ 81 However, as for the context of war, Simon does claim that name-calling was an effective form of dehumanisation, but stresses that rather than epithets from the animal world, it was military terms, such as ‘enemy’, or ‘accomplice’ that were the most important. As for the deprivation of political rights, he notes that the Tutsis in the democratisation process were gaining more political rights than they had had since the 1959 revolution. In spite of this, he argues, the rhetoric in Hutu extremist propaganda represented the Tutsis as a foreign group, with no rights to political protection. 82

While I agree with Simon that the use of *inyenzi* was not the main form of dehumanisation and that the political aspects and strategies he identifies are important, I argue that they need to be understood as parts of larger contexts, stretching back in time. The Tutsis were indeed referred to as enemies or accomplices, but these and other words used in the propaganda prior to and during the genocide had acquired numerous connotations, some of them religious, because of a long history of oppression, segregation, and conflict. The same is the case with the process through which the Tutsis were deprived of their rights; it was a protracted process, involving the use of mythologies, history and religion, a process that was ongoing before the civil war.

There is also another aspect that should be stressed and that is the lack of actual comparisons with animals. It is true that several animal and vermin names were applied to the Tutsis. However, it is almost exclusively in name, not in comparison. The characteristics of animals are seldom referred to or transferred to the Tutsis. Of course, these words have certain connotations meant to invoke disgust or contempt, and thus, referring to someone as a cockroach or a snake is highly demeaning. However, like Simon, I argue that this was not enough to make it morally acceptable to commit genocide, and certainly not for a Christian Hutu population. To them, the Tutsis needed to be distanced or removed completely from the Christian community, and eventually from God’s creation.

79 Simon 2015, p. 83.
80 Simon 2015, p. 78.
81 Simon 2015, p. 83.
82 Simon 2015, pp. 88–89.
Explaining religion

In order to understand the religiously influenced rhetoric used in Rwanda in connection to the genocide, it is necessary not only to have an understanding of religion in Rwanda, but also of religion and its possible roles in conflict in general. In this study, I take a functionalist approach to religion – in other words, I will define what religion does, not what it is. Thus, this section addresses two themes: definitions of religion from a functionalist perspective; and an overview of research on religion in Rwanda prior to and after the genocide.

Most of the works that rely on a functionalist definition of religion appeared in the late 1960s and early 1970s. However, the definitions and theories in the field can be traced back to the works of Max Weber and Émile Durkheim.83

A recurring theme in functional definitions of religion is the notion of a system of symbols. Robert Bellah provides a definition that in his own words is quite limited: ‘[Religion is] a set of symbolic forms and acts which relate man to the ultimate conditions of his existence.’84 Bellah’s interest is the role of religion and how it has evolved over time. Furthermore, he is interested in its functions in relation to the individual, the self, and the question of meaning in situations of hardship.85

Religion as provider of meaning is also a key aspect of Milton Yinger’s definition:

Religion […] can be defined as a system of beliefs and practices by means of which a group of people struggles with these ultimate problems of human life. It expresses their refusal to capitulate to death, to give up in the face of frustration, to allow hostility to tear apart their human associations.86

Elaborating on his definition, now from the perspective of the individual, Yinger argues that being religious entails a belief that pain, evil, injustice, and bewilderment are inevitable facts of life, but also ‘a set of practices and related sanctified beliefs that express a conviction that man can ultimately be saved from these facts.’87

Like Bellah, Yinger thus stresses that religion gives meaning, provides comfort in times of hardship, and answers the fundamental questions of life. While these are indeed functional definitions, they are somewhat

83 Beckford 2003; Bellah 1964; Yinger 1970.
84 Bellah 1964, p. 359.
85 Bellah 1964.
limited, as religion can ‘do’ more than provide meaning in times of existential crisis and hardships. However, in times of war and genocide, and probably even more so in the aftermath, existential questions may be particularly important. Thus, the definitions discussed above may provide an understanding of the religiosity of Rwandans and motivations for the actions of some during the genocide, as well as afterwards.

Further definitions of religion, albeit less focused on meaning, are provided by Clifford Geertz and Thomas Luckmann. Geertz defines religion as follows:

A religion is: (1) a system of symbols which acts to (2) establish powerful, persuasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence, and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic.88

A system of symbols that carry meaning is not necessarily exclusive to religion. Geertz rightly notes that symbols can be anything that carries meaning, and gives examples of a white flag symbolising surrender or a red representing danger. Symbols, in Geertz’s definition, are ‘tangible formulations of notions, abstractions from experience fixed in perceptible forms, concrete embodiments of ideas, attitudes, judgments, longings, or beliefs.’89 This definition of symbols means that anything could be religious, even the act of playing golf, provided it is seen as ‘symbolic of some transcendent truths’,90 but not if it is merely played with passion on a Sunday.91 This entails that simply going to church is not a religious act unless the cross, the priest, and the sacraments are seen as symbols of a transcendent truth.

Thomas Luckmann takes on a similar line, arguing that church and religion are not the necessarily the same thing, and suggesting that a study of church attendance, for example, will not give any indication of religiosity.92 Luckmann instead claims that churches, like other familiar religious concepts such as cults and sects, are institutionalised ‘symbolic universes’, which is akin to Geertz’s definition. These symbolic universes are ‘socially objectivated systems of meaning that refer, on the one hand, to the world of everyday life and point, on the other hand, to a world

---

88 Geertz 1973, p. 90.
89 Geertz 1973, p. 91.
90 Geertz 1973, p. 98.
91 Geertz 1973, p. 98.
that is experienced as transcending everyday life.'\(^{93}\) The latter he refers to as a ‘sacred cosmos’.

Just as any worldview consists of and is communicated through performance, language, and images, the sacred cosmos is communicated through ritual performance, a certain language, and iconic imagery. The difference is that the rituals associated with the sacred cosmos are not important to the practical aspects of everyday life. We perform the rituals of eating and drinking, which are essential for life, while sacrifice and burial rites are highly significant but not essential for our daily living.\(^{94}\) It is important to note that the reality of the sacred cosmos created through symbols and icons, although not necessarily essential for our practical survival, is still an absolutely vital part of any worldview.\(^{95}\)

Having discussed the sacred cosmos, Luckmann turns to individual religiosity and the church. He claims that socialisation is the main reason why individuals become religious, but also notes that individual religiosity is shaped by the traditional churches:

> The sacred cosmos is available in the form of a doctrine which is codified in sacred texts and commentaries. The doctrine is transmitted by an official body of experts in a manner that is binding for the laymen.\(^{96}\)

In other words, an individual socialised into religiosity finds him- or herself in a pre-existing or ready-made system of meaning that is understood by everybody as religion. Consequently, the sacred cosmos is not entirely individual.

> [The sacred cosmos is] defined by an institution that claims the exclusive right to interpret matters of ‘ultimate’ significance and pursues, at the same time, various ‘secular’ aims which are determined by the organizational structure of the institution, the relations of conflict or accommodation to other specialized institutions, the vested interests of its body of experts, and so forth.\(^{97}\)

While Bellah’s and Yinger’s definitions shed light on religion as a provider of meaning, Geertz and Luckmann explain what religion does

---

\(^{93}\) Luckmann 1967, p. 43.
\(^{94}\) Luckmann 1967, p. 59.
\(^{95}\) Luckmann 1967, p. 61.
\(^{96}\) Luckmann 1967, p. 73.
\(^{97}\) Luckmann 1967, pp. 72–3.
beyond the realm of meaning. However, all these definitions are more backdrop than analytical tool.

On how to approach religion analytically, I have turned to James A. Beckford. Religion, Beckford argues, is a social phenomenon and construction. It is, in fact, not relevant whether or not a supernatural force or entity is involved, or if religion is the result of some basic human need. Religion is still ‘expressed by means of human ideas, symbols, feelings, practices and organisations.’98 It does not have agency, it cannot ‘do’ anything on its own, and is dependent on ‘human actors and social institutions’.99

Although Beckford argues against generic theories of what religion is or does, he does not venture far from the accepted definitions when he states that religion is ‘an interpretive category that human beings apply to a wide variety of phenomena (mostly notions of ultimate meaning and value).’100 This is not far from Yinger’s definition, and it bears repeating that I agree with both. I regard Beckford’s definition as compatible with, and as a continuation of, the definitions presented above. Of particular importance is how Beckford stresses the importance of contextualisation.

The category of religion is subject to constant negotiation and re-negotiation. Its meaning must therefore be related to the social contexts in which it is used.101

I is precisely these negotiations and re-negotiations that are the focal point of this thesis. When religious concepts and arguments were used in Hutu extremist propaganda and in testimonies, some aspects were stressed and others left out depending on the context. As important as generic definitions of religion are in understanding religion as a phenomenon and what religion does, they cannot alone explain specific cases with sufficient precision. To do so also requires an in-depth understanding of the specific religious traditions and contexts in which they are negotiated and re-negotiated.

98 Beckford 2003, p. 2.
99 Beckford 2003, p. 4.
100 Beckford 2003, p. 4.
101 Beckford 2003, p. 4.
Explaining Rwandan Christianity

Christianity in pre-genocide Rwanda

Research on religion and faith in pre-genocide Rwanda is sparse. There is plenty on the churches and their role and relationship with Rwandan regimes. Due to these relationships and their importance in the separation of the Hutus, Tutsis, and Twas, studies of belief systems or lived religion has been neglected. What research there is tells of a highly politicised church. Alison Des Forges notes that both Protestant and Catholic clergy disseminated political messages during services, and several of them also served in a variety of councils outside their churches.\(^\text{102}\)

Far more explicit when discussing the politicisation of the churches, Tharcisse Gatwa claims that the Hutu regime became more important than the gospel for Catholic clergy and laity alike.\(^\text{103}\) In a country that had seen its fair share of conflict, oppression, poverty, and ethnic segregation, members of the clergy could argue that their political involvement enabled them to do humanitarian work.\(^\text{104}\)

The role and power of the churches was a legacy from the colonial regime, which left it in charge of institutions such as schools, medical centres and hospitals, as well as development projects and tourism. This made it the most powerful institution after the state.\(^\text{105}\) While Gatwa does not really go into detail concerning the theological teachings of the churches, he claims that they consisted of a barely updated catechism, introduced by the European missionaries in the colonial era, predicated on a theology influenced by Social Darwinism, maintaining what in secular westernised terms could be described as right-wing conservatism.\(^\text{106}\)

Saskia Van Hoyweghen offers insights into the matter of faith and the Catholic Church. She argues that all denominations were very protective of their economic position and therefore avoided or banned any talk of social issues. Van Hoyweghen implies that economic considerations were a major reason for Rwandans to convert to Catholicism in the first place, and a reason why they stayed.\(^\text{107}\) Also implied in this is that the conversion of the Rwandans to Christianity continued as it had during the colonial era, when the Rwandans converted more out of necessity than anything else, as they would have

\(^\text{102}\) Des Forges 1999, p. 45.
\(^\text{103}\) Gatwa 2006, p. 130.
\(^\text{104}\) Gatwa 2006, pp. 130–1.
\(^\text{105}\) Gatwa 2006, p. 131.
\(^\text{106}\) Gatwa 2006, p. 62.
\(^\text{107}\) Van Hoyweghen 1996.
lost any form of security had they not accepted the patronage of the Catholic Church by joining\textsuperscript{108}

The Catholic Church, Van Hoyweghen argues, focused on liturgy, individual salvation and faith, while avoiding social work.\textsuperscript{109} Individual problems were regarded as individual, not part of a larger social context. Bringing Gatwa’s results into this picture, it would seem that the Rwandan Catholic Church focused on individuals and their personal faith and salvation, while maintaining an official image of being active in social work and having great influence, due to its extensive number of members.\textsuperscript{110} However, as Van Hoyweghen and Luckmann emphasise, faith and church are not necessarily the same thing, and Van Hoyweghen shows that in the 1980s Rwandan Catholics had begun searching for places outside the church, where they could participate, rather than just listen. This resulted in them becoming ‘Sunday goers’ rather than pious Catholics.\textsuperscript{111}

This picture is corroborated by Ben Weinberg in a study based on interviews with eleven perpetrators, survivors, and refugees, ten of whom defined themselves as Christians and one as a practitioner of witchcraft. He analyses their perception of God before and after the genocide. His initial finding is that ten out of the eleven interviewees experienced strengthened faith after the genocide, although most left their churches for others denominations. When asked about their religiosity prior to the genocide, the ten informants who identified as Christians described being pushed into Christianity by their parents. They did emphasise, however, that their understanding of God was limited to the belief in God’s existence and that God was good and Satan was evil. Aside from that, God was not perceived as having had much influence over their lives.\textsuperscript{112} The number of informants is too low to be representative of the entire population. However, considering the notion of the Catholic Church as politicised and that church and faith may be two different things, faith may have been, as Weinberg’s results suggest, limited to the knowledge of the existence of a good God and an evil Devil, and as explained by the informants, that religion consisted of going to church with their families.\textsuperscript{113}

Discussing Christianity in Africa, in a general sense, the theologian Matthew Michael argues that atheism does not exist there, as the traditions of indigenous religions, such as proverbs, ceremonies, morals

\textsuperscript{108} Van Hoyweghen 1996.
\textsuperscript{110} See Van Hoyweghen 1996.
\textsuperscript{111} Van Hoyweghen 1996, p. 386.
\textsuperscript{112} Weinberg 2015, p. 20.
\textsuperscript{113} Weinberg 2015, p. 23.
and ethics have lived on in African Christianity. Thus, God is in everything good, and the Devil is in everything evil. All imperfections in the world are the work of Satan, who Michael claims is as central as God in African Christianity.\footnote{Michael 2013.} Although Michael provides an image of African Christianity, his notions of the roles of God and the Devil could explain the use of the concepts of God and Satan in Rwanda as well. Especially noteworthy is the idea of their roles having been formed partly by traditional indigenous religions.

In sum, the Catholic Church attempted to maintain its political position and to protect its finances, and therefore avoided addressing social issues in its teachings. Instead it stressed individual faith and salvation through strict liturgical teachings, which possibly reduced Christianity to the dichotomies of God and the Devil to good and evil, and certainly turned Christianity into the simple act of church attendance on Sundays.

\textit{Christianity in post-genocide Rwanda}

Ten of Weinberg’s eleven interviewees responded that their faith had been strengthened after the genocide.\footnote{Weinberg 2015, p. 20.} Religion, these informants claimed, was no longer words and sermons on Sundays. Instead, it had become more important than the church.\footnote{Weinberg 2015, pp. 22–3.} This is a clear contrast to what Gatwa noted, that the regime in pre-genocide Rwanda was more important than the Christian message.\footnote{Gatwa 2006, p. 130.}

There is a difference between perpetrators and survivors in the reasons given for the strengthening of faith. Perpetrators found God in the search for forgiveness, while the survivors and refugees found God in their survival.\footnote{Weinberg 2015, p. 27.} According to Weinberg’s study, some of the perpetrators claimed to have ignored or forgotten God during the genocide, and consequently their actions had been the result of Satan’s schemes. Only one perpetrator claimed to have believed that God was on the side of the Hutus in the genocide, and that the killings happened with God’s approval. All did claim that it was forgiveness that made them believe in and understand God, however.\footnote{Weinberg 2015, p. 28–9.} Of the survivors and refugees, several of them prayed to God during the genocide, promising to do God’s work if He saved them. Afterwards, they were convinced that God had saved them and therefore kept their promises.\footnote{Weinberg 2015, p. 25.}

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{Michael 2013.}
\item \footnote{Weinberg 2015, p. 20.}
\item \footnote{Weinberg 2015, pp. 22–3.}
\item \footnote{Gatwa 2006, p. 130.}
\item \footnote{Weinberg 2015, p. 27.}
\item \footnote{Weinberg 2015, p. 28–9.}
\item \footnote{Weinberg 2015, p. 25.}
\end{itemize}

42
Weinberg’s study is of limited scope, and one can always ask whether his informants, and especially the perpetrators, were telling the truth. However, Anne Kubai corroborates the results, noting that Rwandans have returned to God. She does emphasise, however, that many have moved on to other churches. Eleven years after the genocide, the number of Protestants in Rwanda had increased by 20 per cent and Muslims by 0.6 per cent, while the number of Catholics had fallen by 8 per cent. These figures, Kubai argues, do not provide the full picture as a number of new churches have emerged in Rwanda since the genocide.121

Those who return to God but in a different church argue, much like the informants in Weinberg’s study, that there is a sense of belonging, of both spiritual and material support, and a focus on finding God through forgiveness. The new, often charismatic churches are more focused on fellowship and less on the formalities, unlike the established churches, where, as one informant claims, ‘people are just bored, going to church every Sunday when they do not even greet one another.’122

According to Kubai, these new charismatic churches were often imported to Rwanda by returnees who saw the need to face the challenges of Rwandan post-genocide society, and thus came to change the religious landscape with religious belief systems that were of a holistic nature, focusing on both the spiritual and the material.123

Gerard van ’t Spijker argues that some of these new charismatic churches began as prayer groups, which subsequently grew into churches, while, as Kubai notes, others were imported by returnees.124 Van ’t Spijker focuses on these new charismatic churches and the ‘spirit of Pentecostalism’, and less on the established Rwandan churches. He claims, however, that the revivialist movement influenced the latter too mainly because returnees replaced the many murdered priests.125 As noted by Kubai, Pentecostalism strongly encouraged the congregation’s participation, often in ecstatic services and healing prayer sessions.126

Van ’t Spijker notes that a common phenomenon among the Protestant churches in Rwanda is the presence of numerous choirs, and he adds that it is not rare to find as many as sixty in one parish. These choirs sing their own compositions each Sunday, and the songs often have a greater impact than the preachers’ sermonising.127 There are two

121 Kubai 2007a, pp. 202–204.
122 Kubai 2007a, p. 205.
123 Kubai 2007a, p. 213.
124 Van ’t Spijker 1999, p. 165.
125 Van ’t Spijker 1999, p. 169.
themes or theologies that Van ’t Spijker identifies in these songs, both with their own distinct messages of hope. The first is contemplation of the suffering of the Lord: those who follow the example of the Lord and persevere in their suffering will find a place in heaven when the world and all suffering comes to an end. The second is focused on the present, and is a theology of the reconstruction of Rwanda and its people.128

Van ’t Spijker emphasises that the new churches, because they are thoroughly vetted, have been given legal status and acceptance by the new regime. The possible reason for this, given by Van ’t Spijker, is that the new regime has recognised the role of the Catholic Church in segregating Rwanda, and consequently wants to diminish the power of the Catholic Church.129

Anne Kubai notes that religion has the power to legitimise or delegitimise government authority.130 While this could be a reason why the new regime wants to destroy the authority of the Catholic Church, it is also a reason, Kubai argues, why the post-genocide regime has adopted religious concepts for the purpose of reconciliation. Kubai specifically studies the concepts of confession and forgiveness and argues that these words, common in Catholicism, have been used by the state and by NGOs to promote reconciliation. Not only are they used in general reconciliation, but they were also essential for the state to 'systematise confession and forgiveness as a strategy for restorative justice, which in the peculiar circumstances of post-genocide Rwanda, is necessary for the country to move forward.'131

The question of confession, forgiveness, and renewed faith is discussed and analysed below in relation to the ICTR trials, in the aftermath of the genocide (Chapter 6). Before that, however, there is the question of the use of religion for darker purposes.

**Explaining theologies of violence and genocide**

This subsection addresses, first, the research on the uses of religion for violent purposes, with examples from different contexts in which religion has been used to incite and legitimise violence, and, second, research on the relationship between religion and violence in Rwanda.

130 Kubai 2016, p. 2.
131 Kubai 2016.
Religion, violence, and genocide in general

Religion has been used to justify violence throughout history—all the major religions, indeed.\(^{132}\) I will thus provide a brief overview of some of the most relevant research on religion, war, and genocide in the last century, with particular focus on conflicts or genocides involving Christianity. I will focus on how religion has been used by perpetrators, not by victims. The aim is to provide an understanding of how religion has been utilised to justify violence in different contexts.

It is a basic tenet of Christianity to uphold the sanctity of human life, with reference to the Ten Commandments, which in Roman Catholicism extends to a prohibition on contraceptives and abortion. Yet, wars have been fought, people murdered, and groups annihilated, all in the name of Christianity, with or without the approval of the churches. In spite of the official policies of Christian churches, and in spite of many of them working actively for peace and humanity, the scriptures do allow for different interpretations. There are numerous contradictions in the Bible, as in most religious texts. God is vengeful and forgiving. We are to love our neighbours and turn the other cheek, but stone them to death if they work on the Sabbath or engage in homosexual practices.\(^{133}\) Even Jesus claims not to have come with peace but with a sword, in the Gospel of St Matthew, a statement that can lend itself to interpretations that justify the use of violence.\(^{134}\) This scriptural ambivalence towards violence can be and has been used to promote violent acts, to legitimise murder, and even to justify genocide.

Benedikt Kranemann demonstrates, for example, how Catholic prayer books, distributed to German soldiers during the First World War, were meant to offer comfort and encouragement, but they also legitimised the war by de-secularising it, to make it a war of the Catholic faith, and to turn soldiers into obedient warriors of Christ. Thus, by giving war a religious dimension, the reality of it is altered, and the seemingly meaningless violence becomes meaningful.\(^{135}\)

The Nazi regime never promoted Christianity, although it swore to uphold and protect Christian values. Susannah Heschel argues that one of the conditions necessary for the Holocaust was the notion of the Jews as a threat to Christianity and the Christian population of Germany. In her study of the Institute for the Study and Eradication of Jewish Influence on German Church Life, an institute established by German

---

\(^{132}\) For examples, see Wellman 2007; and Juengensmeyer et al. 2013.

\(^{133}\) Exodus 31:15; Leviticus 20.13.

\(^{134}\) Matthew 10:34, ‘Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword’ (here and hereafter, biblical quotes are given in the English Standard Version 2010).

\(^{135}\) Kranemann 2010.
theologians, Heschel concludes that its objectives was to prove that Jesus was not Jewish, but rather an Aryan enemy of the Jews.\textsuperscript{136}

Theologians sympathetic to the Nazi cause used the inconsistent portrayals of a vengeful God in the Old Testament and a forgiving God in the New Testament to further elaborate on the traditional supersessionist theology that Jesus provided a new teaching, separate from that in the Old Testament. They said that the ethics found in the New Testament overruled any remnant of Jewish law; the more personalised Christianity they ascribed to the teachings of Jesus even overruled the commandment stating that one shalt not kill. Heschel finds that the Institute ‘functioned as the religious justification for the social production of Nazi antisemitism’ and ‘created a theology able to manipulate and exploit morality.’\textsuperscript{137}

Robert P. Ericksen corroborates Heschel’s claims. According to him, the Institute and many other German Christians and theologians decided to condone Nazism and the violent oppression of the Jews – some even condoned their extermination – because Hitler’s views on morals and family values, not to mention communism, sat well with the Christian values they said were threatened by modernity, communism, and Judaism.\textsuperscript{138}

Although it is unclear to what extent the results of the Institute’s research reached the public, the reinterpretations of Scripture to create a theology that would condone the anti-Jewish policies in Nazi Germany speaks a clear language. Much like the prayers in the Catholic prayer books described by Benedikt Kranemann, war, oppression, and violence were legitimised through different interpretations, and the multivalences found in the scriptures even enabled interpretations that would justify the use of deadly violence.

This kind of elaborate exegesis is not always necessary to legitimise oppression and persecution, of course, since religious ideas that can be used for these purposes in various ways permeate culture in general. As R. Scott Appleby has noted, there is a tendency among scholars to downplay the religious dimensions to the conflict in Bosnia in the early 1990s, in spite of the fact that religious symbols, artefacts, and songs were used in the committing of atrocities. Instead, political, economic, and cultural factors are emphasised, and culture is discussed as if it were independent of religion. Appleby claims that the downplaying of religion is due to the secularisation of both Muslims and Christians.\textsuperscript{139}

\textsuperscript{136} The main claim was that Jews had caused Jesus to be crucified, which by the logic of the Institute meant that Jesus was the enemy of the Jews (Heschel 2001, p. 85).

\textsuperscript{137} Heschel 2001.

\textsuperscript{138} Ericksen 2001, pp. 72–3.

\textsuperscript{139} Appleby 2000, p. 67.
One of the ongoing processes throughout history, Appleby argues, is the construction of the sacred; and when the sacred is threatened by perceived infidels, or heretics, deadly violence is ‘an authentic, if not necessarily legitimate, response.’ Although this deadly violence may not derive from extremism, it becomes extremist when ‘othering’ and demonisation of the so-called heretics or infidels comes into play ‘to a degree that the annihilation of the enemy is considered a religious obligation.’ In this thesis I argue that the latter is what the Hutu extremist propagandists were aiming for, and to some extent achieved.

While noting that the genocide against the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire was not a result of religious convictions or factors, Ronald Grigor Suny emphasises that religion was nevertheless a marker of difference between the Muslim Ottomans and the Christian Armenians. Through the so-called Tanzimat reforms promulgated between 1839 and 1876, the distance between religious groups increased, as Jews and Christians were prone to accept the modern European ideas that influenced the reforms, while the Muslim leadership attempted to stay in charge of an ever more vulnerable and unstable empire. This led many Muslims to argue that the reforms were depriving them of their sacred right to rule. Suny demonstrates how religious community mattered both to the Armenians and Muslims, but claims that the reason why religious factors are seldom seen in research is the close links between religion and ethnicity.

In the Ottoman Empire, the links between religion and ethnicity were integral to the political and judicial framework of the state from the first. In other instances, the close links were constructed, as with the Jews in Nazi Germany, who were transformed from a religious group into a race, and thus regarded as possessing certain characteristics that would not vanish with conversion to Christianity. Michael Sells shows that a similar rhetoric was used in Bosnia, where certain physical characteristics were claimed to be specific to the Muslims. By arguing that Bosnian Muslims had a defective gene, Serbian religious nationalists depicted Muslims, a religious group, as biologically different. Just as the Jews in Nazi Germany were unable to escape their alleged ‘Jewishness’, this racialisation of the Bosnian Muslims prevented them from avoiding persecution by converting.

What this field of research makes plain is that even though religion may not be the central issue in conflict, it still matters, and it serves several purposes. James K. Wellman notes that ‘religion creates symbolic

---

140 Appleby et al. 2015, p. 5.
141 Appleby et al. 2015, p. 5.
143 Sells 2001.
and social boundaries that include and exclude. By definition, these boundaries create tensions that differentiate the self from the other, one group from another.\footnote{Wellman 2007, p. 5.} What is also clear is that violence can and has been justified by religious exegesis. However, in most cases it is a matter of conflict between two separate religions, or at the very least two separate denominations. Such was not the case in Rwanda. Hutus and Tutsis spoke the same language, shared a nationality, and since intermarriage was permitted and widely practised, by the late 1980s the Rwandan Hutus and Tutsis were less segregated than they had ever been. They were Christians, and although there were different denominations, none of them were specific to a certain group, but had both Hutu and Tutsi members. In spite of all this, as I will demonstrate, the use of religion to justify violence and legitimise war and genocide in Rwanda was similar to Nazi Germany, Bosnia, and the Ottoman Empire, the difference being that Hutu extremists had to create two separate religious identities from one religion.

**Religion, violence, and genocide in Rwanda**

‘The Rwandan genocide cannot be understood solely in political or even ethnic terms’,\footnote{Taylor 2013, p. 278.} writes Christopher C. Taylor of the use of religious imagery in Rwanda prior to the genocide.

When we look beneath the surface of ideology and the avowed intentions of social actors in the genocide, we uncover a ritual and mythological component, one whose origins lie in the rituals of sacred kingship and one that reveals something about the deeper fears and desires of the génocidaires.\footnote{Taylor 2013, p. 278.}

Taylor’s work on the religious continuities between traditional Rwandan beliefs and the imagery used in the Hutu extremist media is highly relevant here. Taylor has an extensive knowledge of Rwandan traditions and religions, which he uses to analyse the assassination of President Juvénal Habyarimana. In pre-Christian Rwanda, the king, or mwami, was a conduit between the creator God in the sky – Imana – and Rwanda. If a natural or manmade disaster occurred, the problem was often interpreted as the mwami being an inadequate conduit. Thus, the Rwandans established a ritual sacrifice of the mwami to appease Imana – the umutabazi. Although the inadequate mwami’s seldom agreed to be
sacrificed, they were hailed as heroes who had given their lives for Rwanda.\textsuperscript{147}

Taylor, in an analysis of images in Hutu extremist media, demonstrates how President Habyarimana, whose name means ‘It is God who gives life’, was depicted as an inadequate conduit, and therefore had to be sacrificed.\textsuperscript{148} He also shows that the idea of overthrowing Habyarimana was extended to encompass the extermination of the Tutsis. The argument went that since Habyarimana, as a sacred king, had failed to get rid of the foreign invaders, the Hutus would have to do it themselves.\textsuperscript{149}

Habyarimana was an obstacle for both the RPF and the Hutu extremists, which is one reason why even today it is not known who was responsible for his assassination. Since he stood in the way of the radical policies advocated by the Hutu extremists, it makes sense that they would think of him as an inadequate conduit, as one who could not prevent the Tutsi rebels from invading, nor end the financial crisis of the late 1980s, or take a strong enough stance against the Tutsis in general. The fact that Habyarimana was criticised both by Hutu extremists and by the RPF during the war, only to later be hailed by the extremists as a hero who died for Rwanda, strengthens Taylor’s argument.

In addition to Taylor’s note on this assassination extending to the Tutsis as they were perceived as foreign, I would argue that there are other religious connotations, which explain the religious factors in the attempted extermination of the Tutsi. This thesis will demonstrate not only that the Tutsis were depicted as invaders from Abyssinia, but also that the close connection to Imana in traditional religious mythology, which led some Tutsis to claim their divine right to rule in Rwanda, was used against them far more explicitly than the images of Habyarimana as a faulty conduit. However, I fully agree with Taylor that ‘one of the best ways for gaining access to this level of genocide is to examine the symbolism implicit in both verbal and nonverbal means of communication’.\textsuperscript{150}

Jean-Pierre Karegeye argues that ‘genocide proceeds from a logic that defines good and evil and thus allows killing without committing a crime.’\textsuperscript{151} He claims that it was through a manipulation of the religious

\textsuperscript{147} Taylor 2013, p. 274. *Umutabazi* was considered in the first encounter with the Europeans. The German Count von Götzten and his soldiers were believed to be invincible with their rifles and supposed ability to read minds. Rather than resorting to *umutabazi*, the Europeans were greeted peacefully, and the *mwami* was shielded from the supernatural powers of the Europeans (Linden & Linden 1977, p. 22).

\textsuperscript{148} Taylor 2013, p. 276.

\textsuperscript{149} Taylor 2013, p. 279.

\textsuperscript{150} Taylor 2013, p. 278.

\textsuperscript{151} Karegeye 2015, p. 198.
language that the Hutu extremists’ ideological hatred of the Tutsis was conveyed. Citing some examples of the use of Christian imagery in Kangura and discussing the use of the Virgin Mary in RTLM’s broadcasts, Karegeye claims that the religiously influenced propaganda found itself in a crisis, in between good and evil, peace and war, revolution and genocide. This ‘ambivalence of the sacred’, a concept he borrows from R. Scott Appleby, allowed interpretations that rationalised violence and made the killing of Tutsis a Christian duty.\(^{152}\) Leaning heavily on theory, Karegeye makes some strong arguments, although the lack of empirical evidence makes it difficult to gauge their validity.

With the exception of Taylor and Karegeye, most research about religion in Rwanda in relation to the genocide focuses on the role of the churches as institutions, and not religious beliefs. Hence the anthology Genocide in Rwanda: Complicity of the Churches? gives a variety of perspectives on the role of the churches before, during, and after the genocide, the general conclusion being that they contributed to the early segregation of the Rwandans, and that they did not act or speak out strongly enough against the increasing hatred.\(^{153}\) More specifically, Roger W. Bowen argues that the churches did not have the means to compete with the extremist media in delivering their message to the population,\(^{154}\) whereas Marie Césarie Mukarwego claims that the religious message provided by the churches did not matter, since the Christian population was manipulated by the extremist propagandists.\(^{155}\) Although Mukarwego does not elaborate on this, I agree with her interpretation, while I would argue that the Christian message was replaced with an alternative religious message, supplied by the Hutu extremists.

Discussing the complicity of the churches, Timothy Longman attempts to explain how and why they were involved in the genocide. As for the question of how, he revisits earlier findings regarding the Catholic Church’s involvement in the early racialisation and segregation of the Rwandans, of the close ties to the Hutu regime, and the active participation of some of the clergy.\(^{156}\) On the question of why, Longman proposes that the history of the Catholic Church in Rwanda, growing into a political organ closely connected to the Hutu regime, brought forth an elite within the Church that embraced ethnic ideologies in order

\(^{152}\) Karegeye 2015.
\(^{154}\) Bowen 2004. Tharcisse Gatwa (2006, pp. 150–152) to some extent disproves this notion when demonstrating that the churches had easy access to the state-owned radio station Radio Rwanda. Thus it was not a matter of access, but a lack of trained journalists and the government control over Radio Rwanda’s broadcasts, which may have prevented the churches from speaking out against Hutu extremism.
\(^{155}\) Mukarwego 2004.
\(^{156}\) See Gatwa 2006.
to suppress radical ideas about how power should be exercised. The Church could not side with the poor, the weak, or vulnerable, as that could potentially challenge the position of the church elite.\textsuperscript{157}

Longman implies that the failure of the churches to forcefully and effectively condemn the ethnically based conflict – some church leaders, he notes, practised ethnic discrimination – should be seen as complicity in the genocide. Failure to prevent is not necessarily complicity, but that said, Longman makes an important point; we need to understand what Christianity was in Rwanda, to the Rwandans. However, Longman takes it farther, and repeatedly compares Rwandan Christianity with his pre-conceived definition of what Christianity should be, suggesting that Rwandan Christianity was not true Christianity.\textsuperscript{158}

Cited by Longman and many others, one of the most important works on the role of the Rwandan churches is \textit{The Churches and Ethnic Ideology in the Rwandan Crises, 1900–1994}, by the Rwandan theologian Tharcisse Gatwa. Through his extensive research, he provides a thorough account of the Christian churches in Rwanda, from the introduction of Christianity through the genocide. Gatwa concludes that the foundation for the genocide is found in the revised version of the Hamitic Hypothesis, introduced by the Catholic missionaries in the early 1900s. This hypothesis (which I discuss below) was used to explain the origins of the Rwandans, and led to the ethnic separation of the people of Rwanda. Thus the missionaries, in collaboration with the European colonists, constructed a history containing biblical elements, which was internalised by the Rwandans, who, after Rwanda gained independence, maintained the segregation and the contempt that would evolve into hatred in the early 1990s.

Somewhat surprisingly, in spite of an extensive chapter on the Rwandan Hutu extremist media, in which he comments on the imagery in the press such as \textit{Kangura}, Gatwa does not go into how religious imagery and religiously influenced propaganda was used, but focuses chiefly on the ethnic and political propaganda.\textsuperscript{159} Fortunately, others, not least Alison Des Forges, have addressed the religious aspects of Hutu extremist propaganda. She does that in her Human Rights Watch report, which is one of the most extensive and comprehensive books on the genocide.\textsuperscript{160} In a short chapter on how the Rwandan extremist media validated the message of hatred, Des Forges emphasises that the propagandists used religion and the church in their disinformation. Noting the high percentage of Christians in Rwanda, she suggests that

\textsuperscript{157} Longman 2010.
\textsuperscript{158} Longman 2010.
\textsuperscript{159} Gatwa 2006.
\textsuperscript{160} Des Forges 1999.
‘these references to religion helped make the teachings of fear and hate more acceptable.’\textsuperscript{161} Des Forges does not provide any empirical results to back up her claim. However, as will be seen from the empirical material, I would argue that her claim is valid – religious references were indeed an integral part of the devaluation and dehumanisation processes.

With a clearer picture of the processes that led to the genocide, I will now turn to the theoretical, empirical and methodological concerns that underpin this thesis.

\textsuperscript{161} Des Forges 1999, p. 85.
CHAPTER 2
Theory, Sources, and Method

2.1 Theory

The theories used in this thesis fall into three groups: Roger Dale Petersen’s theory of fear, hatred, and resentment; theories of devaluation, delegitimisation, and dehumanisation; and theories of social identity, self-victimisation, and competitive victimhood. These theories help explain different aspects of how and why religious concepts and arguments were used, whether in Hutu extremist propaganda prior to or during the genocide, or in the post-genocide trials.

Fear, hatred, and resentment

In this thesis, the focus is on religious concepts and arguments in Hutu extremist propaganda. It is important to understand why and how Rwandan Hutus resorted to violence. Even if we cannot see the effects of the propaganda, understanding the reason why people commit atrocious acts against another group will tell us something about those who incite people to do so.

In an attempt to explain ethnic violence, Roger Dale Petersen takes what he refers to as an emotion-based approach. He argues that although there are few theories of ethnic violence that take emotions into account, emotions are implicitly present in most. He claims that the emotion-based approach is the most convincing theory to explain why individuals commit acts of atrocious violence. Emotions, Petersen argues, trigger actions to satisfy pressing concerns. In the case of ethnic violence, he emphasises three instrumental emotions: fear, hatred, and resentment. In his words: ‘Fear prepares the individual to satisfy safety concerns; Hatred prepares

---

the individual to act on historical grievance; Resentment prepares the individual to address status/self-esteem discrepancies.\textsuperscript{163}

Ethnic violence often occurs when the political centre is weakened or collapses due to structural changes. Such conditions produce fear, which in turn drives individuals to take action to ensure their safety. This action is often violence directed at a certain group, and Petersen argues the targeted group ‘will be the group that is the biggest threat.’\textsuperscript{164} Fear is thus an instrumental emotion as it produces actions in direct response to a threat, most often what is perceived as defensive action either through fight or flight, to satisfy the pressing concern, which in this case is safety. The responses differ depending on conditions and the threat creating the fear.\textsuperscript{165}

Petersen emphasises the role of elites. Genocides are normally planned and organised by some form of elite that mobilises the population. Regarding fear and the relation between elite and population in such contexts, three aspects should be noted. In a situation that leads to ethnic violence, one or more of three aspects of fear is present: (i) the same fear is experienced by the population and the political elite; (ii) the fears of the population are manipulated and exacerbated by the political elite to achieve a certain goal; (iii) there is political struggle between elites, where one elite creates or exacerbates fear, often by presenting the other elite as a threat to security, to mobilise the population against the other.\textsuperscript{166}

Whichever one of these is present, Petersen notes that the elites, being in control of information through the media, can use ‘nationalist myths and constant reminders of past and present victimizations [to] inflame and intensify the emotions themselves.’\textsuperscript{167} It is important to note, however, that elites do not shape structural changes, but are responding to them.\textsuperscript{168} In Rwanda in the early 1990s, there were indeed structural changes. Democratisation and the civil war caused by the invading exiled Rwandans, predominantly made up of Tutsis, can be defined as structural changes. Several studies have shown that the Rwandan population initially did not fear the RPF or the democratisation process.\textsuperscript{169} Thus, the fears were either created and/or exacerbated by the Hutu elite, mainly using nationalist myths and self-victimisation.

\textsuperscript{163} Petersen 2002, p. 18.
\textsuperscript{164} Petersen 2002, p. 25. Important to note is that if the target of attack is not a threat, this hypothesis is not supported.
\textsuperscript{165} Petersen 2002, pp. 17–18.
\textsuperscript{166} Petersen 2002, pp. 74–5.
\textsuperscript{167} Petersen 2002, p. 35.
\textsuperscript{168} Petersen 2002, p. 35.
\textsuperscript{169} Straus 2006, p. 124.
Hatred, in Petersen’s theory, is a latent emotion that may not be experienced at times, but can be triggered. Petersen refers to hatred as a cultural schema, which when triggered awakens the emotion of hatred and the appropriate response. It is, in a sense, culturally inherited instructions on which actions to be taken against a perceived enemy, and these actions are often a repetition of actions taken by ancestors. Thus, latent hatred is not aimed at a group for its present characteristics, but for the ‘innate aggressive and unjust characteristics of “ancient” enemies, the hateful characteristics, the former violent and aggressive interactions.’ The perceived enemy may not be an ancient enemy, but for the theory to be applicable there must have been a lengthy period of time during which the targeted group has been frequently subjected to similar violence, justified in similar ways. Thus, the schema is familiar to the population, and so are the actions that are to be taken against the historical enemy, who is identified in the schema. This hatred produces a feeling that it is time to “take back what is ours”, time to “settle old scores”.

Considering the immediate response of the Rwandan Hutus after the assassination of President Habyarimana, it is clear that there was a notion of what should be done, considering the violence that to some extent reflected the violence against the Tutsis during the 1959 revolution.

On resentment, Petersen writes, “The predicted ethnic target will be the group perceived as farthest up the ethnic status hierarchy that can be most surely subordinated through violence.” Here, the matter of esteem is in focus. Petersen argues that individuals desire esteem, and as individuals identify with groups so individuals desire esteem for their group. Resentment is when individuals feel that their group is being politically dominated by ‘a group that has no right to be in a superior position.

Along with the identification with groups, individuals tend to think of groups as having a place in a hierarchy. As often is emphasised in Petersen’s theory, it is when structures are weakened or collapse that ethnic violence occurs. According to the resentment narrative, individuals believe that they can reorder the hierarchies through ‘violence and discriminatory policies.’ Thus, resentment is the feeling found in unjust status relations that a subordinated group is out of bounds, but that this can be corrected, most likely through violence. This sense of injustice

---

170 Petersen 2002, p. 64.
172 Petersen 2002, p. 64.
175 Petersen 2002, p. 41.
often arises when a majority group perceives itself to be subordinated by a minority group. Therefore, ethnic violence brought on by resentment will never be aimed at a group that is perceived to be lower in the ethnic hierarchy. As for Rwanda, the Hutu extremists were at the top of the ethnic hierarchy in the 1990s, being in the majority and in power since 1959. However, the colonial notion of the Tutsis as a superior race persisted throughout the genocide, providing a perception that it was \textit{they} who were positioned at the top of the ethnic hierarchy.

![Figure 1. Roger Dale Petersen’s model of structures, emotions, and ethnic conflict. Source: Petersen 2002, p. 23.](image)

Figure 1 shows the model of Petersen’s theory of ethnic violence. It begins with structural changes. Through information about the changes comes belief, which produces emotions. The emotions in turn affect the information and beliefs, which further strengthen the emotions. Fear, for example, will produce reports of threats that will overshadow other reports. Such reports will remind a group of past animosities, leading to hatred, and they will feed thoughts of one’s own group status. The instrumental emotions will also awaken desires for safety, vengeance for historical grievances, and a need for a reorganised group hierarchy. The

\footnote{Petersen 2002, pp. 48–52.}
predicted action of individuals under these conditions is violence. In Petersen’s model, actions and emotions thus have predictable outcomes.

This thesis does not analyse the effects of propaganda. However, the underlying presumption is that the propagandists expected their arguments to have an effect, and they predicted certain actions. Thus any effect mentioned in this dissertation, unless a direct effect is visible, as in the case of Father Seromba and the demolition of the Nyange church, is the effect expected by the propagandists, the witnesses, defendants, and lawyers.

It is well established that the RPF was perceived as a threat, and that this threat created fear, and that this fear in turn was exploited by the Hutu extremists. It is also well known that the Tutsis were subjected to violence, and that they were perceived as an ancient enemy, due to the oppression of Hutus under the Tutsi monarchy. The Tutsis were a minority, and although they had lost their position at the top of the ethnic and social hierarchy after the 1959 revolution, the notion of the Tutsis being, or at least believing themselves to be a superior group, appear to have left a lasting imprint on some Hutus.

To pursue this further, I will thus analyse how religiously influenced concepts and arguments were used to incite fear, hatred, and resentment. Since the government controlled information through the media, the role of the elite and the flow of information will be important to investigate. As mentioned, I neither can nor will measure effects, but through the analysis of propaganda I will be able to provide insight into what the propagandists wanted the population to feel and believe.

**Devaluation, delegitimisation, and dehumanisation**

There are many theories that explain the psychological processes that leave people capable of committing genocide. In this thesis, I have chosen to use an umbrella concept that encompasses some of these theories, namely devaluation, which entails the reduction of the human value of a group or an individual. There are of course several ways in which this can be done, and thus, the concept of devaluation will entail both theories of delegitimisation and dehumanisation.

Ervin Staub in his earlier works employs the term dehumanisation, but has in later works replaces it with devaluation to explain the processes leading to genocide. He emphasises that mass violence and genocide evolve over time. As violent acts are performed, even more violent acts become acceptable, since the moral values of the perpetrators change. By blaming the victims, the violent acts are justified. For this to happen, the

human value of the victims must be reduced. Staub has discerned two forms of devaluation, the first of which he refers to as ‘milder’, in which the victim is seen as lazy, inferior, and unintelligent. There is a more intense form, however, which correlates with the Holocaust and the Rwandan genocide, in which the victim is seen as successful, and for that reason represented as ‘manipulative, exploitative, dishonest, and generally morally deficient’.

The tendency to differentiate between us and them, or in-groups and out-groups, is well established, and is often the cause of the devaluation of entire groups. From this arises a need to provide the other group with a separate identity, and these identities will in time become part of mainstream culture. Added to that, a history of violent conflict and oppression, Staub argues, can be the cause of an ideology of antagonism. This entails an antagonism against the other group as an integral part of the construction of identities, which in a worst-case scenario can make the world seem better without the other group.

The processes leading to such points are very complex, and therefore need to be discussed and defined further. Daniel Bar-Tal has introduced a theory of delegitimisation. In his definition, delegitimisation is defined as:

the categorization of a group, or groups, into extremely negative social categories that exclude it, or them, from the sphere of human groups that act within the limits of acceptable norms and/or values, since these groups are viewed as violating basic human norms or values and therefore deserving maltreatment.

Using delegitimisation as an umbrella concept, Bar-Tal gives five examples of delegitimisation: (i) dehumanisation, (ii) outcasting, (iii) trait characterisation, (iv) use of political labels, and (v) group comparisons. In Bar-Tal’s definition, dehumanisation does not necessarily entail animal comparisons, but can also contain references to the targeted group as monsters, devils, or demons. The second form of delegitimisation is outcasting, in which the targeted group is depicted as ‘violators of pivotal social norms. It includes such categories as murderers, thieves, psychopaths, or maniacs. Thirdly, trait characterisation entails ‘the attribution of personality traits that are evaluated as extremely negative

179 Staub 1999 p. 183.
180 Staub 1999 p. 183.
181 Staub 1999.
182 Staub 1999.
and unacceptable to a given society.\textsuperscript{186} This category includes labels such as parasites, idiots, and aggressors, applied to an individual or a group. The fourth form of delegitimisation is the use of political labels, which, like trait characterisation, entails labelling the group or individual as unacceptable in a given society. In this case, it is a matter of applying political labels, such as Nazis, communists, fascists, capitalists, or colonialists, depending on what is deemed unacceptable in the society where the delegitimisation occurs. The fifth and last, and closely related to the use of political labels, is group comparison. Here too a label is taken from one group and applied to the targeted group. Bar-Tal gives the example of Americans referring to Germans as Huns during the First World War.\textsuperscript{187} Bar-Tal emphasises that, depending on culture, the labels and groups will differ.

Bar-Tal notes that delegitimised groups are often part of society, albeit categorised as groups that are rejected by the norms and values of the delegitimising group. As was the case in Rwanda, delegitimisation seldom occurs without the support of political institutions or the judicial system. As this thesis will demonstrate, and as Bar-Tal emphasises, the delegitimised group is often ascribed potentially harmful behaviour. Bar-Tal states that 'labels such as fascists, savages, or aggressors imply potential behaviour, which may endanger the delegitimizing group, or even other groups.'\textsuperscript{188} However, the result is the same: as Bar-Tal notes, a delegitimisation process will result in the notion that the delegitimised group does not deserve human treatment. Thus, delegitimisation can lead to genocide or other extreme actions, as the target group is 'considered a threat to the basic values, norms, or even the existence of the society itself and its structure. Thus the delegitimising group feels an obligation to avert the danger, in order to protect its existence.'\textsuperscript{189}

Of the five forms of delegitimisation presented by Bar-Tal, dehumanisation is one that deserves extra attention, as it is a concept that likely is familiar to most and frequently used, not least in research on the Rwandan genocide. It entails an individual or collective being denied their humanity, thus being reduced to something less than human, most often animals. David J. Simon provides a definition according to which dehumanisation is the process that 'renders a target psychologically (and socially) easier to kill, and therefore makes killing more likely and more widespread.'\textsuperscript{190}

\textsuperscript{186} Bar-Tal 1989, p. 173.
\textsuperscript{187} Bar-Tal 1989, p. 173.
\textsuperscript{188} Bar-Tal 1989, p. 171.
\textsuperscript{189} Bar-Tal 1989, p. 171.
\textsuperscript{190} Simon 2015, p. 90.
Based on previous research and definitions, Nicholas Haslam argues that there are two forms of dehumanisation: animalistic and mechanistic dehumanisation. Regarding the animalistic form, if a person is denied what separates a human from an animal, then the human is regarded as comparable to, and often represented as animals, especially in conflict situations. Mechanistic dehumanisation, on the other hand, is common in everyday life, and is not necessarily related to aggression, but rather to the objectification of the other. Haslam also discerns five attributes associated with each for dehumanisation: for animalistic dehumanisation they are coarseness, amorality, irrationality, childlikeness, and a lack of culture; for mechanistic dehumanisation they are inertness, coldness, rigidity, passivity, and superficiality. Although not all of these characteristics fit into the dehumanisation or devaluation of the Tutsi in relation to the 1994 genocide, I would argue that they were all used in self-victimising and devaluing propaganda.

While dehumanisation and certainly animalistic dehumanisation is common in most genocides, it does not account for the many other ways in which human beings are categorised and subjected to devaluing treatment. Bar-Tal’s delegitimisation theory remedies this problem by providing specific definitions and forms of delegitimisation. However, his theory is limited to existing conflicts, and excludes the evolution preceding it. I will primarily use the term devaluation, as I find that delegitimisation occurs mainly within the intense form of devaluation. Bar-Tal implicitly supports this claim, noting that ‘negative evaluation facilitates the use of delegitimizing labels’, and that ‘the less a group values another group, the easier it is for this group to delegitimise the other group.’ Thus, although it encompasses both delegitimisation and dehumanisation, I find devaluation to be better suited to describe the entire process leading to the Rwandan genocide.

**Social identity, self-victimisation, and competitive victimhood**

This section will address three closely related aspects of group identity and victimhood: social identity theory; theories of self-victimisation; and theories of competitive victimhood. Social identity theory aims to explain group identities and individual behaviours within groups. Theories of self-victimisation, as the name implies, deal with situations when a person or group claim victimhood, regardless of whether or not they are victims of

---

191 Haslam 2006, p. 262.
harm. Competitive victimhood means claiming victimhood in response to accusations of wrongdoing.

*Social identity theory*

Groups, group formations, and group identities are central concerns in this thesis. I rely on Henri Tajfel’s theories of social identity. At the very core of Tajfel’s theory is the assumption that ‘an individual strives to achieve a satisfactory concept or image of himself.’194 This is done when the individual recognises his or her identity through membership of a social group.195 A group, as defined by Henri Tajfel and John Turner, is:

A collection of individuals who perceive themselves to be members of the same category, share some emotional involvement in this common definition of themselves, and achieve some degree of social consensus about the evaluation of their group and of their membership of it.196

Tajfel argues that an individual will maintain membership of a group that contributes positively to that individual’s social identity. An individual may also seek membership in other groups, without necessarily leaving the former, if they can satisfy his or her self-concept.197 If one’s self-concept is not satisfied in a group, the individual will seek memberships in other groups, unless it for some reason is rendered impossible, or if it conflicts with values that are parts of his or her social identity. If it is impossible or difficult to leave a group, there are two options: either reinterpret the attributes of the group to justify or make acceptable any unwelcome features; or engage in social action to change the situation—simultaneously justifying the negative aspect and attempting to remove it.198

Tajfel emphasises that all groups live in the midst of other groups. He further notes that groups lose their meaning unless they can be related to or compared with other groups. In fact, a group cannot be defined without its perceived differences to other groups.199 This leads to the formation of in-groups and out-groups, where the former is one’s own group, comparable to other relevant groups.200 Through experiments, Tajfel concludes that intergroup differences are created when they do not exist,
and when they do, they are given value and are enhanced. Tajfel suggests that this is the result of the individual’s need to provide order, meaning and social identity to a given situation.\footnote{Tajfel 1974, p. 75.}

There were a number of groups in Rwanda such as ethnic groups, gender groups, religious groups, and, after the genocide, even categories that depend on the roles the individuals played during the genocide. Henri Tajfel’s social identity theory will therefore be used to provide possible explanations for behaviour in intergroup interactions, and in their attempts to improve their self-concept prior to, during, and most certainly after the genocide.

**Self-victimisation**

Daniel Bar-Tal and Phillip Hammack claim that alongside delegitimisation, self-victimisation – or collective victimhood, or self-victimhood, as they prefer to call it – is an important part of most conflict.\footnote{Bar-Tal & Hammack 2012, pp. 36–7.} They argue that the ‘sense of victimhood fulfils important psychological functions for individuals in conflict settings, including supporting the sense of moral superiority relative to the out-group’.\footnote{Bar-Tal & Hammack 2012, p. 40.} The moral superiority that comes with the notion of oneself as the victim of unjust harm also removes all responsibility for the conflict, violence, and suffering.\footnote{Bar-Tal & Hammack 2012, p. 40.} Thus, self-victimhood serves as a prism though which information and experiences in conflicts are interpreted.\footnote{Bar-Tal & Hammack 2012, p. 37.} Bar-Tal et al. argue that individuals define themselves as a victim if they believe that: (1) they were harmed; (2) they were not responsible for the occurrence of the harmful act; (3) they could not prevent the harm; (4) they are morally right and suffering from injustice done to them; and (5) they deserve sympathy.\footnote{Bar-Tal, Chernyak-Hai, Schori, & Gundar 2009, p. 232.}

They further emphasise that the experience of a harmful event is not enough to produce a sense of victimhood; for that, the event must be experienced as unjust, undeserved, immoral, and unpreventable by the victim.\footnote{Bar-Tal et al. 2009, p. 232.} Although this is focused mainly on individuals, groups – not least ethnically defined ones – can experience a sense of collective victimhood, even if the entire collective has not been harmed, simply because they are members of the group in question. The harm caused to

\footnotesize

\footnote{Tajfel 1974, p. 75.}
\footnote{Bar-Tal & Hammack 2012, pp. 36–7.}
\footnote{Bar-Tal & Hammack 2012, p. 40.}
\footnote{Bar-Tal & Hammack 2012, p. 40.}
\footnote{Bar-Tal & Hammack 2012, p. 37.}
\footnote{Bar-Tal, Chernyak-Hai, Schori, & Gundar 2009, p. 232.}
\footnote{Bar-Tal et al. 2009, p. 232.}
members of said group must be experienced as directed at the group, or at members of the group, solely due to their group affiliation.\textsuperscript{208}

What is evident here is that collective self-victimisation is not resorted to without some forms of harmful act committed against the group. These forms may be recent, but can also be past harms, internalised by a collective and integrated into a cultural narrative of a group’s identity.\textsuperscript{209} Bar-Tal and Ervin Staub have noted that past harms or injustices are often integrated into collective memories, and are passed on down the generations.\textsuperscript{210} Thus, collective victimhood can strengthen a group’s identity, and provide a sense of moral superiority, entitlement to sympathy, and protection from criticism.\textsuperscript{211} This, I will argue, was the case with Hutu extremism.

Whether it is a matter of a group or an individual, a matter of unjust harm or the perception of a harmful act as unjust, or whether it is a past or recent harm does not matter: according to Staub, the consequences are the same. Individuals and groups who have experienced trauma or suffering are likely to respond to threats of violence, and engage in what they perceive to be defensive aggression.\textsuperscript{212}

The phenomenon of self-victimisation is a continuous theme through this thesis. The first two empirical chapters deal with collective self-victimisation, for they focus on the perceived threat of the return of the Tutsi monarchy. The third empirical chapter, in which the judicial processes after the genocide are analysed, will deal mainly with individual self-victimisation, as defendants generally depicted themselves as victims rather than perpetrators.

\textit{Competitive victimhood}

Daniel Sullivan, Mark Landau, Nyla Branscombe, and Zachary Rothschild have studied what they refer to as competitive victimhood, which is the claim ‘that one’s in-group also has victim status relative to the harmed out-group.’\textsuperscript{213}

Based on a series of studies, Sullivan et al. conclude that victim status enables groups to occupy the moral high ground, thus to their mind giving them licence to commit condemnable acts. Regardless of when in history a harmful act has been committed against one’s in-group, it still justifies harmful acts, and endorses collective forgiveness for current condemnable acts committed by the in-group. Claiming victimhood is imperative, as

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{208} Bar-Tal et al. 2009, p. 234.
\item\textsuperscript{209} Bar-Tal et al. 2009, pp. 235–6.
\item\textsuperscript{210} Bar-Tal & Staub 2013, p. 722.
\item\textsuperscript{211} Bar-Tal et al. 2009 p. 237.
\item\textsuperscript{212} Staub 1999, p. 184.
\item\textsuperscript{213} Sullivan et al. 2012, p. 778.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
being in an in-group that commits harmful acts without the justification of past harms may cause the experience of a ‘distressing moral identity threat’.

Masi Noor, Nurit Schnabel, Samer Habi, and Arie Nadler emphasise that competitive victimhood does not necessarily entail competition over victimhood between adversaries, as in cases where perpetrators of harmful acts against an out-group claim victimhood. Non-adversarial groups, such as victims of the same perpetrator, may also make competitive claims of victimhood based on comparisons of suffering.

Noor et al. conclude, based on previous research that this is the result of a competitive mindset. This is corroborated by an experiment by Henri Tajfel and John Turner, in which the participants did not compete in any way until the notion of ‘group’ was introduced, but when it was, without any definition of the groups, external information, rewards, or even knowledge of who was in the groups, competitions arose. The competitive mindset, combined with a sense of victimisation, leads to competitive victimhood, which in turn bolsters in-group cohesiveness, justifies in-group violence, denies responsibility, and serves to recruit moral and material support from non-involved parties.

Regardless if it is a matter of Hutu extremists using the oppression under the colonists and the Tutsi monarchy to claim victimhood, or of perpetrators competing for victimhood in the judicial aftermath, the notions of belonging to and identifying with a certain group, and claiming victimhood for that group, can be used and understood using the theories above. If we are to understand the behaviours of individuals, we will need to understand their belonging to groups. As this study focuses on the use of religiously influenced arguments and concepts in Hutu extremist propaganda and in the genocide tribunal after the genocide, the notion of group identities is important. Likewise, the notion of victimhood, both in propaganda as well as in the judicial aftermath is important.

Admittedly, there are numerous theories that could explain aspects of the present study. However, I find that the theories here presented encompass the phenomena in the present study. Roger Petersen’s theory of ‘fear, hatred, and resentment’ provides the tools needed to explain the functions, or intended functions, of Hutu extremist propaganda prior to and during the genocide.

As this thesis addresses the attempts to reduce the human value of others, theories of devaluation, delegitimisation, and dehumanisation must

---

217 Tajfel & Turner 1979, p. 74.
218 Noor et al. 2012, p. 353.
be included. The theories discussed here are not only meant to serve as tools, but will also to some extent be challenged.

Lastly, the notions of groups, group identities, and individual identities within groups are highly relevant, as are the ideas of rights and claims to victim status, of self-victimisation, and competitive victimhood, not least since these claims were a key part of the Hutu extremist rhetoric during the war and the genocide, and that such claims were made again by suspected perpetrators during the ICTR trials.

2.2 Primary Sources

Three types of primary sources are used in this thesis: magazines, radio broadcasts, and trial documents. The first two empirical chapters (Chapters 4 and 5) deal with Hutu extremist propaganda during the civil war and the genocide. Here the two most important tools in this propaganda – the Hutu nationalist magazine Kangura, and the Hutu extremist radio station, Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) – are used. In the third and last empirical chapter (Chapter 6) the judicial aftermath is analysed, where the material mainly consists of court documents and trial transcripts from the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

In the following, a discussion of the various sources and how they have been used to answer my questions is followed by a critical assessment of their reliability and limitations, and remarks on the problematics of language and translation.

Kangura

The magazine Kangura was founded in 1990 by the Hutu journalist Hassan Ngeze.\textsuperscript{219} He had previously distributed the Kanguka magazine – a magazine sponsored by the Tutsi rebel group, the RPF – but disagreed with the magazine’s criticism of the Habyarimana regime and therefore decided to counter with a Hutu nationalist magazine.\textsuperscript{220} Kangura was financed by the Presidential party, the Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement (MRND), but never hesitated to criticise the President for any leniency towards the RPF. When Ngeze and other hardline Hutus founded the extremist party Coalition pour la Défense de

\textsuperscript{219} Kangura in the imperative translates as ‘Awaken!’

\textsuperscript{220} ICTR-99-52-T, Nahimana et al., *Judgement and sentence*, 3 December 2003, p. 2. Kanguka in the imperative translates as ‘Wake up!’
la République (CDR), Kangura, albeit still loyal to the President, became the mouthpiece of the newly founded party.

In all, 85 issues of Kangura, most of them twenty pages long, were published in Kinyarwanda and French, bimonthly from May 1990 and to April 1994, and monthly between September 1994 and September 1995, with the exception of October 1994 when no issue was published. After the genocide, Hassan Ngeze fled and continued publishing Kangura from Kenya. Of the total, 74 were published in Kinyarwanda with a few articles in French, while 11 were international issues, translated and published in French only.

Many of the articles in Kangura were translated to English to serve as evidence in the ICTR trials. However, none of the issues have been translated in their entirety, likely due to the irrelevance of some of the content in a court of law. There are more French translations than English, mainly due to there being international versions in French of the magazines, and some articles were published in French in the Kinyarwandan versions as well. Although I have relied heavily on the articles translated into English or French and the international issues, I have searched for a specific set of concepts in the Kinyarwandan issues as well, both to make sure the translations are correct, and to see if there is more of relevance to my study than is found in the French and English versions. Thus, I have searched through all 85 issues, and many of them in all three languages.

Strongly critical of the RPF, Kangura raised the ethnic issue when urging Hutus to unite and oppose the Tutsis as an ethnic group at a much earlier stage than other media. The Hutu Ten Commandments, published in December 1990 is such an example, where Kangura argued that the Tutsis were deceitful, and that any Hutu who got involved with Tutsis was to be considered a traitor.221 In contrast to the relative calm of the 1980s, the RPF invasion in October 1990 enabled Kangura journalists to depict Rwanda as being in the midst of an ethnic catastrophe.222

There were few news outlets in Rwanda in the early 1990s. Radio Rwanda, broadcasting news and messages from the government, was the only radio station. Although there were several other magazines, Kangura soon became the most popular and widespread, likely due to its intriguing headlines, well-written content, and the many drawings and photo collages accompanying and to some extent explaining the articles. Although editor-in-chief Hassan Ngeze claimed that the circulation of Kangura ranged from 10,000 to 30,000 copies, these numbers are likely to be exaggerations. Ngeze printed between 8,000 and 15,000 copies of each issue, but it is

222 Kabanda 2007, p. 68.
estimated that no more than 2,000 to 3,000 copies were actually sold.\textsuperscript{223} Despite Ngeze’s exaggeration and the difference between the number of copies printed and actually sold, the numbers should still be regarded as high. After all, Kangura and its distributors faced three major problems. First, the illiteracy rate in 1991 was estimated to be 44 per cent of a population of 6,871,000. Second, there was nowhere to buy magazines in rural areas. And third and last, the cost of a magazine was so high that few could afford it. The first problem was solved when literate Rwandans began reading Kangura out loud in public places to the illiterate. As for the second problem, local authorities in rural areas began distributing the magazine to the rural population. The third problem was solved by newspaper vendors who would allow people to pay a smaller fee to read the paper by the newspaper stand and return the copy after reading.\textsuperscript{224}

The willingness of people who were not paid by Kangura to help distribute the magazine or read it aloud gives evidence of the impact of the magazine. It should also be emphasised that Kangura should be understood in the context of public reading; each copy was read by or read out loud to numerous individuals, resulting in a much wider circulation and spread of the content of the magazine than the number of copies printed and distributed indicates.\textsuperscript{225} Kangura was an important instrument for Hutu extremist propaganda and thus for the devaluation or dehumanisation process studied in this thesis.

Hassan Ngeze’s outspokenness and inflammatory language, combined with crude illustrations, appealed to the public. The initial loyalty to the Habyarimana regime, albeit declining as the genocide drew closer, also meant that unlike many other magazines, Kangura was never censored or restricted. Its journalists and editors were never persecuted, unlike many others who criticised the Habyarimana regime – a regime that maintained that Rwanda had freedom of press, but kept finding ways to restrict it, including imprisonments and attempted assassinations on editors.\textsuperscript{226}

On the cover of each issue there is a drawing of a postman, holding a copy of Kangura in one hand, giving a thumbs up with the other, and with the word Salama printed on his shirt, a word of greeting meaning ‘peace’. On many of the covers there are caricatures, or photographs of politicians,

\textsuperscript{223} See Chrétien 1995, pp. 29–30; Higiro 2007, p. 81.
\textsuperscript{224} Higiro 2007, pp. 80–2.
\textsuperscript{225} Åke Abrahamsson (1990) shows something similar for Stockholm in the mid-1800s. With widespread illiteracy and high rates of poverty, working-class people bought old newspapers at a discount, or they pooled their money to buy one copy, which often was read aloud. Although Stockholm in the mid-1800s was distant from Rwanda geographically and temporally, the context of illiteracy and poverty is quite similar, and thus, Abrahamsson’s study provides evidence of how the circulation of newspapers can be larger than the number of printed copies.
\textsuperscript{226} Higiro 2007, p. 82.
often edited in the sense that heads are cut out of the photographs and pasted in drawings that show their bodies in comic or compromising situations, with speech bubbles containing political satirical statements.

Each issue of the magazine opens with an editorial, most often written by Hassan Ngeze, about the RPF, the political climate, or a personal experience of the writer, aimed to discredit the RPF or moderate Hutu politicians. The RPF, moderate Hutus, and the situation in Burundi are frequent themes in Kangura’s articles and drawings. Regarding the latter, the illustrations are often crude and demeaning. For example, in one issue, the moderate politicians Faustin Twagiramungu and Agathe Uwilingiyimana are depicted in bed together, Uwilingiyimana with exposed breasts and Twagiramungu with an erection. The slightly pointy shape of Twagiramungu’s head is exaggerated in most of the caricatures in which he appears. There are often lines or sweat drops around his head to emphasise it. In this image, a similar emphasis is put on the erection, likely implying that he is thinking with his penis. In this satirical illustration, Twagiramungu is asking Uwilingiyimana how she is doing; Uwilingiyimana responds that she only wishes he could make her prime minister.

When the UNAMIR arrived in the autumn of 1993, UNAMIR general Roméo Dallaire also became a target of the Kangura illustrators. In one issue he was drawn sitting with two lightly dressed Tutsi women, one

---

227 Kangura no. 55, January 1994. Uwilingiyimana was killed in the first days of the genocide, while Twagiramungu fled and later was appointed Prime Minister by the RPF after the genocide. This appointment was a strategic move to appease the Rwandan Hutus, as Twagiramungu was a Hutu and the son-in-law of the first Rwandan President Grégoire Kayibanda.

228 Kangura no. 55, January 1994. In March 1994 she was appointed Prime Minister of the Transitional Government by President Habyarimana. It is unlikely that Faustin Twagiramungu had anything to do with the appointment of Uwilingiyimana, but that it is more likely that President Habyarimana believed her to be easily manipulated. If so, he was wrong. See Holmes 2008, p. 58.
kissing him on the forehead and the other lying on his lap, all wearing FPR (the French acronym for the RPF) as tags on their clothes.\textsuperscript{229}

Aside from the satirical illustrations and political discussions, the \textit{Kangura} journalists resorted to a blatant use or abuse of history, depicting an RPF victory as the return of the Tutsi monarchy. Using examples of oppression in the colonial era, the \textit{Kangura} journalists argued that the 1959 Hutu revolution was not yet over.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image2.png}
\caption{‘General Dallaire and his soldiers have fallen into the trap of good looking women.’ Translated by Sarah Harting and the author. Source: \textit{Kangura} No. 56, February 1994.}
\end{figure}

\textbf{Radio Télérision Libre des Mille Collines}

In July 1993, the RTLM began broadcasting. Rwandan democratisation meant the monopoly formerly held by Radio Rwanda was challenged, although the broadcasting licence made sure that there were few competitors. RTLM was established by supporters of the MRND and CDR, and prominent members of these parties financed the station, while President Habyarimana, who was a major shareholder, gave RTLM a free licence to broadcast their Hutu Power message.

Unlike Radio Rwanda, which broadcast news and messages from the government, read in a monotonous voice, the RTLM employed young, witty journalists and presenters who often interacted with the audience and played popular music between the fast-paced talks and discussions.\textsuperscript{230} Although loyal to the government and the President, they were even more

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{229} \textit{Kangura} no. 56, February 1994.
\item \textsuperscript{230} Des Forges, ‘Call to Genocide: Radio in Rwanda, 1994’, in Thompson 2007, pp. 44–6; Prunier 2010, p. 133.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
loyal to the Hutu Power cause, and would at times criticise the President and the MRND for their alleged leniency towards the Tutsis and the RPF.231

Due to the widespread illiteracy in Rwanda, Kangura, in spite of its reach, had a limited scope.232 This was not a problem faced by RTLM. A new radio transmitter was installed by the government, and portable radios were imported, to make sure that RTLM could be heard all over the country.233 News broadcasts were highly sensationalist, and over time the anti-Tutsi propaganda grew more explicit. As the genocide commenced, RTLM became a tool for the perpetrators to locate Tutsis in hiding, and to convey orders from the orchestrators of the genocide to the Interahamwe – the Hutu paramilitary organisation responsible for most of the killings. RTLM broadcast daily from 8 July 1993 until August 1994.234

Unlike Kangura and its use of history, the RTLM focused on the present, and depicted the RPF and its Tutsi accomplices as attempting to exterminate the Hutus, arguing explicitly that the RPF and the Tutsis had to be pre-emptively exterminated.

Regardless of the differences, there was no competition or animosity between Kangura and RTLM. In fact, Kangura’s editor-in-chief, Hassan Ngeze, praised the new radio station in Kangura and was a frequent guest in the radio studio. Kangura’s articles were often read on the air, proving that the Hutu extremist message was the highest priority for both media outlets.

Although RTLM’s broadcasts were more moderate prior to the genocide, they were inciting violence even before the genocide commenced, and hinted at the genocide to be carried out against the Tutsi. For example, on the 18 March 1994, it was suggested in an RTLM interview that the RPF would kill Hutu officials and blame the Rwandan Tutsis, which would result in Hutus and Tutsis trying to exterminate each other in anger. To gain power in Rwanda, the RPF would then alert the international community that the Tutsis had been exterminated.235 This worked in two ways: first, it implied that the RPF would be willing to sacrifice the Rwandan Tutsis to gain power; and second, it told of the

---

231 Prunier 2010, p. 189.
232 Approximately 60 per cent of the population was illiterate by the time of the civil war (Prunier 2010, p. 133).
233 RTLM was mainly financed by the brother-in-law of President Habyarimana, Félicien Kabuga, a businessman who imported the radios and thousands of machetes prior to the genocide (Des Forges 1999, p. 349). Habyarimana had initiated a project of getting radio coverage all over Rwanda in the 1980s and had radios sold at low prices, as a means of ensuring the flow of information to the whole country. ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Judgment and sentence, 3 December 2003, p. 117.
235 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0171, 18 March 1994.
genocide to come, but placed the blame on the RPF. Once the genocide began, however, the broadcasts became all the more explicit, in statements such as ‘when the majority people [the Hutu] is angry, you have to bow to their wishes to avoid being exterminated, eradicated.’ 236

According to a Belgian radio presenter who worked for the RTLM, Georges Ruggiu, the policy of the RTLM was to demonise the RPF and pro-RPF leaders; to exaggerate incidents that would discredit the RPF and its supporters, or prove that they had violated the peace agreement; to remind the Rwandan population of the 1959 Hutu revolution. 237

Ruggiu further claimed that the RTLM journalists and announcers were ordered to replace the words ‘RPF’ and ‘inkotanyi’ (invincible fighter) with ‘inyenzi’ (cockroach), and to omit the word ‘peace’ when speaking of the Arusha peace process. 238 The shift from a more moderate language to explicit incitements came from editor-in-chief, Gaspard Gahigi, at a staff meeting after the assassination of President Habyarimana, during which he said: ‘I am asking you to be harsh, everyone knows what that means.’ 239

David Yanagizawa-Drott has estimated that approximately one-tenth of the participation in genocidal violence in Rwanda, as well as one-third of the violence by the Interahamwe, the gendarmerie, and other organised groups was the direct result of RTLM broadcasts. 240 Although his calculations often are based on estimates and vague definitions and categorisations, it is an indisputable fact that the RTLM radio had an impact on the genocidal violence. 241

A surprisingly large number of the RTLM broadcasts are still available. In all, 273 out of 345 tapes were preserved, transcribed, and translated into French and English to be used as evidence in the ICTR. 242 Going by the transcripts, the length of most recordings was 60 minutes. However, many do not have any information on length. Although not every broadcast has been recorded, those that have, indicate that the RTLM broadcast daily from its establishment in July 1993 until the end of the genocide, possibly

---

236 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0009, 18 May 1994.
237 Georges Ruggiu, This Criminal Ideology and the Methods Used by RTLM to Broadcast Them, ICTR-99-52-T, Prosecution Exhibit P92 B.
238 Georges Ruggiu, This Criminal Ideology and the Methods Used by RTLM to Broadcast Them, ICTR-99-52-T, Prosecution Exhibit P92 B.
239 Georges Ruggiu, This Criminal Ideology and the Methods Used by RTLM to Broadcast Them, ICTR-99-52-T, Prosecution Exhibit P92 B.
240 Yanagizawa-Drott 2014, pp. 4–5, 30. Yanagizawa-Drott is vague in his categorisations and definition of genocidal violence. While I do not contest his results, I believe that based on his estimates the number would be higher if he had used the categories of the Rwandan genocide laws, as this would entail a wider definition of genocidal violence, and thus a greater number of participants than he estimates.
242 Some broadcasts were in French, particularly the ones made by the former Belgian social worker Georges Ruggiu, who did not speak or even understand Kinyarwanda.
with the exception of its early and last days when there are fewer recordings. As they often aired reruns we may also assume that not all broadcasts contained original material.

Charles Mironko notes that the RTLM broadcast on two frequencies, one of which was the same as Radio Rwanda. As for the time of day, Mironko claims that the radio programmes were broadcast in the evenings, but the transcripts show that they broadcast in the mornings from 8 a.m. until noon – presumably on the Radio Rwanda frequency, as that was when Radio Rwanda began its broadcasts – as well as evenings from 6 p.m. until late. This seems to have been the case until the genocide began, when the RTLM broadcast in the afternoons as well.

The RTLM broadcasts were recorded or collected by the Rwandan Ministry of Information, the US State Department, journalists, and civilians, who handed them over to the ICTR as evidence. However, not all of them were used in the trials, and therefore not all the transcripts are filed in the ICTR archives. Several transcripts have been gathered in other archives or on websites established to preserve documents concerning Rwanda, and thus I have managed to find and use 103 transcripts in English, 43 in French, and 159 in Kinyarwanda, rendering a total of 305. Some of these are transcripts of the same broadcasts, but in different languages. However, several exist only in one or two of the three languages. Some of the English transcripts have only been translated in part, but exist in full in French and/or Kinyarwanda. Thus, it is difficult to give a precise account of the number of transcribed broadcasts that I have used in this study.

I have examined all 305 transcripts in the three languages in search of religious concepts. When found, I have checked the transcripts in the other two languages to see if the concepts exist in the other languages, and if so, I have tried to find the most correctly translated transcript. The existing tapes and transcripts provide ample examples of the religiously influenced rhetoric used by the RTLM and its function in the devaluation process. Since my research questions concern how they were used, and with what intent, I have not analysed how often each of the concepts appear. However, there is of course a quantitative aspect to my qualitative analysis, in that some concepts may gain meaning, or the meaning may be enhanced, when the concept appears repeated. The quantitative aspects of the study will be further discussed below in the section on method.

---

243 See, for example, RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 142, 24 May 1994; RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 168, 16 March 1994; RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0146, 9–10 December 1993.
244 See, for example, RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0004, 12 April 1994.
The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) was established in Arusha, Tanzania, in 1995, in accordance with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 955. At the end of 2015 the ICTR officially ended, with only a few appeals pending. During its active years, 93 individuals were indicted. Most of them were accused of having committed crimes in the so-called Category I – Planners, organisers, instigators, and authority figures who have committed, or encouraged others to commit such crimes, as well as individuals in leading roles in massacres, and those who committed sexual crimes.

Out of the 93 indicted individuals, 14 were acquitted, 10 were transferred to national jurisdictions, 3 are still at large, 2 died before trial, and 2 indictments were withdrawn before trial, while 62 persons were sentenced. Due to the fact that some of these trials were joint, meaning that several people were tried in the same trial, there were 53 trials held at Arusha.

It is important to note that although judgements and sentences, as well as indictments, are available for all completed trials, not all the transcripts have been made available. For instance, transcripts from closed sessions are classified and have therefore not been released. As for open-session transcripts, only those redacted – edited to ensure the anonymity of witnesses, etc. – have been published at the ICTR archive website. The transfer of documents from the ICTR official website to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (IRMCT) between 2012 and 2015 also entailed the publication of exhibits, transcripts, and documents previously unavailable, and more is published continuously.

In total, I have examined 3,091 transcripts of 52 out of the 53 trials, and, for context and information not otherwise available in the transcripts, the published indictments, judgements and sentences, and exhibits. The one trial excluded was that of Interahamwe leader Joseph Serugendo, who

247 ICTR was the first tribunal to include rape as a weapon of extermination. The exceptions were the two trials against a witness and an investigator, who were deemed to have obstructed the course of justice.
248 The joint trials were of closely connected people. For example, high-ranking military officers were tried in the Military I and II trials, media personalities were tried in the so-called Media trial, and politicians were tried in the Government I and II trials. Some of the joint trials were based on region rather than profession, such as the Butare and Cyangugu trials.
250 The transcripts have been redacted to ensure the anonymity of the witnesses.
251 The cases and number of transcripts used are given in Appendix III.
pleaded guilty and cooperated with the Prosecution, and provided the ICTR with 200 pages of information on the collaboration between the RTLM and the Interahamwe militia.252 There are only three transcripts of his trial: the initial appearance, in which the accusations were read and responded to, the sentence hearing, and a summary of the judgement, none of which contain any religious references, making it the only trial without relevance for this investigation. In the analysis, the documentation from the remaining 52 trials has been examined and 23 out of the 53 trials have been cited, as they have provided ample representative examples.

Some ICTR documents that not yet published are available on request. When a request is submitted, the archivists read every requested transcript to make sure they do not contain any sensitive information. While I have requested a large number of transcripts – the exact figure is unknown as I had assistance in downloading and requesting253 – the IRMCT archive has not been able to deliver them all due to the time-consuming process of screening and editing the documents before releasing them, and because of a shortage of suitable staff. The archivist who handled my requests ultimately stopped sending documents and replying to requests and emails. By then approximately one-fourth of the commissioned transcripts had been delivered. It should be noted that I began by downloading and requesting English transcripts only. The fact that I did not receive all the English documents, and eventually no answers or documents at all, convinced me that it was futile to attempt to acquire the French documents. The downloading process was equally time-consuming, and even if the archive had eventually released the documents, it would have taken too long to acquire them all. Another important aspect is that no transcripts in Kinyarwanda were available. This means that I have solely worked with ICTR transcripts in English. However, since I have examined 3,091 transcripts in total, from 52 out of 53 trials, the data set is nevertheless sufficient for the purposes of this thesis.

Witness testimonies as a source

The use of witness testimonies often entails questions regarding reliability. Memories change over time, witnesses do not have the full picture and

252 ICTR-2005-84-I (Serugendo), Judgement and sentence, 12 June 2006. He initially pleaded not guilty on all counts, but in 2006 agreed a plea bargain with the Prosecution and pleaded guilty to direct and public incitement and persecution as a crime against humanity. Serugendo was sentenced to 6 years’ imprisonment, but spent a few months in hospital with a terminal illness before dying there.

253 I was ably assisted by Filip Rescec, to whom I owe a great debt of gratitude; he was employed as a research assistant at the Hugo Valentin Centre as part of the Österreichischen Auslandsdienst, an Austrian alternative to military service.
may misunderstand what they have seen, or may withhold information out of shame, fear, or for other reasons. However, it is not what actually happened during the genocide that is of interest in this thesis, but how the people who appeared in court use religious references in their testimonies and why. The aim of the last empirical chapter (Chapter 6) is to analyse how the use of religious concepts and arguments continued in the ICTR trials after the genocide, and to discuss the importance of religion also in the aftermath of the genocide. Witness testimonies are an ideal source for the purpose of this study since they reveal what witnesses do to come across as trustworthy and reliable, and which kinds of arguments and concepts they use to do so, presenting themselves as not only trustworthy but also innocent, and to dispute and repudiate allegations. For example, witnesses comparing their plight during the genocide to the suffering of Jesus in his final days does not tell us much of their actual suffering, but a great deal about how they chose to describe their suffering and even themselves, and about the role of religion.

Since most of the witnesses were anonymous, their age, gender, and whether they were Hutu or Tutsi is usually unknown. This is unfortunate since it does not allow a systematic comparative study of the use of religious concepts and arguments among different groups of people. However, when information regarding gender, age, and ‘ethnicity’ etc. is available it is used to provide context.

Regarding the cases analysed, it is important to note that while I may not agree with the decisions of the tribunal, those acquitted will be treated as innocent, and those convicted as guilty. This is of minor importance for the results of this thesis, but since individuals and trials are discussed, it is important to make it clear if someone has been found not guilty, to avoid depicting him or her as a criminal. I of course also respect the anonymity of those anonymised in the sources, and the wishes of those who have requested to be anonymous. Those who appear by names are most often individuals who had leading roles in the genocide, and are thus already known and whose names appear in previous research, online, and in the sources; however, there are some witnesses and victims, and even some perpetrators, who did not have leading roles but whose names appear in this book. The reason is that they were not anonymised in the sources that are publicly available, and do not appear to have requested anonymity.

Translations

One challenge with the source material is the language. Regarding Kangura, all issues of the magazine were published in Kinyarwanda, with 11 out of 74 translated into French for international publication. The RTLM broadcasts were also mainly in Kinyarwanda, with the exception of those
by the Belgian Georges Ruggiu, who only spoke French. Most of the accused in the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) trials spoke Kinyarwanda or French, or both. I have chosen to rely on the English translations of *Kangura* and RTLM transcripts done by or for the ICTR as far as it is possible.

Both *Kangura* and the RTLM documents exist in the original language, Kinyarwanda. For *Kangura*, it is difficult to give an estimate of the number of issues that have been translated to English, since most of the translations are of individual articles or sections rather than entire issues. The same is true of the French translations, although they are often more complete, and most certainly so in the case of the international issues. Although I am not a native speaker of any of the three languages, I have no problems understanding English, and I can read French. As for Kinyarwanda, it is not the easiest for non-native speakers, especially since it is primarily a spoken language, and thus one where context, body language, and intonation are crucial for the understanding. However, I do have sufficient skills in the grammar and I am familiar with enough Kinyarwandan words to grasp the context in which religious concepts are found. To make sure I have not misunderstood or mistranslated, I have sought the aid of a Rwandan native speaker, who wishes to remain anonymous, and of Sarah J. Harting, MA, fluent in Kinyarwanda, both of whom helped me with translations when necessary. While the former helped me with *Kangura* texts, the latter has provided translations of most of the illustrations. The translations have been made from Kinyarwanda to English.

The translation process had three steps. First the translators and I translated the texts separately. Thereafter I compared the versions, and finally, if there were major discrepancies, I discussed them with the translator(s), after which I arrived at a definitive translation. The translators and I never arrived at exactly the same translations of any sentence. However, the meaning was always the same. What differed was the wording in English, and the sequence of the words. This phenomenon can also be observed in some of the transcripts that have been translated into English by different translators. Often one translation is more literal whereas the other is more interpretive. The literal translations are not necessarily more accurate or correct. The accuracy can only be assessed by a comparison between the original and the different translations.

For the most part, I use and refer to the English translations, provided they are sufficiently accurate. To judge their accuracy, I have made comparisons with the original language and other translations, if such have

---

254 One is the linguist Sarah Harting; the other has asked to remain anonymous. I owe them both a debt of thanks.

255 Cox & Gakuba 1984.
been found. The original language is always Kinyarwanda or French – the latter to a lesser extent. If the original language of a transcript or document is Kinyarwanda, there is most often also a French translation, as well as one in English. This has given me three languages to compare for most of the statements that are analysed in this thesis. Although time-consuming, this triangulation has made it possible to arrive at what I deem to be the most accurate translations and to avoid mistranslation.

One problem with translations is when the translator chooses words or concepts that have several different meanings in the original language, as is often the case in Kinyarwanda. One example is the reoccurring use of the word ‘race’ for the Kinyarwandan word *ubwoko* or *bwoko*. The concept of race was introduced by the colonists in the early twentieth century and has since been incorporated into the term *ubwoko*, since it is the word for group, tribe, species, or type. In the transcripts and translations of *Kangura*, *ubwoko* is in general translated as ‘race’. In this way, the translator can convey a meaning that the writer or utterer of the word in the original language may not have intended. Consequently, the text may seem more prejudiced than it would be in the original language. However, comparisons with the original language resolve most of these issues, or at least raise an awareness of the difficulties with these specific translations, which I will discuss where applicable.

The ICTR transcripts were written on site in Arusha during the trials, based on direct interpretation. Thus there is a risk of misunderstandings and misinterpretations. However, in most trials, important statements were discussed by the court, and any misunderstandings due to misinterpretations were resolved in the courtroom. However, this does not mean that a translation is absolutely correct, as an interpreter may not notice errors. Since I have only had access to the English transcripts, I have not been able to make comparisons with other translations. I have therefore read carefully to make sure there are no inconsistencies, possible misspellings, or other mistakes, and I have compared with summaries in other documents when available.

Whether it is a matter of already translated sources or my own translations, there is the problem of Kinyarwanda being a language that does not translate easily. As noted, Kinyarwandan words often have several different meanings, and they rarely, if ever, have exact English equivalents. Likewise, English words rarely have an exact equivalent in Kinyarwanda. For that reason, it is imperative to find the precise meanings of words, and to interpret them rather than to translate them. As the historian Quentin Skinner notes, we do not need to find correct

---

256 Cox & Gakuba 1984, p. 2.
translations of words or concepts, but we do need to understand their meanings in their contexts.257

The aim of this thesis is to find and analyse concepts and arguments, to understand what is said and done with them in a given context, and to discern distinctions that are made, and chains of reasoning that are used to make sense of the world. This does not require a direct translation of concepts.258 In fact, translating concepts into terms we are familiar with may introduce meanings that may not necessarily be familiar to the author of a text or the person who makes a statement. Thus, to avoid bringing irrelevant or anachronistic meanings to a text, it is sometimes best not to strive for a literal translation of concepts.259 In such instances, it is better to trace the different meanings a concept may have had, and, by studying the linguistic and social context, find the meaning it has in the time and place of the utterance.260

*Previous use of the sources*

The source material analysed in this dissertation has of course been used by other scholars studying the Rwandan genocide. In general, besides interviews with Rwandans and contemporary reports of different kinds, there are very few sources for the propaganda during the genocide other than the three used in this thesis—*Kangura* magazine, RTLM broadcasts and transcripts, and documents produced in the ICTR in the judicial aftermath of the genocide.

The ICTR, having handed over its archive to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (IRMICT), between 2012 and 2015 made tribunal transcripts, evidence, and other documents previously not available accessible for research. Until this point, it was also difficult to find RTLM transcripts. This means that early research about the RTLM was primarily based on witness testimonies. It also took quite a few years for a nearly complete set of *Kangura* publications to be assembled, as most had been destroyed during and after the genocide.

The *Kangura* magazines and the RTLM broadcasts have been studied as far back as 1995, when Jean-Pierre Chrétien published his often-cited book *Les Médias du Génocide.*261 Like in most research on Rwandan propagandist media, his aim is to give a broad perspective on the role of media prior to and during the genocide. In the anthology *The Media and the*
In which Chrétien again appears, the essays are focused on RTLM and Kangura with different aspects presented in each, although with a common focus on media as a tool for mass murder. As mentioned in the discussion of previous research, gendered representations in Kangura have also been the topic of research. Lastly, research on media and propaganda in a broader, more general sense, often include examples from Kangura and RTLM.

As for the ICTR documents, they seem to have be the source of choice for scholars currently researching the genocide. Not only do they provide insight into the judicial process, but also, and even more so, into the genocide, as the stories told in the tribunal, along with the factual findings, provide knowledge of events and the behaviour of both key figures and people in general. Research done before 2012 had access to verdicts and sentences, but only to few or no transcripts, depending on which trials were analysed. With IRMICT taking over the ICTR archives, transcripts and evidence have been made public, which also brings researchers closer to the people involved in, or affected by, the genocide.

Research based upon ICTR documents has focused on the behaviour of actors, either in studies of a specific actor or actors, or in order to explain the genocide through their actions in overarching studies, both by scholars and journalists. In most of these works it is mainly the judgements that are used, but in the most recent works, more newly publicised documents appear. However, none of these works employ the methodology used in this thesis, nor do they pose the questions asked here.

2.3 Method

In this section I will first present my practical methodological approach, which consists of the search for religious concepts in the extensive source material using specific computer software, MAXQDA. Thereafter, I turn to the method of analysis, based on the contextual approach developed by Quentin Skinner.

The search for concepts: Text analysis using MAXQDA

To understand how a religious rhetoric was utilised during the war, the genocide, and in the genocide tribunal, along with variations in different contexts, it is imperative to study the whole period from the onset of the civil war in 1990 to the end of the ICTR trials in 2015. In what follows I will explain how the material was gathered and analysed.
All sources were in digital form, enabling the use of a qualitative text-analysis software, MAXQDA (Max Qualitative Data Analysis). This software allows the researcher to search for words or sentences, to code these and find relationships between them when working with large amounts of documents. Instead of searching through each document individually, MAXQDA allows searches through several thousand documents at a time, be it print material, RTLM and trial transcripts, court judgements, and so on. However, to simplify the process of searching, coding and analysing, I chose to divide the source material into different projects.

Thus I chose to import Kangura and the RTLM transcripts into separate MAXQDA projects, or groups. The English and French I chose to import into the same project, while documents in Kinyarwanda were imported into projects separate from the ones containing the English and French, one for Kangura and one for RTLM. This choice was made because of the issue of readability. Documents in Kinyarwanda took far more time and effort to read, and often required the help of translators, which is why I wanted to keep and process them separately.

As for the ICTR documents, I chose to divide them into two projects, since their quantity made them hard to grasp and it took the software too long to process them all. As mentioned in the section on source material, I did not include documents in Kinyarwanda for the simple reason that no transcripts in Kinyarwanda were available, and the French documents were also excluded due to the difficulties I had in obtaining them.

This meant that I worked in six projects in all, four concerning propaganda in Kangura and RTLM and two concerning the ICTR. The Kangura project contained 39 documents in English and French. It should be noted, however, that some of these documents contained several issues of Kangura, amounting to a total of 43 issues. It should also be emphasised that some documents only contain translations of some of the articles in each of these magazines. In the Kangura project for the documents in Kinyarwanda, there were 81 documents. The RTLM project contained 146 English and French documents, and 159 documents in Kinyarwanda, amounting to a total of 305.

In the first of the two ICTR projects, I chose to include trials against media personalities, high-profile politicians, and military officers, as well as priests. These were prominent cases that I deemed to be of the most immediate relevance for my project. The number of documents in this project was 1,245. In the second project, documents from the remaining trials were imported, amounting to 1,828 documents.

I began with a basic list of concepts that are common in Christianity. As the three largest denominations in Rwanda are Christian – Catholicism, Protestantism, and Seventh-Day Adventists – concepts found in these were prioritised. The presence of Islam in Rwanda also prompted me to
include a few concepts that I deemed to be common and basic in Islam. I divided these concepts into two sets, one related to religion and one related to secular matters. These two sets were then further divided into four categories. In the set related to religion, the first category concerns supernatural entities, for example ‘God’, ‘Jesus’, and ‘the Devil’. The second category concerns religious institutions, buildings, and officials, and it contains concepts such as ‘Bishop’, ‘Catholic’, ‘Church’, and ‘Priest’. The third category focuses on rituals and liturgy, and contains concepts such as ‘Baptism’, ‘Bible’, ‘Communion’, and ‘Eucharist’. Lastly, there is a category containing more general concepts related to religion, such as ‘Christianity’, ‘Faith’, ‘Jihad’, and ‘Sacred’.

The second set of concepts was also divided into four categories, where the first contains politically influenced concepts, such as ‘Democracy’, ‘Majority’, ‘Minority’, and ‘Peace’. The second category contains concepts related to the military and war, such as ‘Gendarmerie’, ‘Presidential Guard’, and ‘Refugee’. In the third category I placed concepts related to genocide and violence, such as ‘Death’, ‘Exterminate’, ‘Kill’, and ‘Massacre’. The last category contains concepts mainly found in the ICTR transcripts, such as ‘Forgiveness’, ‘Guilt’, ‘Innocence’, and ‘Truth’. The sets, categories and concepts are given in full in Appendix I.

When searching for these concepts, other words were found and added to the list, in spite of them initially having no obvious relevance, such as the word ‘nobility’, which later would prove highly relevant. It should be noted that many concepts that I found when searching for others did not yield any results after a quick search, and were therefore not added to the list. The words on the list are those that have been part of analyses. For example, there are words that were used solely to quickly find events or certain statements, such as the names of places, churches, or people. These words were not part of the analysis, and therefore they were not included. It should also be emphasised that the concepts listed here, although parts of analyses, are first and foremost search words. In some instances, they are not relevant in themselves as concepts, but may be found in an argument that is pertinent. Therefore, they should not initially or exclusively be considered key concepts in a Koselleckian sense, but they may become key concepts in certain contexts.

The search function in MAXQDA allows, as mentioned, for searches for words or sentences in large amounts of documents. There are also several options when searching, such as case sensitivity, searches for whole words or parts of words, and searches for several words at once with the possibility of choosing the proximity between them. I searched for each of the words in the list found in Appendix I, and when they were found I began to code them by name. To take the example of the word ‘God’, if it was found 600 times, I used the auto-code function to code them all as ‘God’. The codes then became available on a list of codes, and when I had
searched for and coded each word, I clicked on each of the words to see all the documents in which the word appeared.

I then read the relevant pages of these documents to learn the context. If, for example, the document was an RTLM transcript, I first looked at the date to establish when the broadcast was made, to learn if it was made during the war or the genocide. If it was not obvious from the transcript that the contents of the broadcast were made in relation to any certain event, I consulted previous research to learn of events at that particular time. I also looked at who the announcer or journalist was, as they all had different ways of speaking, different topics, which they often talked about, and when comparing them over the course of the period of research, I have found them to use religious concepts in different ways.

Once I had learnt the meaning of the word, statement, or argument, I have coded the word or sentence again. If ‘God’ was used in a statement that occurred more than once, such as ‘the God of Rwanda’, I coded it as such. When I had read through all documents in which the word ‘God’ appeared, and all the relevant statements had been re-coded, I did the same with all the other words.

Another function that I found useful in MAXQDA was the possibility to learn if codes coincide in documents, paragraphs, or sentences. This function was used at times, to find if the word ‘God’, for example, was used in relation to any of the other codes. This was mainly used when I tried to find whether a religious concept was used in relation to non-religious concepts – for example, if ‘God’ and ‘Exterminate’ or ‘Priest’ and ‘Kill’ were used in a sentence. If so, I could easily find how they were used and if they were used in relation to one another. Having found that ‘God’ and ‘Exterminate’ coincided, I could access the document by a simple click, and then find the exact place where RTLM announcer Kantano Habimana praises God that the RPF had been ‘exterminated’.

While this software is a tool to facilitate the searches and coding for the purpose of qualitative analyses, it also provides quantifications that have been relevant for this study. While the number of times a word or phrase appears does not alter the linguistic meaning, it may be important to understand the intended meaning. For example, the phrase ‘God of Rwanda’, if used once, may not give much information about how the utterer or writer of the phrase meant for the phrase to be understood. Having noticed, however, that it appears on several occasions, used in similar ways and contexts, it is easier to understand how the phrase is meant to be understood, and also learn of its relevance or lack thereof for the purpose of this thesis. This type of quantification is how the themes for chapters, subchapters, and subsections have grown forth. It makes it possible to find patterns in the manner in which the concepts and

---

262 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0300, 23 June 1994.
arguments were used. It also makes it possible to find the purpose of these concepts and statements – how the utterer or writer of a statement meant for the statement to be understood – and thereby also to identify the strategies used by the Hutu propagandists, perpetrators, survivors, and witnesses. This will be further elaborated on in the following subsections.

**Contextual approach**

In this study, I have sought for and traced the meaning of concepts, and then analysed the statement in which they are found in order to find the intended meaning of both concept and statement. That is, I have analysed what the meaning of a concept does to the meaning of a statement. What is here meant by ‘intended meaning’ is not the linguistic meaning of the words, but how the person making the statement meant for it to be understood.\(^{263}\) It may seem like a minor difference, but often in propaganda, the statements are implicit, and what is said is not necessarily what is understood.

For example, in Rwanda during the genocide there were expressions that had meaning other than their straightforward linguistic sense. One such was ‘work’. When the propagandists urged the listeners to ‘go to work’, the intended meaning was: ‘go out and kill Tutsis’. To ‘cut down the tall trees’ was meant to be understood the same way, as Tutsis were stereotypically taller than Hutus. While this is quite explicit, there are subtler statements, particularly when it comes to statements containing religious references. However, for the purpose of explaining the method used in this thesis, the concept of ‘work’ will suffice.

In order to find the meaning that the utterer of a statement intended to convey, and thus properly understand it, historian Quentin Skinner suggests that the statement must be placed in its linguistic and social context.\(^{264}\) For example, if person A tells person B to ‘go to work’, we will not know what the intended meaning is unless we know the context. If the context is a factory, at 8 a.m., and person A is a boss and person B is his employee, we may assume that person B is told to perform his or her duties in the factory. If we also know that person A utters this statement regularly, and the result is that person B commences the work, we may be certain of the meaning of the concept of work, and what the intended meaning of the statement is.

\(^{263}\) Quentin Skinner (2008) refers to this intended meaning as ‘linguistic action’, arguing that speaking is acting, and to say something is to do something. In other words, each statement is part of a conversation, meaning that anything uttered is meant to be understood in a certain way and have some kind of effect on the listener or reader.

\(^{264}\) Skinner 2008, p. 652.
Let us apply this to Rwanda during the genocide in 1994, and say that person A is a Hutu extremist propagandist at the RTLM, urging the Interahamwe militia to go to work in a certain commune, while person B is a member of the Interahamwe. This happens during the genocide in which the RTLM is frequently arguing that Hutus must kill or be killed, and person A is repeatedly urging people to go to work in different communes, after which massacres occur there. If we also know that person B and the Interahamwe soon thereafter kill a number of Tutsis in the mentioned commune, the meaning of ‘go to work’ is to kill Tutsis, unlike the first example where it is a matter of labour in a factory.

Thus, comparing a statement made by a certain person with other utterances made by the same person, or with statements made by people in his or her vicinity and thus in a specific context, we will find the linguistic context, and likely understand why the person found it appropriate to make a certain statement. Skinner further suggests that all utterances are parts of conversations, even though we may only see one side of it, and as such, the person making the statement intends that his or her utterance will have a certain effect on the listener.265 If it is also possible to place the statement in a temporal and social context, if there are certain events related to the statement, then that will most likely bring us to the intended meaning. Most articles in Kangura and most of the content of the RTLM broadcasts are the direct result of events in Rwanda or internationally, whether it be the RPF advance, political or military developments, the failing peace negotiations, or the spread of AIDS. The meanings of concepts, religious or not, and how they are used in statements, are dependent on these contexts.

Having searched through the source material for relevant concepts, the linguistic context of the statements has been analysed to answer the questions of who is responsible for the statement, when it was stated, and where. The statement is then compared with other statements made by the person and others, if it is part of a conversation. As mentioned, many statements are made in relation to contemporary events, often related to the civil war or the political climate, and this context is also imperative, since it most often gives an understanding of the reasons for the statement. Temporal context will also be of importance in the sense that the intended meaning of religiously influenced statements may change during the course of the war and the genocide. Furthermore, the use, frequency, and intended meanings might be affected by the religious calendar. For instance, it might be reasonable to expect an increase in religious references in general and to the sufferings of Christ in particular during Holy Week. However, it could also be the other way around, that religious concepts are not used for political purposes during Holy Week.

Several images are used as sources in this dissertation. They are analysed in the way I analyse the texts, focusing on religious references and using the contextual approach. I look especially for religious references and motives and how they are used. Since most of the caricatures have captions and speech bubbles, and because some caricatures and other illustrations seemingly are meant to give an understanding of the content of articles and the magazines for illiterate people, I pay close attention to the relationship between texts and images.

To summarise, I have searched for concepts and statements with religious connotations, and then analysed the argument, in order to find the intended meaning of the argument – meaning how the utterer or writer of a sentence or statement meant for the statement or sentence to be understood.

The themes

This thesis is first and foremost a qualitative analysis of concepts, statements, and arguments. However, there is some quantification. I have, for example, divided this book into chapters, subchapters, and subsections according to certain themes. These themes have been established through quantification, in that they are based on concepts or arguments that appear with similar meaning on several occasions.

The number of times a concept appears is not necessarily important to an understanding of the concept or argument, but it gives weight to it, and concepts that may seem irrelevant may be given meaning if used in similar manners in different contexts. One example is the concept of ‘nobility’, which seemed not to be relevant to this study, but when finding it on several occasions where it was used to describe the Tutsi in a certain way, brought not only meaning but also an understanding of the religious connotations inherent in the word, and how it was used for devaluing purposes.

The use of a concept or argument may thus give weight to the importance of it. Even when not used on many occasions, some concepts have meanings that were meant to be understood by the Rwandans. They may be words or expressions that are meant to trigger certain emotions. A frequent and extensive use of a concept is not necessarily an indicator of importance. Instead, an overly used concept can deprive it of meaning and reduce it to a simple expression. The expression ‘thank God’ is one such example, as this is used by witnesses, perpetrators, lawyers, and judges in the ICTR, and by propagandists in Kangura and at RTLM.

The analysis of concepts and arguments has thus been qualitative, while the themes in this dissertation have largely been identified through quantification, or the symbolic importance of concepts and arguments.
**Limitations**

In this thesis, I focus on the language used in the propaganda and the testimonies. Importantly, this focus implies that I do not consider whether or not the language presents a truthful or reliable description of events as such. *Kangura* and RTLM broadcasts were heavily biased news outlets, used by extremists to spread anti-Tutsi propaganda. For this reason, they are important sources for a study on the religious aspects of the devaluation process associated with genocide. The journalists and broadcasters involved may not have believed a word of what they wrote or broadcasted but that does not matter for the purpose of this study. What matters is that they said and wrote what they did because they believed and hoped it would affect people. Propaganda is used to convince people, and if the people responsible for the propaganda disseminated by *Kangura* and RTLM had not believed that the concepts and arguments used were efficient, they would not have employed them. They had to use concepts and arguments that made sense in the Rwandan context at the time – concepts and arguments that were easily understandable to the recipients of their message.

The same applies to the testimonies in the ICTR trials. The witnesses may have lied, held idiosyncratic beliefs, or account for atypical events. However, appearing before a tribunal we may assume that they wanted to come across as trustworthy and reliable. If they wanted to present themselves as innocent or as victims, they had to do so in a convincing way, which meant that they too had to use concepts and argument that made sense in the context in which they appeared.

The sources used for this thesis can thus reveal important knowledge of how religious concepts and arguments were used in propaganda before and during the genocide and in the trials following the genocide. Using Skinner’s contextual approach and drawing on the theoretical understanding of ethnic violence, propaganda, and processes of devaluation, as well as on concepts of self-victimisation and competitive victimhood provide an analysis and interpretation of propagandists and witnesses used religious concepts and arguments for specific purposes. Hence, this thesis does not aim to assess the actual effects of the propaganda and the testimonies, nor to make comparisons between the testimonies from different categories of witnesses and defendants in the ICTR trials.

Finally, given these limitations, I cannot assess the relative importance of the religious aspect in the propaganda, neither can I specify the role of propaganda in relation to the importance of other variables that in combination resulted in the genocide.
3.1 Historical background

*Precolonial Rwanda*

The precolonial history of Rwanda has been widely discussed among scholars, mostly because it has been obscured by reconstructions by colonists and missionaries, who attempted to combine history and Christian mythologies. Contemporary scholars have reached some consensus regarding the origins of the Rwandan people. The widely debated and sometimes controversial notions of the origins of the Hutus and Tutsis have become clearer as the interest in these issues has increased in the post-genocide era. It has been established that the group of people who would become Hutus were an agricultural Bantu group, who likely migrated to Rwanda in AD 1100. Those who were to be referred to as Tutsis were most likely a group of pastoralists who originated in Uganda and Tanzania.\(^{266}\)

The colonial narrative would make the Tutsis an ethnic group that migrated from Ethiopia or Egypt, invading and conquering the Bantu people living in Rwanda, introducing a civilised structure. However, it is far more likely that this group moved into the country over the course of several centuries, peacefully mixing with the other peoples in Rwanda, and that the cultural customs, as well as the social and political structures, originated within the Bantu group, a process that negates the colonial narrative.\(^{267}\)

Precolonial Rwandan society consisted of a hierarchical system of clans, clan membership, and wealth. The Tutsis were the upper class, the wealthiest, while the Hutus were a working class – and the Twas were a

\(^{266}\) Carney 2016, p. 10.

\(^{267}\) Carney 2016, p. 10.
marginalised group in the precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial eras. This system allowed for social mobility between Hutus and Tutsis, making it possible for a Hutu to become Tutsi if he could acquire ten cows or more. All Rwandans spoke Kinyarwanda, regardless of clan, lineage, or place in the hierarchy, and they all had one God, Imana, who was at the centre of the hierarchical system.

Although there was a hierarchy, in which the royal Tutsi clans were at the top, Hutus were allowed some responsibilities and could be chiefs within their fields of labour. The hierarchy extended to the households, in which age and gender entailed certain restrictions and responsibilities. Women were mostly confined to the home, caring for children, providing food, and working in the fields. Until the introduction of Christianity, polygamy existed mainly as a symbol of wealth for the husband, but it also served as a means of financial security and relief from the many burdens that women carried in the household. At the same time it was a system that repressed women, for they could not own land, had few civil rights, and had no identity other than that of their husbands.268

At the very top of the hierarchy was the mwami, often translated as king.269 The mwami had a royal drum, the kalinga or karinga, which was never to be played. It was decorated with the genitals of fallen enemy kings, and served as a symbol of his power. The mwami was said to be closely linked to the creator deity, Imana, and was Rwanda personified. This consolidated his unlimited power and gave it religious legitimacy. Being Rwanda personified also gave him safety, since causing him harm would be to harm Rwanda, the exception being the umutabazi, the ritual sacrifice of the mwami, which would do no harm since the sacrifice was only carried out if the mwami had proved an insufficient conduit between Imana and Rwanda.270 Offering the fruits of one’s labour to the mwami was to make offerings to God.

Rwanda is also known as Mille Collines, ‘Thousand Hills’. It is hardly an exaggeration, if anything an understatement. A popular joke claims that if Rwanda was flattened it would increase tenfold in size.271 On each of Rwanda’s hills there was one chief, a Tutsi, and below him there were three sub-chiefs, all with different responsibilities, and one of these sub-chiefs was always a Hutu. This system, ubuhake, was a form of patron–client system, which entailed a chain of patronage that would go from the mwami, through Tutsi chiefs, down to the Hutus, who would work for the Tutsi

269 While avoiding ‘king’ for mwami, I will use the word ‘monarchy’, as this is frequently used in the sources.
270 Taylor 2013, 274.
271 Rusesabagina & Zoellner 2007, p. 3.
patron, who in return protected his clients and represented them at the royal court.272

Precolonial Rwandan society was in no way equal, fair, or free from oppression, but it was a functioning society, in which each person had a role to play. These roles were not based on ethnicities, but on wealth, clan membership, and lineage, as well as age and gender.

The arrival of the Europeans

Rwanda was one of the last African countries to be formally colonised. Although it became part of the German colonial empire after the Berlin Conference in 1884–1885, the conference in which the European colonial powers divided Africa between them to avoid conflict, the Germans only sent a small group of military representatives to Rwanda. They were offering protection against other colonial powers, mainly Belgium.273

With the approval of the German administration, the White Fathers, as the Catholic missionaries were called, were permitted to establish a missionary station in 1905.274 Like the first explorers who had traversed the Great Lakes Region in the mid-1860s, the German colonists found the Rwandan ubuhake system astonishing, and in spite of important differences they compared it to European feudal monarchies.275 Such an advanced social structure had not been encountered before in this part of Africa, and should, in the view of many, not have existed, since it was presumed that Africans were incapable of developing such structures.

To explain their findings, the Europeans resorted to the biblical story, in which Noah casts a curse on his grandson Canaan. The descendants of Canaan were assumed to have been white, and they were said to have travelled to Africa. As Africans were presumed to not be able to evolve, the advanced social structure must have been the result of the descendants of Canaan and Canaan’s father, Ham, giving rise to the notion of a Hamitic race.

As the majority of the Rwandan leadership consisted of people from the perceived Hamitic race, the missionaries and colonists concluded that

272 Carney 2016, p. 14. The bond between patrons and clients, from mwami to Twa, was so strong that the first missionaries saw the ubuhake as the greatest obstacle to the evangelisation of Rwanda. As long as the mwami refused to convert, the Church could not get to any other group in the system, as converting to God would mean serving two masters – the mwami and God – which the Rwandans initially would not do. (Linden & Linden 1977, p. 61).
274 Carney 2016, p. 27.
275 This comparison is an anatopism since the ubuhake was far less rigid, and allowed for social mobility. See Carney 2016, p. 12. For a detailed discussion of the differences and similarities of European feudalism and ubuhake, see Linden 1977, pp. vii-x.
the Tutsis and the Hamites were one and the same, while the Bantu race
must be what the Rwandans called the Hutus. In doing so, the Europeans
introduced the concept of races, and applied it to the groups they found
in Rwanda, along with the word ‘race’ itself. The Banyarwanda, which was
the word used for all Rwandans, who all stemmed from one ancestor
according to Rwandan lore, lost its original meaning, and the word race
was added to the meanings of the Rwandan word ubwoko (type, species,
group).

The German colonists and the Catholic Church began sorting people
into the newly established races. They measured and compared physical
features and categorised those with lighter skin and eyes, thinner noses,
and slimmer and taller bodies as the Tutsi race, and those with
stereotypically Bantu features as the Hutu race, and the pygmy group they
had found were categorised as the Twas.

The missionaries’ usual strategy was to convert a population by turning
to the local leadership, which in turn helped convert the population. In
Rwanda the missionaries faced resistance from the leadership, as they
feared that the authority of the mwami would be challenged. They only
allowed the missionaries to teach reading and writing, to communicate
with the whites, but Christianity was only to be taught to the Hutus and
Twas.276 The White Fathers met less resistance among these two groups,
as they were poor and marginalised, and sought patronage. Yet, the
missionaries still favoured the Tutsi elite, and attempted to befriend the
mwami, Yuhi V Musinga. In 1905, these efforts paid off when the mwami
allowed the White Fathers to establish a missionary station in Rwanda.277
The Christian population grew, albeit slowly. With the arrival of Lutherans
in Rwanda, the Catholic missionaries saw an opportunity to side with the
mwami, in opposition to the new religion, while the mwami saw and seized
the opportunity to play the two denominations off against each other.278

The German colonists and the Catholic Church never grew close, and
while Mwami Musinga saw no benefit in collaborating with the White
Fathers, he found that he could centralise his power by manipulating the
colonists through collaboration.279 The problems the missionaries had
encountered because of the resistance of the mwami would find a solution
only during the First World War.

278 Carney 2016, p. 28.
**The Belgian era**

Mwami Musinga refused to convert to Christianity. He was openly bisexual, adulterous, and incestuous, and when the First World War commenced and Rwanda, a German colony between large British and Belgian colonies, faced famine and the threat of Belgian colonisation, he fought alongside the Germans to keep the Belgians out. He failed, however, and in 1916 Belgian troops forced the outnumbered Germans out of Rwanda.\(^{280}\)

Due to the resistance of Mwami Musinga, who now had lost his German allies, and thus faced the ire of both the Catholic Church and Belgium alone, the Belgian colonial administration contemplated a direct military rule, but decided to follow in the footsteps of the Germans and rule Rwanda indirectly. Therefore, they attempted to cooperate with Mwami Musinga, but the *mwami* had no such ambitions. Belgium instead found its allies in the Catholic Church.

The White Fathers had remained in Rwanda throughout the war and the Belgian take-over, and knew how to handle the *mwami*. They advised the Belgians to only have dealings with the Tutsis, and preferably younger Tutsi chiefs who had trained at the Catholic schools.\(^{281}\) Rather than attempting to convert the Rwandans from the top down, which was the common method of the missionaries, the White Fathers instead turned to the poor and marginalised, in the hope of Christianity spreading to such an extent that the rest of the Tutsi leadership would feel obligated to follow suit. The Belgians and the Catholic White Fathers continued the segregation of the Rwandans that the Germans had begun, according to the new racialised categories. The also continued favouring the Tutsis, while the Hutus found themselves without the protection of their former patrons. Social mobility was no longer possible, and in practice they were reduced to poverty and slavery.\(^{282}\)

This benefitted the Church. By 1914 the Catholic Church had gained 10,000 members in Rwanda, which was far more than they had in Burundi, but the number would now rise drastically as they began offering basic education, work, protection, and a sense of community to the marginalised Hutu, in exchange for their conversion to Christianity. Having a monopoly on education, the Catholic Church began teaching the Hamitic Hypothesis as history in Rwandan schools, claiming that the Tutsis were a superior race that had conquered the inferior Bantus and brought civilisation to Rwanda. While the Tutsis were said to be natural leaders, the Hutus

---

\(^{280}\) Carney 2016, p.29; Prunier 2010, p. 30.

\(^{281}\) Carney 2016, p. 32.

\(^{282}\) Des Forges 1999, p. 38.
generally accepted their alleged inferiority.\textsuperscript{283} At the same time, the Catholic schools opened up for higher education, although reserved for Tutsis.\textsuperscript{284} However, there was one possibility for Hutus to gain access to higher education, and that was through studying at the Catholic seminaries and becoming priests.\textsuperscript{285}

In 1931 a great change benefitting both the Belgians and the Church took place. Mwami Yuhi V Musinga was dethroned by the Belgians and the Church. He was forced into exile and replaced by his son, Mutara III Rudahigwa. The latter was far friendlier towards the Belgians and the Church, and did not mind converting to Christianity. After a three-year catechumenate he converted in 1943, and in 1946 he dedicated Rwanda to Christ the King.\textsuperscript{286} The mwami changed his name to Charles Léon Pierre, and gave up the divine rights of the mwami in favour of a Christian kingship.\textsuperscript{287} By then, the project of separating Hutus from Tutsis had already culminated when the Belgians in 1933 conducted a census, after which all Rwandans were given identity cards on which their racial identity was printed.\textsuperscript{288}

Traditional Rwandan society and culture was replaced by one introduced by Europeans. Not only were the political, social, and religious structures replaced, but also family and household structures were reorganised. Christian values were introduced, which resulted in women becoming even more confined to the home, as their duties could no longer consist of work in fields or any other chores that were viewed as male. As polygamy was abolished, there was a general increase in poverty, as the now smaller families could not produce as much as they had before. The abolition of polygamy also meant that many women lost the financial protection they had in the precolonial system, and the lack of income led to an increase in prostitution, contrary to the aim of the Catholic reforms.\textsuperscript{289} While many elements of Rwandan society were replaced, the Rwandan patriarchy saw the addition of Belgian and Catholic patriarchies, adding to the subjugation and subordination of women. Thus, the plans to make Rwanda into a modern society based on Catholic values turned into a reality of increased poverty and segregation, and where moral values were exceedingly difficult to uphold.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{283} Des Forges 1999, pp. 36–7.
\item \textsuperscript{284} Carney 2016, p. 37.
\item \textsuperscript{285} Prunier 2010, p. 33.
\item \textsuperscript{286} Carney 2016, pp. 38–9.
\item \textsuperscript{287} Carney 2016, p. 40.
\item \textsuperscript{288} Although I do not agree with the notion of Hutus and Tutsis as races, at this time it did say ‘race’ in these cards, which is why I use the term. In the 1960s this was changed to ‘ethnicity’.
\item \textsuperscript{289} Hunt 1991, p. 53.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
One reason for the failure of the colonial project was the divide within the Catholic Church. From the start, there were missionaries who opposed the oppression of the Hutus and therefore began establishing an educated Hutu elite. In the 1930s, as the first missionaries began to retire, new Belgian priests arrived. They had seen and experienced the class struggle and segregation of Flemish and Walloons in Belgium, and for that reason they did not favour the Tutsi monarchy.\(^{290}\)

By 1951 the number of Rwandan priests was equal to the number of white priests, and in the post-Second World War era the ideas of racial equality grew strong, even among the Tutsi priests in Rwanda. The Catholic newspaper *Kinyamateka*, which until then had focused on Rwandan culture and its past, changed under the leadership of progressive the White Father Arthur Dejemeppe, who in the mid-1950s began writing editorials on social injustice in Rwanda. One journalist in particular, Grégoire Kayibanda, was very active in mobilising a Hutu grassroots movement, which with the help of some Catholic priests became a political party. In 1957, this party, *Parti du Mouvement de l’Emancipation Hutu* (Parmehutu), under the leadership of Kayibanda, wrote the *Bahutu Manifesto*, in which the Tutsi political monopoly was described as the cause of not only a political, but also a complete cultural monopoly.\(^{291}\) In response to Parmehutu and the Manifesto, conservative Tutsis founded the Union Nationale Rwandaise (UNAR), in favour of the monarchy and opposed to both the Belgians and ethnic equality. UNAR received funds and support from communist countries, which further increased the antagonism between the UNAR and Belgium.\(^{292}\)

The new Archbishop of Kabgayi and Vicar Apostolic of Rwanda, André Perraudin from Switzerland, had a personal relationship with Grégoire Kayibanda, who worked as his personal secretary. Once he had risen to the rank of archbishop, Perraudin began advocating social justice, and was often accused of being partial to the Hutu. Although he denied that he helped Kayibanda write the *Bahutu Manifesto*, he likely influenced him in his political endeavours. He was certainly not on the side of the UNAR, as he openly accused them of being an ultra-nationalist communist party.\(^{293}\)

While he did not openly support Parmehutu, Perraudin contributed to a pastoral order which stated that Christianity rejects inequality, and that the racial segregation in Rwanda was not acceptable from a Christian perspective. Some interpreted this as the Catholic Church officially siding

\(^{290}\) Prunier 2010, p. 44.
\(^{291}\) Prunier 2010, pp. 45–6.
\(^{292}\) Prunier 2010, p. 47.
\(^{293}\) Longman 2010, p. 72.
with the Hutu and favoured a revolution to end the inequalities. As the political struggles became increasingly violent, it was clear that a Hutu revolution was coming.

On 1 November 1959, a Parmehutu activist named Dominique Mbonyumutwa was walking home when he was attacked and beaten by UNAR members. Immediately, false rumours of his death spread across Rwanda, and Hutu activists began assaulting Tutsi chiefs and UNAR members. The Belgian colonists stood by and watched, and allowed the Hutus to burn the houses of Tutsis. Retaliatory attacks were organised by the new mwami of Rwanda, Kigeli V Ndahindurwa (who had succeeded his brother Mwami Mutara, who had died in July 1959). With so many attacks on both sides, there was great confusion, to the extent that some unintentionally fought on their enemies’ side.

In an attempt to stem the upheaval, Belgium sent Colonel Guy Logiest to assume command of the colonial administration in Rwanda on 4 November 1959. Shortly after his arrival, in January 1960, Colonel Logiest declared the situation in Rwanda untenable, and decided that Belgium had to take sides.

The Belgian colonial administration began replacing Tutsi chiefs with Hutus, who forced Tutsis to leave their homes. Instead of attempting to calm the situation, or even standing by and allowing the revolution to take place, the Belgians began actively aiding the revolutionary Hutus against the Tutsi monarchy.

The reason why the Belgians under Colonel Logiest deemed the situation uncontrollable and decided to change sides is a question that has yet to be answered. The decolonisation of Africa had begun in the mid-1950s, and Belgium would lose Congo in June 1960. It is possible that the pressure upon the colonial powers to grant independence to its colonies affected the Belgians in Rwanda and resulted in the strategic shift in loyalty. It is also likely that the Belgians felt betrayed by the Tutsis, who were beginning to demand independence from Belgium. Perhaps more important was the fact that the majority group, the Hutus, although eager to get rid of the Belgians, were even more eager to abolish the monarchy. Aside from being the majority group, constituting 83 per cent of the

---

294 Linden & Linden 1977, p. 259.
296 Although Mwami Mutara most likely died of a penicillin overdose, rumours spread that he has been murdered (Prunier 2010, pp. 48–9).
297 Prunier 2010, pp. 50–1.
population, they were also supported by the Catholic Church. The Belgian administration could do little against such a revolutionary force.

Although the violence continued and Tutsis were still being massacred or forced to flee the country, Colonel Logiest declared the revolution over in 1960. Belgium decided to depose Mwami Kigeli and began organising communal elections, from which Parmehutu emerged as the winners. The UN did not approve of these elections, and instead expressed its support of the Tutsi monarchy. In a compromise with Belgium, it was decided that legislative elections would be held in June 1961. However, in late January, Grégoire Kayibanda approached Colonel Logiest and asked his approval for a coup, which Logiest granted. Thus, on 28 January 1961, Kayibanda summoned a national assembly, that replaced the kalinga, the royal drum, with a national flag, and abolished the monarchy in favour of a democratic republic.

As the violence continued with the massacre or exile of thousands of Tutsis, Kayibanda was ultimately elected President of Rwanda. His main objective was independence, which was hardly unexpected, since there was heavy pressure on Belgium to leave its colonies. On 1 July 1962, Rwanda gained independence.

Postcolonial Rwanda

In the early years of independence, the violence continued. Exiled Tutsis in Uganda formed a guerrilla, calling themselves Inyenzi, and began attacking Rwanda, which in turn caused retaliatory violence against Tutsis in Rwanda. President Kayibanda used the attacks of the Inyenzi to his advantage in two more elections. Since the Catholic Church strongly supported the Kayibanda regime in return for a privileged position in Rwandan society, they did condemn the violence in the 1960s, but argued that at its root was the Tutsis’ refusal to accept the new government.

---

298 This according to a study finished in the late 1950s and published in 1971 by M. D’Hertefelt, according to which the Tutsis constituted 16 per cent and the Twas 1 per cent of the Rwandan population (Gatwa 2006).

299 It is also possible that Belgium wanted to maintain influence in Rwanda and thought the best chance of doing so would be to befriend the Hutu and to help them to power. Having never ruled before, the Hutu may have been in need of support from Belgium. See Scherrer 2002, p. 28.

300 Prunier 2010, p. 52.


302 Prunier 2010, p. 54.

303 Prunier 2010, p. 54.

Although the new regime was declared a democratic republic, there was no democracy, as Kayibanda banned all other parties but his own, and as for the republic, Kayibanda acted more like a mwami than a president.\textsuperscript{305} Under his authoritarian rule, people were expected to obey without question, to work the lands, to attend mass, and not break any of the many laws and regulations restricting their lives.\textsuperscript{306}

In 1972, genocide was committed against Hutus in neighbouring Burundi. In late April a group of Hutu officials attempted a coup d'état, in which several thousand Burundian Tutsis were killed. The coup failed, however, and the Burundian Tutsi regime retaliated in a series of massacres between May and August 1972, resulting in the deaths of more than 200,000 Hutus, while even more Hutus fled across the border into Rwanda.\textsuperscript{307}

Kayibanda used this in his anti-Tutsi propaganda in Rwanda, arguing that the Tutsis could not be trusted, and that given the chance they would commit genocide against the Hutu in Rwanda. The result of Kayibanda’s rhetoric was purges of Tutsis from schools, workplaces and churches. Officially, this was the introduction of a quota system, which meant that the percentage of Tutsis in education, public service and other official positions was to match the percentage of Tutsis in the Rwandan population. Tutsis were physically thrown out, and several were dragged from their homes by angry Hutu mobs.\textsuperscript{308}

In the violent turmoil that followed, Major-General Juvénal Habyarimana, the head of National Defence and a Hutu from Northern Rwanda, decided to overthrow the President. The northern Hutus had been marginalised, and they had been the people most exposed to the Inyenzi attacks, and among them were the most fervent Hutu extremists. On 4–5 July 1973, Habyarimana carried out what incorrectly has been labelled a bloodless coup, deposing Kayibanda, and killing him and his family along with more than thirty other Parmehutu leaders.\textsuperscript{309}

In 1975, Juvénal Habyarimana was sworn in as President of Rwanda. He soon made Rwanda a one-party state with his own party, the MRND, as the only legal party. Unlike Kayibanda, Habyarimana did not isolate himself in his authoritarianism, but portrayed himself as a man of the people. Although his was an authoritarian rule – in the presidential elections in 1983 and 1988 he won with more than 98 per cent of the votes, as he was the only candidate – he did know how to play the political

\textsuperscript{305} Prunier 2010, p. 57.
\textsuperscript{306} Prunier 2010, p. 59.
\textsuperscript{307} Carney 2016, p. 188.
\textsuperscript{308} Carney 2016, p. 189.
\textsuperscript{309} Carney 2016, p. 190. It is unknown how the Parmehutu leaders were killed, but it is said that the Kayibanda family was imprisoned and left to starve to death.
opposition and the population, and did manage to bring peace and security to Rwanda.

However, this came at a cost, as Rwandans were not allowed to move freely: they needed permits to travel both within and outside the country, and unmarried, unemployed women residing in the cities were regarded as prostitutes and arrested.310 There was discrimination against the Tutsis, but as long as they did not attempt to get involved in politics, obeyed the laws and rules, and did not oppose the regime, they were allowed to live in peace. Moreover, although the quota from 1973 was still in place, Habyarimana did not enforce it. Aside from the discrimination of Tutsis, there were no real conflicts. Tutsis were gradually accepted and could pursue careers in fields to which they had previously not had access. Everyday life for Hutus and Tutsis was at the very least tolerable.311 Nevertheless, the peace and stability of the 1980s would not last, and the political game Habyarimana played would not appease everyone forever.

War and democracy

The stability of Habyarimana’s so-called Second Republic ended in the late 1980s. The economy was faltering, partly due to the so-called coffee crisis, and Habyarimana responded with new and increased taxes that brought poverty to the peasants. A drought in 1988–1989 caused a famine, and forced thousands to leave Rwanda, which destabilised the region, causing social, political, and economic upheaval.

On the political front, the man that Habyarimana unofficially had appointed as his successor, Colonel Mayuya, was murdered. The assassin was a member of the akazu, sometimes referred to as Le Clan de Madame, which was a small close-knit group of influential friends and family of the president’s wife, Agathe Kanziga Habyarimana, and the motive was likely that the President’s intended successor was not an akazu member. President Habyarimana relied on his wife and her family and friends, and if he was to appoint a successor that did not act according to the interests of Madame Agathe’s akazu, the group would have lost control of Rwanda.312

The status quo that Habyarimana had managed to uphold for a decade was over. The population was displeased, and politicians from different clans fought for influence, while journalists began to find evidence of corruption among ministers. To stem the increasing disorder,

---

312 Prunier 2010, pp. 86–7. Akazu (lit. little house) was the group of people closest to the mwami during the Tutsi monarchy.
Habyarimana introduced even more restrictions, based on Catholic moral values, with humiliating punishments and re-education camps for alleged prostitutes and criminals. These actions did not stabilise the situation.313

In April 1990, during a visit to Paris, Habyarimana was persuaded to introduce a multi-party system in Rwanda, and in spite of the President having been protective of the one-party system, he agreed.314 Good relations with France may have been the cause of his change of heart. However, it would later become obvious that he did not fully agree with the idea of democracy, as he did what he could to stall the democratisation process, especially after the invasion in 1990 of the RPF, a militarised political party formed by exiled Rwandans in Uganda that demanded citizenship and power-sharing.315

The first invasion by the RPF, on 1 October 1990, was a failure. The RPF commander, Fred Rwigema, was killed by an unknown assailant in an argument over strategy.316 This caused the RPF to lose momentum, allowing the Rwandan Armed Forces (FAR) to strike back, forcing the RPF to retreat to the Rwandan hills. Upon the news of Rwigema’s death, Paul Kagame, another of RPF’s founders and leaders, travelled back from the US where he was undergoing military training. He assumed command, regrouped and reorganised the RPF and attacked again in January 1991, this time with far greater success.

Adopting guerrilla style hit-and-run tactics, the RPF managed to stay ahead of the FAR, gaining ground with every attack. Due to the pace with which the RPF advanced there is little doubt that there would have been a short war and victory for the rebels, had it not been for the French support of the Habyarimana regime. Believing that the RPF invasion was a short-lived rebellion, French president François Mitterrand provided troops, funds, and supplies to the FAR, and threatened to intervene in the war if the RPF would not agree to peace negotiations.

The democratisation process and the civil war are far too complex to account for in detail. In short, the negotiations were disrupted by Hutu extremists killing Tutsis, assassinations of politicians, and a staged attack upon Kigali, for which the RPF was wrongfully blamed, and which prompted the French to increase their support of the FAR. As for the democratisation process, Habyarimana played the minor opposition parties off against each other while the RPF and the Habyarimana regime argued over the terms of the Broad-Based Transitional Government (BBTG).

313 Prunier 2010, pp. 89–90.
314 Prunier 2010, p. 89.
315 Prunier 2010, p. 127.
316 Some say he was hit by a stray bullet, others that the RPF leadership assassinated him.
On 4 August 1993, they finally signed the so-called Arusha Accords, a peace agreement by which the RPF forces would be integrated in the Rwandan army and the RPF would get fair representation in the interim government. The Habyarimana regime and the RPF also agreed that the three-year conflict and the series of sabotaged negotiations might disrupt the implementation of the Arusha Accords, and so sent a joint request to the United Nations for an independent international peace force to aid in the delicate process. Although the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) did not have the mandate to carry out their requested tasks, their presence did bring hope of peace.\textsuperscript{317}

In spite of this international presence, the UNAMIR was challenged, not only by the conflicting parties who still did not fully agree, but also by the extremist groups in the country. The situation deteriorated after the assassination of the first elected Hutu President of Burundi, Melchior Ndadaye, which was followed by violence and massacres, causing yet another influx of refugees into Rwanda. As in 1972–1973, Hutu extremists in Rwanda used the actions of the Tutsis in Burundi in their propaganda.

By 1990, \textit{Kangura} had been founded and began publishing its anti-RPF, anti-Tutsi articles. Its founder, Hassan Ngeze, was also a founding member of the \textit{Coalition pour la Défense de la République} (CDR), a Hutu extremist party that was excluded from the BBTG due to its violent anti-Tutsi rallies, and yet formed an alliance with the presidential MRND party. Aside from the propaganda in \textit{Kangura}, which is the topic of this thesis, there were other forces at work as well, like the Interahamwe, a youth group formed within the MRND, which mainly consisted of unemployed young men, and was officially said to be trained to patrol the country and keep watch for any illicit RPF activities. In reality they were training to commit genocide. Roaming the streets in colourful clothes and wigs they sang anti-Tutsi songs and shouted slogans. Furthermore, at the time of the signing of the Arusha Accords in July 1993, the RTLM radio station began broadcasting. It was supported and funded by the CDR, \textit{Kangura}, the influential extremist group known as the \textit{akazu},\textsuperscript{318} and President Habyarimana, who was a major shareholder and who granted the radio station a free broadcasting licence. Prominent business man Félicien Kabuga, the president’s brother-in-law and member of the \textit{akazu}, imported portable radios and provided funds to install several new radio transmitters so RTLM to reach the entire country.\textsuperscript{319} In spite of the

\textsuperscript{317} For an accurate and detailed account of the peace process and democratisation, see Prunier 2010, pp. 93–213.

\textsuperscript{318} The \textit{akazu} was made up of prominent friends and relatives of the President’s wife, Agathe Habyarimana – the people supposedly responsible for planning and organising the genocide.

warnings and reports that reached the UN through UNAMIR, the restricted mandate did not allow the UNAMIR to act on these indications of genocide in the making.  

On 6 April 1994, President Habyarimana attended a meeting in Dar es Salaam with leaders of neighbouring countries who pressured him to accelerate the implementation of the Arusha Accords, since the conflict in Rwanda was threatening the security in the African Great Lakes Region. On his way home, as his plane was approaching Kigali airport, two missiles, fired by unknown assailants, hit the plane, which crashed in Habyarimana’s own backyard, killing him, several members of his cabinet, and the new Burundian president who had tagged along. Within hours, the Presidential Guard, the Gendarmerie, and the FAR began setting up roadblocks in Kigali, checking identity cards, arresting, and executing Tutsis and moderate Hutu politicians and officials. The Interahamwe militia was unleashed, and soon anyone with the word Tutsi written in their identity card was a target.

The genocide

The 1994 Rwandan genocide has been described as well planned and well organised, due to the immense effectiveness of the perpetrators. However, in the early stages, there was fighting between some FAR soldiers and the Presidential Guard, as the former believed that the latter were staging a coup d’état. Other evidence shows how the perpetrators initially were unaware of the plans of the organisers, and more recent studies prove that there was a fair amount of resistance to the génocidaires in the communes. Nevertheless, once it was set in motion, the genocide spread quickly across the country, and in a hundred days more than 800,000 people were killed.

Within hours of President Habyarimana’s death, Tutsis began to take refuge in churches, schools, and other public buildings. The génocidaires took advantage of this, and even helped many of them reach such locations, claiming they would be brought to safety. Once the buildings were full, the army and the Interahamwe moved in and massacred the refugees inside. Due to a shortage of ammunition, caused by the resumed civil war, the majority were killed with machetes, most of which were imported from China by Félicien Kabuga’s company.

320 Dallaire 2005, p. 146. See also S/RES/872 (1993), Resolution 872, 5 October 1993, for the UNAMIR mandate.
321 Bangwanubusa 2009.
322 Des Forges 1999, p. 127. It is estimated that enough machetes were imported to arm every third adult Hutu male.
Within the first days, the French had moved in with a military force, extracting all expatriates, along with members of the Habyarimana regime and the akazu, including Agathe Habyarimana. On 20 April, Belgium announced that it was pulling its UN soldiers out of the UNAMIR, following the murders of ten Belgian soldiers on 7 April.\(^{323}\) Having argued that the threat to the UNAMIR was too great, they attempted to convince the UN to abort the mission in Rwanda. In spite of the objections of the UNAMIR, even the Belgians in the UN force, and the clear evidence of genocide, the UN voted to withdraw all but a skeleton crew of 270 observers.\(^{324}\) This left thousands of Rwandans unprotected, and the perpetrators were free to kill without witnesses or interruption.

When the realisation dawned that churches and schools offered no sanctuary, Tutsis began so flee and hide, and as they could no longer be found in large numbers the violence changed. The perpetrators resorted to torture, rape, and mutilation when they found Tutsis. Many reported Tutsis they had seen to the RTLM, which broadcast lists of names of Tutsis, along with encouragement to keep searching in order to exterminate the Tutsis that remained.\(^{325}\)

With the UNAMIR reduced to almost nothing and with no control over the situation, and with the international community watching, the RPF could resume their advance, with cautious French support, although they had not distanced themselves fully from the Hutu regime. By the end of June, the RPF had laid siege to Kigali and had taken several strategic positions. Hutus began to flee Rwanda into Zaïre. When the UN finally admitted that the killings in Rwanda constituted genocide, there was not one single member state willing to lend troops to the UN mission referred to as UNAMIR II. France offered to send troops to establish a safe zone and provide security until the UN could launch the second UNAMIR mission. The security zone was set up on by the border to Zaïre, and this became a refugee camp for Hutus, many of them perpetrators who took the opportunity to flee.\(^{326}\)

On 4 July, the RPF took Kigali and forced the remaining FAR soldiers out, marking the official end of the genocide. While the new RPF government, headed by the moderate Hutu President Pasteur Bizimungu, in 1995 attempted to bring the escaped Hutus back to Rwanda to face

\(^{323}\) This was part of a plan by the organisers of the genocide to get the Belgians out of the country, prompted by events in Mogadishu six months earlier, when the US pulled its troops out of Somalia after it lost 18 soldiers.


justice, the UN established the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in Arusha, Tanzania. This tribunal was modelled on the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague. After some discussions about the jurisdiction and mandate of the tribunal, it was settled that only the most high-profile Category I criminals would be tried in the ICTR. To date, 93 individuals have been indicted for having planned, organised, orchestrated, instigated, or carried out large-scale massacres during the genocide. Most of them were politicians, bourgmestres, préfets, and military officers, but among them were also the people behind Kangura and RTLM, and few priests.327

3.2 Thesis outline

Following the two introductory chapters, there are three empirical chapters, a concluding discussion, and a summary in Swedish. The three empirical chapters and their contents are organised thematically rather than chronologically. I have, however, chosen to place the subchapters in the order in which the themes were introduced in the media, to the extent it is possible. Likewise, the source mainly used in the first empirical chapter is Kangura, because it was published from 1990, while RTLM did not begin broadcasts until 1993 and thus is the key source for the second empirical chapter. For obvious reasons, ICTR documents and transcripts are the main source in the third empirical chapter on the post-genocide period.

Thus the first empirical chapter, Chapter 4, ‘The dividing God’, analyses the Hutu extremists’ attempts to divide Tutsis from Hutus using origin myths. It begins with a brief summary of the mythologies that have served as the Rwandans’ origins, followed by an analysis of the use of these myths by the Hutu extremist media, mainly Kangura and RTLM during the civil war and the genocide, in their attempt to portray the Tutsis as foreign. Following this are the representations of the Tutsis as royalty or nobility, and the claim that they perceived themselves as God’s chosen people. The chapter concludes with the attempts to divide the Church by devaluing its representatives in the opposition to the Hutu regime.

In Chapter 5, ‘The Rwandan gods’, the focus shifts from people to deities and faith. The attempts by the Hutu extremists to introduce a Rwandan God favourable to the Hutus and the genocide are analysed, and the ways in which Hutu extremists represented their own faith in God, contrasted to the Tutsis’ faith as portrayed – and diminished – by Hutu extremists. The RPF killings of the clergy prompt the questions of the

manner in which religion proved more or less important depending on context, who committed the murders, and how they were viewed in the media.

Chapter 6, ‘Between the Devil and the deep blue sea’, focuses on the trials after the genocide, held in the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in Arusha, Tanzania. Where the preceding chapters deal with the attempts to give genocide a moral gloss within a religious context, the focus of the last empirical chapter is how religious concepts were used in the judicial aftermath to claim victimhood.
CHAPTER 4

The dividing God: The separation of Hutu and Tutsi through mythology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with a presentation of the origin myths of the Hutus and Tutsis, discussed in relation to the consequences they have had throughout the history of Rwanda, and especially during the civil war and the genocide. There are two such origin myths, the first being a local Rwandan myth according to which the Hutus, Tutsis, and Twas all originated in the area that would become Rwanda. Due to regional differences, changes over time, the lack of a written language, and possible mistranslations in the documentation, this myth comes in many variants, but the essence is the same. The other myth was imposed on the Rwandans by the Catholic missionaries and German and Belgian colonists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This myth was based on an interpretation of a biblical story and had the Tutsi as conquerors from northern Africa.

In order to understand the implications of these origin myths prior to and during the genocide, we must first explore the legends as such, which will be done in the first subchapter. The use and consequences of these mythologies is then analysed in the second subchapter, while in the third I analyse the use of the concepts of royalty and nobility in reference to the Tutsis. In a similar manner, the references to the Tutsis as God’s race is analysed in the fourth subchapter, and in the last, the extremists’ attempts to divide the Church.
4.2 The origins of the Rwandans

Starting with the Rwandans’ pre-Christian origin myths, I then consider the similar mythologies found in Christianity. The third and final subsection presents some of the consequences these myths had during the colonial era. These are all imperative if we are to understand the creation of the context in which the Hutu extremist propagandists operated.

Not only did these mythologies explain the origins of the three groups in Rwanda, but they also shaped their identities and the society they lived in. As will be demonstrated, these myths contributed to the separation of Hutus from Tutsis, and laid the foundations for genocide.

**Pre-Christian origin myths**

According to precolonial Rwandan mythology, there was a heavenly King, named Nkuba (‘Thunder’). Nkuba ruled over the heavenly world in which Imana, the creator, lived. Nkuba had three children; two sons and a daughter. One day these children fell from the sky and landed in what is now Rwanda. The oldest child, a boy named Kigwa, became the first mwami of Rwanda. He married his sister, and they had three sons – Gatutsi, Gahutu, and Gatwa – who became the fathers of the Rwandan people. These three sons were each born without social abilities, however, and so they went to Imana to ask him to provide them with new faculties. Gatutsi, the ancestor of the Tutsi, was then given anger, while Gahutu, the ancestor of the Hutu, was given disobedience and labour, and Gatwa, the ancestor of the Twa, was given gluttony, which he was said to have gladly accepted.\(^{328}\)

The Banyiginya dynasty, which was said to have originated with the heavenly king Nkuba, who according to Rwandan lore descended from the sky, is said to have laid the foundation for the country we now know as Rwanda. For that reason, the belief that the mwami was a divine figure became part of Rwandan lore. Since the mwami always came from the Tutsi class, the authority of the Tutsi and the mwami was not to be questioned, as all power was said to have been given by Imana, the creator.\(^{329}\) But there are also other myths aimed to fortify the social hierarchy in Rwanda.

There was a popular legend in Rwanda, sometimes referred to as the ‘Legend of the Gift of Power and Milk’. There are at least two versions of this legend, one in which Kigwa entrusts Gatutsi, Gahutu, and Gatwa with one jar of milk each, to keep safe through one night, and another in which

\(^{328}\) Mamdani 2001, p. 79.  
\(^{329}\) Bazuin 2013, p. 40.
it is Imana who provides the milk. In the first version, documented in the memoirs of a missionary in the early 1900s, Gahutu spills his milk on his hands and licks them, and Gatwa drinks his milk and falls asleep, while Gatutsi keeps his milk safe but half of it evaporates during the night. Because of this Gahutu and his descendants were to cultivate the land, while the Twas were to make pots and beg from the Hutus and Tutsis, who would refuse them nothing. The Tutsis were to raise cows, and half of them would live and half would die.330

The other version is the one that was used by Hutu extremists during the civil war. In this version Gatwa falls asleep and spills his milk, while Gahutu drinks his milk after a couple of hours of sleep, and Gatutsi stays awake, keeps his milk safe, and offers it back to Imana, who then tells him that he shall reign over the other two.331

The mythology of power, symbolised by milk, as given to the Tutsis by Imana was not only referred to in the media and the propaganda. As Christopher Taylor has demonstrated, the symbolic value of fluids was important in precolonial Rwandan high society. The mwami was not only the conduit between Imana and Rwanda, but he embodied both. Thus, the bodily functions of the mwami reflected what happened in Rwanda. A well-functioning mwami body would result in rain, lactating cattle, fertility among the people, to give a few examples. This control of flow is the reason why the mwami was sometimes called the umukama, ‘the milker’.332

The Tutsi, traditionally cattle herders, were therefore strongly associated with milk, which would have negative consequences during the genocide. Witnesses, for example, said that Hutu perpetrators tortured and mutilated their victims, saying that they wanted to see if the Tutsi bled milk instead of blood.333

The legend of power and milk did not only consolidate the hierarchy and professions of the three classes, but gave it a religious denotation. In the legend, the Tutsi is the preferred and favoured group. It is important to remember that they were not considered a race at that time; the racialisation of Hutus and Tutsis came from the colonists, in their creation of new social and political structures and identities.334 However, when the Catholic Church began teaching the Hamitic Hypothesis as Rwandan history, the notion of the Tutsis as descendants of a biblical character strengthened the internalisation of the notion of the Tutsis as the group

332 Taylor 2013, p. 5.
favoured by God. In doing so, they created a new religious identity alongside the political one.

The transition from indigenous religion to Christianity was not a difficult one. The Rwandan god Imana and the Christian God were similar enough for the Church to claim that Imana was the Christian God. Imana, like the Christian God, was transcendent, immanent, and omnipotent. He was the creator who dwelt in the sky, who provided protection to humans.\textsuperscript{335} There was little need for modifications. This would also explain why the incorporation of traditional myths and legends of origin, along with the Hamitic Hypothesis, could be utilised in the dehumanisation of the Tutsi. Not only did these myths consolidate the social hierarchy of the three classes, but they also gave them certain qualities that evolved into stereotypes that prevailed throughout the genocide.

\textit{Christian origin myths}

The British explorer John Hanning Speke travelled through Africa in the 1850s and 1860s in the hopes of finding the source of the Nile. Although this quest failed, he did make other discoveries. In fact, he claimed to have found proof of the truth of a biblical story.

Speke was firmly convinced that nothing of value could exist in Africa, so when he found people with skin fairer than other Africans he had encountered, he refused to believe that they were of African origin. These peoples were also living in societies that, in Speke’s opinion, were too advanced to have evolved in Africa. Thus he concluded that this group of people who, except from their darker skin, shared many features with European people, living in an advanced society, were not originally of African origin, but had brought their more modern societal structures to the African continent.\textsuperscript{336} The question of the origin of this people still remained, however. It would be more than twenty years before the Catholic missionaries found what they believed to be the answer in the Bible.

In the Book of Genesis, Noah falls asleep drunk and naked in his tent, where his son Ham finds him. Instead of covering his father, preserving some of his dignity, Ham instead goes and tells his brothers what he has seen. His brothers, Shem and Japheth, cover their father with a blanket without looking at him, and when Noah wakes they tell him of what Ham has done. Noah is angered, casting a curse upon Canaan, the son of Ham:

\textsuperscript{335} Adekunle 2007, p. 29.
\textsuperscript{336} Sanders 1969, pp. 528–9.
Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be to his brothers.’ He also said, ‘Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem; and let Canaan be his servant. May God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem, and let Canaan be his servant."\(^{337}\)

There is no mention of race in the biblical story. Centuries later, however, other versions of this myth emerged in which Ham was represented as a sinful person who emasculated his father, which brings on the curse. These versions were often far more vivid, making the children of Canaan black and ugly, twisted, with red eyes, naked with elongated penises, and in some texts it was even mentioned that they should be called Negroes and that they loved theft and fornication.\(^{338}\) These reinterpretations of the biblical myth were coined to legitimise slavery among Arabs and Americans.

The Hamitic Hypothesis had been used to explain origins before, namely in Egypt, where the Europeans could not accept that the sophisticated culture was actually African. The Hamitic Hypothesis offered a solution to this conundrum; the consensus reached was that only Canaan had been cursed and that the other sons of Ham must be the ancestors of the Egyptians. Concerning Rwanda, the interpretation was quite different, as the explorers, the colonists, and the missionaries argued that the group that they would later call Tutsis was the true Hamitic race, and that the others were Africans, and that Africans had no origin in the Book of Genesis, or indeed the Bible. The Bantu group in Rwanda were not Hamites, and therefore they were not held in such high regard as the group later referred to as Tutsis by the missionaries and the colonists.\(^{339}\)

In the mid to late nineteenth century, scientists took over from theologians on this issue. They did not discard the biblical mythology, but used contemporary scientific methods to distinguish different races on the African continent, favouring those who had features resembling those of Europeans.\(^{340}\) As Edith Sanders has noted, modern racism changed the notions of Africans as descendants of Ham.\(^{341}\) In the 1850s, Joseph Arthur de Gobineau claimed that the Hamites were actually white people who travelled down to Africa, had interbred with the black people, and thus degenerated.\(^{342}\)

When John Hanning Speke discovered the group of people that in Rwanda would come to be referred to as the Tutsis, he connected them

---

\(^{337}\) Genesis 9:25–27.

\(^{338}\) See, for example, Sanders 1969, pp. 521–2.

\(^{339}\) Carney 2016, p. 11.

\(^{340}\) Sanders 1969, p. 528.

\(^{341}\) Sanders 1969, p. 258.

\(^{342}\) Gatwa 2006, p. 65.
to the Hamitic Hypothesis, arguing that they were the true Hamites; former white people, degenerated, but still far more advanced than other Africans. With the notion of Africa as a continent without a history, a continent still in its infancy, inhabited by savages without the ability to evolve on their own, the churches and scientists were given the opportunity to introduce a history of Africa and its inhabitants based on their own mythologies and research.343

Measurements of heads, eye colour, body shape, hair, and other physical attributes helped the Europeans distinguish three races in the Rwanda-Burundi region. They also found that Rwandan society consisted of different classes, and that those at the top of each society were called Tutsis. They then concluded that those with features and attributes closer to stereotypically Europeans must be the Tutsis, while those with stereotypically Bantu features must be Hutus. Being at the top of the hierarchy, the Tutsis were assumed to have introduced the social order found in the region, and hence they could not be African in origin.

The Tutsis had gone from a Rwandan social class to a foreign race, favoured by God, the colonists, and the Catholic Church. The foundations for genocide had been established.

Consequences of mythologies

The indigenous Rwandan mythologies served several purposes. They explained the origins of the three classes, but also shored up the class system and structure. It was a system based on wealth, which meant that a Hutu could acquire the status of a Tutsi, prior to the racialisation of these classes. What is also important to note is that this system was said to have been established by deities. Since all power was given by God, it would mean that it was a system that could not be questioned, lest one would question God. A class struggle would mean a struggle against Imana, and since Imana was an immanent God, living in all things, to anger Imana could have devastating consequences for the country.344 In essence it set up a social hierarchy, applied characteristics to the three classes, and fortified them through religion.

Unlike these myths, the Christian mythology of the Hamitic race traced the origin of the Tutsis to another part of Africa, making them foreign invaders and conquerors. The inequality of the class system was exacerbated when it was racialised; as ascension in class was made impossible, and the Hutus were deprived of civil rights, such as the right to ownership of land and the patronage they had under the Tutsi class.

Much like the precolonial *ubuhake* system, however, the racially based system was claimed to have been instituted by God. The Catholic White Fathers, who established the first missionary station in Rwanda in 1905, collaborated with the German colonists until the Belgian take-over of what was then known as Ruanda-Urundi during the First World War. The collaboration continued with the Belgians in categorising the Rwandans.

In their descriptions of the Hutus the Belgians claimed that they ‘display very typical Bantu features. [...] They are generally short and thick-set with a big head, a jovial expression, a wide nose and enormous lips. They are extroverts who like to lead a simple life.’\(^{345}\) The effects of the Hamitic Hypothesis turning the Hutus into the indigenous population and the Tutsis into foreign invaders can thus be seen in the descriptions of the Hutus’ physical features. It is evident from allegations that they had ‘let themselves be enslaved without ever daring to revolt.’\(^{346}\) Again it is worth mentioning that a revolt against the Tutsi class would be a revolt against the *mwami*, and therefore also against Imana, which in turn was believed to have devastating consequences. The story of how the German Count von Götzen, upon their first meeting, shook the *mwami*’s hand, causing fear among the courtiers who believed shaking the *mwami* would cause an earthquake, tells us something of the faith of the Rwandans.\(^{347}\) Thus, Rwandan religion and mythology are to blame for the lack of revolts, not any alleged weakness of the Hutu class.

The descriptions of the Tutsis differed significantly from those of the Hutus. They were said to be born leaders, ‘capable of extreme self-control and calculated goodwill.’\(^{348}\) Unlike the depictions of the Hutus, the Tutsis were said to have ‘a vivacious intelligence [and] a refinement of feelings which is rare among primitive people.’\(^{349}\) In another description, by Mgr. Alexandre Le Roy, their beauty and alleged superiority over the Bantu races is once again stressed: ‘Their intellect and delicate appearance, their love of money, their capacity to adapt to any situation seem to indicate a Semitic origin.’\(^{350}\) To use their alleged love of money as indication of an alleged Semitic origin reflects the entanglement of anti-Semitism and racism. In addition, Mgr. Léon Classe argued that the Tutsis had both


\(^{349}\) Prunier 2010, p. 6.

aryan and Semitic features, further distancing the Tutsis from Sub-
Saharan Africa.  

The Belgian administration and the Catholic missionaries began
collaborating with Tutsi historians on the history of Rwanda. These Tutsis,
realising the opportunity to secure their newly gained privileges under the
colonial influence, told a story that reaffirmed the results of the work of
the missionaries and colonists. This gave the Church and the Belgians
reasons to favour the Tutsis, as they, as noted above, were said to be
natural leaders, ‘capable of extreme self-control and calculated
goodwill.’

The Tutsi historians portrayed the Tutsi as an invading, conquering
people, far superior to the Bantu races. The stories were brought back to
Europe and printed in history books that were then used to teach
Rwandans a recently constructed history of Rwanda. Through the
Rwandan schools, monopolised by the Catholic Church, the Tutsis were
given higher education, administrative jobs, and other privileged societal
positions, while the Hutus were taught that they were of less value than
the Tutsi. They were admitted to basic education, and got work, shelter,
patronage and community in return for their conversion to Christianity.
Having been saved from poverty by the church it is hardly surprising that
they would believe and internalise what their new protectors taught them,
even if it meant that they were marginalised under the rule of the so-called
Hamitic race.

4.2 The use of origins

The subsection above has given a presentation of the mythologies of the
origins of the Rwandan groups as they were told both in pre-Christian and
Christian Rwanda. These mythologies would have severe consequences
during the civil war and the genocide, as Hutu extremists used them in
their anti-Tutsi rhetoric.

---

A worldwide Tutsi conspiracy

The rule of the Tutsis ended with the 1959 Hutu revolution. Soon thereafter, persecutions of Tutsis began, forcing approximately 130,000 refugees into neighbouring countries, between 50,000 and 70,000 into Uganda. Many Rwandan allied themselves with Ugandan rebel Yoweri Museveni and helped him to power. However, Museveni’s friendship with the exiled Rwandans generated several protests among the Ugandans, and eventually, Museveni deprived the exiles of their Ugandan citizenship. However, he did help the exiles, who numbered approximately 200,000 in 1990, to organise themselves for an invasion of Rwanda.  

1990 was the year that the first issue of Kangura was published. Compared with issues published after the RPF invasion, it was moderate, discussing contemporary problems in a fairly mild tone. On the back cover, Pope John Paul II was depicted, with the caption: ‘Continue in the same direction.’ This was not the message the pope conveyed when he visited Rwanda in September that year. Instead he urged the Rwandans to work together to solve the problems they were facing, mainly those related to the droughts that affected the harvests.  

Multi-partyism had been announced, but the process had not yet begun. Thus, there were not as many problems in Rwanda as there would be just three weeks after the Pope’s visit, when the RPF suddenly crossed the border and initiated their invasion, when President Habyarimana was attending a UN summit in New York.

355 Kangura no. 1, May 1990.
The first RPF attack, in October 1990, was a failure. Their leader Fred Rwigema was, as mentioned, killed within the first days of the attack, and there were extensive discussions on tactics, allowing for the FAR to strike back. Although the RPF invasion was halted, they remained in Rwanda, hiding in the mountains, waiting for Paul Kagame to assume command.

The Hutu extremist magazine Kangura did not wait to see the results of the invasion, but instead called the Hutu to arms in the October issue: ‘Now is the time for the Bantu peoples to protect themselves against the threat of genocide skilfully and carefully orchestrated by the bloodthirsty Hamitic people, hungry for barbaric conquest’. The threat of conquest was not a new one, in the eyes of the Kangura writers. In fact, they argued that the war had not started with the RPF invasion in October 1990, but rather 400 years earlier with ‘the Hamite invasion and the massacre of King Mashira’s family’, and that it was a part of a plan by the ‘Hamite constellation that claims, by divine decree, to have the right to reign over the entire African Great Lakes Region.’ It is also noted that the claims of superiority had not only been created by the Tutsis, but in collaboration with western nations and that they were conspiring to realise the Tutsi plans of conquest.

This can be seen in imagery as well. In Kangura no. 53, published in December 1993, there is a drawing of UN General Roméo Dallaire being breastfed by Tutsi women. However, the Tutsi women are not drawn as Rwandan, or even African women. Their clothes, hairstyle, and makeup

---

357 Rwigema may have been killed by his own soldiers in an argument over tactics, but this has not been confirmed.
358 Nkekezi, ‘Hutus of the World, Unite’, Kangura no. 5 October 1990, international issue. The use of genocide as an argument may seem ominous, considering what was to come, but it was most likely a reference to the genocide of Hutus by Tutsis in Burundi in 1972.
359 M.S., ‘The Job of Undermining the Social Democratic Party (PSD), Gatabazi’s Party or Parti Sous Développé [Under Developed Party] (PSD)’, Kangura, no. 4, international issue, November 1990. According to legend, the Hutu (or Bantu) King Mashira was killed, with his family, by the invading Tutsi (or Hamites), and the Tutsi King decorated his royal Kalinga drum with King Mashira’s genitals.
are clearly westernised.\textsuperscript{362} The intent here is not only to provide evidence of a Tutsi conspiracy, but also to emphasise the role of Tutsi women as seductive and immoral, feeding lies to win the international community over to the Tutsi side, through the seduction of UNAMIR.

These accusations of a worldwide Tutsi conspiracy are similar to the allegations of a Jewish world conspiracy in anti-Semitic rhetoric. In fact, similarities with anti-Semitic rhetoric appear elsewhere in Hutu extremist propaganda as well, although not obvious at first glance. The Hutu Ten Commandments, published in Kangura in December 1990 is likely the best example.\textsuperscript{363} While the content does not reflect the import of the biblical Ten Commandments, the title clearly does. The Hutu Ten Commandments, they consist of ten paragraphs that, in general, state that a Hutu is a traitor if he has any dealings with the Tutsi.\textsuperscript{364}

These commandments were not aimed against the RPF but against the Tutsis as a group. They also defined how an ideal Hutu should be and act. There are opposing traits attributed to each of the two ethnic groups in these commandments, and none of the positive traits are found among the Tutsis. While the rhetoric was fairly common, albeit seldom as explicit as in the commandments, what the title does do is to insert a religious element into the ethnic division, thus elevating the postcolonial ethnic disunion to a divine level.

When on trial in the UN genocide tribunal, Kangura editor-in-chief, Hassan Ngeze, claimed not to be the author of these commandments, but stated that they had been published in other newspapers before Kangura published them. However, he could not account for the original source, nor identify the newspapers that allegedly published it. He also argued that these commandments were a response to something he referred to as the ‘Nineteen Commandments of the Tutsi’, containing elaborate plans for a Tutsi empire in Africa, which Kangura also published, allegedly to demonstrate its journalistic objectivity.\textsuperscript{365} The comment made by Ngeze in Kangura in relation to the commandments was that the ancient plan to re-conquer Rwanda and colonise the African Great Lakes Region was once again ‘in fashion’.\textsuperscript{366} However, the origin of the nineteen

\textsuperscript{362} Kangura, no. 53, December 1993.
\textsuperscript{363} Anon., ‘Voici les 10 Commandements’, Kangura no. 6, December 1990.
\textsuperscript{364} For the Hutu 10 Commandments in full, see Appendix II. I say ‘he’ because women had a different role in these commandments.
\textsuperscript{365} Hassan Ngeze claimed that both the Tutsi and the Hutu commandments had been published in other magazines, and that he was not the author of either. However, no magazine has been found containing them. ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 27 March 2003. See also ‘L’Ancien Plan des Reconquerant du Pouvoir est a la Mode Aujourd’hui’, Kangura No.4, November 1990.
commandments has not been established, and Ngeze likely chose to publish them in order to invoke anger among the Hutu.

Marcel Kabanda, an expert witness for the prosecution, commented on the obvious parallels between the Nineteen Tutsi Commandments and The Protocols of the Elders of Zion. These ‘protocols’ – forgeries compiled by officials in the Russian secret police in the late nineteenth century – were presented as the minutes of a meeting of Jewish leaders conspiring to take over the world. The Nineteen Tutsi Commandments contained a similar plan, but the conspiracy limited itself to a Tutsi empire in East-Central Africa. They also limited themselves to nineteen commandments, whereas there were twenty-four ‘protocols’, or twenty-seven in some versions. Nonetheless, the content and intent of these texts are strikingly similar.

While they are commonly called nineteen ‘commandments’, they were not referred to as such by Kangura, and there are nineteen of them rather than ten. However, the Hutu commandments were referred to as the ‘Ten Commandments’, and while the number was of course not the same as the nineteen paragraphs in the alleged Tutsi plan of conquest, they did match the biblical laws of the Decalogue. Thus, the Hutu Ten Commandments were meant to give weight to the allegations of a Tutsi conspiracy by elevating the arguments to a divine level through the reference to the biblical laws.

Just as in contemporary anti-Semitism, where role reversal turns the Jewish state into Nazi Germany and the Israeli Jews into Nazis, the Tutsis were in Hutu extremist propaganda compared with Nazis. In December 1991, it was argued in Kangura that the Tutsi invasion was the result of a worldwide conspiracy that now had been revealed, and that ‘the Tutsis are engaged in a policy based on the Aryan myth, and their ambitions of installing an empire, a great Hamite empire in central Africa’. In the same article, parallels were drawn to both history and legend as it is argued that the Tutsis were ‘invoking its myths and mysteries producing the theory of a superior race created to govern, such as the Aryan race in Hitler’s Germany’.

This was not the only occasion on which comparisons between the RPF – or the Tutsis – and Nazis were made, it is obvious that the manner in which the Hutu extremists described the RPF and their alleged plans for conquest facilitated the comparisons between the RPF and Nazis. Considering that President Habyarimana, like his predecessor Grégoire

---

Kayibanda, was said to have been obsessed with Hitler and Nazism, and that the Tutsis were said to partly be of a Semitic origin, it is interesting that the Hutu extremists would compare them to Nazis. However, as indicated above, the role reversal also takes place in the anti-Semitic discourse at the time. It was a prominent feature in Soviet propaganda from the Six Days War until the fall of the Soviet Union, but it is difficult to assess whether Soviet propaganda affected Kangura. What is certain, however, is that the allegation that the Tutsis were Nazis does make more sense if one considers that the colonists argued far more for the ‘Aryan’ ancestry of the Tutsi than the ‘Semitic’. This is reflected in statements made by Hutu extremists claiming that the Tutsi were ‘hiding behind the theories of the pathological supremacy of the “Aryan” race’. However, when describing the RPF as foreign invaders, attempting to occupy Rwanda as part of the establishing of a Tutsi kingdom in the Great Lakes Region, a comparison with Nazism gives the portrayal of the Hutus as victims far more depth, especially when considering that Kangura journalists frequently argued that the RPF were going to exterminate the Hutus. Turning the Tutsis into Nazis thus implicitly meant turning the Hutus into Jews, and so ‘winners’ in the competition for victimhood.

What is demonstrated here are clear examples of what in Roger Dale Petersen’s theory is referred to as ‘fear’. In response to the structural change in the forms of war and democratisation, media was used to manipulate and exacerbate fears among the population, through ‘nationalist myths and constant reminders of past and present victimizations’, to use Petersen’s words. This use of mythologies, history, and religion was clearly meant to rekindle old animosities, and to stress the need to finish what was started in 1959. Many of the Rwandan Hutus likely did not remember the oppression under the Tutsi monarchy. However, as Daniel Bar-Tal and Ervin Staub notes, past harms are often integrated into collective memories and live on through generations. Not only does this strengthen the group identity, but it also makes violence against the ‘other’ morally acceptable, as even offensive actions of one’s own group are perceived as defensible. As Alexander Solzhenitsyn has argued, it is a precondition for a human being to believe that he or she is doing good deeds in order to do evil. I would suggest that one must at least believe that the evil is the right thing to do. Thus, defending oneself

370 Bonaparte Ndekezi, ‘When the Minority is in Charge’, Kangura, no. 27, December 1991.
372 Petersen 2002, p. 35.
against the threat of an allegedly new form of Nazi conspiracy and extermination would likely be considered a good thing, or at least the right thing to do, for the Rwandan Hutus.

The perception of the Hutus as a simple and inferior Bantu race, conquered by the Hamitic race, without the courage to revolt, is likely the reason why the extremists repeatedly reminded the Hutus of the 1959 revolution, and that the Hamitic race, with the help of its co-conspirators, was once again attempting to enslave them. It was an attempt to convince the Hutus that they were not too afraid to revolt, not against the Tutsis, nor their worldwide conspiracy – the Hutus were, after all, the descendants of Gahutu.

The descendants of Gahutu

In contrast to the representations of the Tutsi as an invading, conquering race, with intentions of exterminating the Hutu and establishing a Tutsi empire in the Great Lakes Region, the Hutu extremists painted a drastically different picture of themselves. While emphasising the alleged non-Rwandan origin of the Tutsis, the Hutu propagandists represented the Hutus as the true Rwandans.

As in most African countries, there had not been any real development of a nation state in Rwanda, as there had been in Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Both the Hutu and the Tutsi strived for independence from the Belgians, but for some of the Hutu it was not only the Belgians who had colonised Rwanda. They instead saw European colonisation as a continuation of the colonisation of Rwanda by the Tutsi centuries before the arrival of the Europeans. In spite of this, the nationalistic rhetoric was not so much focused on the state as it was on ethnicities, although the question of ethnic difference is a difficult one in regard to Rwanda.

As seen, the precolonial local Rwandan origin myths place the Tutsis in Rwanda from their creation as brothers to the Hutus and the Twas. Yet, the Tutsi, as descendants of Gatutsi, were excluded from the origin story of Gahutu, Gatutsi, and Gatwa, as told by Hutu extremists during the civil war. One clear example of this somewhat contradictory use of origins is found in the August 1991 issue of Kangura. At this time, President Habyarimana had officially approved of a multi-party system, and the

---

375 Hetne et al. 2006, p. 365.
Kangura articles were very much focused on this, and how the RPF warfare was disrupting Rwandan politics. In one such article the writer argues:

We, the Hutu, lived in peace, we trusted in unity until October 1, 1990, when the Inyenzi […] implemented their plan to colonise our region. Fortunately, God continued to watch over the Bantu descendants. Descendants of Gahutu, remain vigilant, the traps and malice of the enemy-Inyenzi remain.377

It is clear that the Bantu descendants refer to the Hutus, making the Tutsi immigrants from northern Africa, Europe, or Asia, in accordance with the Hamitic Hypothesis. Yet the writer claims to be descendant of Gahutu, referring to the legend in which the Tutsis were in fact Rwandans as well. This illustrates the complexities of the mythologies and histories of Rwanda, but perhaps even more so, it shows how the Hutu extremists used whatever best served their purposes from these mythologies.

The Kangura article begins with the argument that the descendants of Gahutu believe that it is too late to change the situation to which God had brought them, followed by attempts to convince the reader of the opposite, frequently referring to the Hutu as descendants of Gahutu.378 Again it suggests an attempt to argue that the Hutus should not be afraid to stand up to the Tutsi threat. In another article in the same issue, claims of the existence of a worldwide Tutsi conspiracy were again made, this time given the name TIP (Tutsi International Power), which allegedly was attempting to ‘eliminate the descendants of Gahutu’.379

Each time the Hutus were referred to as Gahutu’s descendants, it was in an encouraging context, in an empowering attempt to create or reaffirm Hutu social identity. It is a reference to their origin and heritage, which was clearly intended to inspire strength and a sense of ethnic community. This way of speaking of, and to, the Hutu continued well into the genocide. Even in June 1994, when the RPF was closing in on Kigali, one of the RTLM journalists argued that the war was still continuing due to the fact that the Tutsis are fighting ‘the children of Gahutu’380, adding that

377 Anon., ‘Nous les Hutu, Dieu nous proteges, faisons notre examen de conscience’, Kangura, no. 20, August 1991. ‘Nous, les Hutu, nous vivions en paix, nous avions confiance en l’unité jusqu’à ce que le 1 octobre 1990, les Inyenzi […] mirent en œuvre leur plan criminal de coloniser notre région. Heureusement que Dieu a continué à veiller sur la descendance Bantoue. Descendants de GAHUTU, restez vigilants, les pièges et la méchanceté de l’ennemi-inyenzi demeurent.’ All translations are by the author unless otherwise stated.
380 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0038, 23 June 1994.
‘it is not the children of Gahutu who will come out empty-handed […], the victory of the children of Gahutu will follow’.381

Referring to themselves as children or descendants of Gahutu was thus a way of reminding the Hutus of a time under the oppressive Tutsi monarchy, while at the same time reminding them of their heritage, and the strength that brought them to power in 1959, omitting the support from Belgium and the Catholic Church in the revolution. It was also a way of establishing a positive Hutu identity; an in-group to be contrasted with the Tutsi out-group.382 These particular references made it clear that it was not a question of standing up to a foreign conqueror, but of standing up to the feudal regime under the Tutsi monarchy, which they claimed that the RPF would reintroduce. It was a matter of the Tutsi as an oppressive upper class, attempting to subjugate a working class.

Thus what we can see is a racialisati on or ethnification of class, using religious myths of origin, in a similar way as the Belgian colonists in the early 1900s. Again the use of history, constructed or not, shines through in this rhetoric. The Tutsis as a precolonial class had been those who could afford cows. Thus, they were pastoralists, while the Hutus tilled the soil during the colonial era and largely continued working the land thereafter. The Hutus appear to have taken great pride in this heritage, of being ‘sons of the hoe’383, as the Hutu were referred to in Kangura, or Benesebabinzi (‘Sons of labourers’), as the popular Hutu extremist musician Simon Bikindi often sang on RTLM.384

The attempts to establish the Hutu identity as a working-class or working ethnicity, are not only evident in the extremists’ use of indigenous religion. On the cover of the June 1990 issue of Kangura Mary, Jesus, and Joseph are depicted above the caption: ‘Burundi – Massacres! Why is the international community not reacting?’ Mary says to Jesus: ‘Child of God, who was born on Christmas, go save the Hutus in Burundi who are dying nastily.’ Jesus responds: ‘I’ll tell them to love each other like God loved

381 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0038, 23 June 1994.
384 Gatwa 2006, p. 156.
them.’ Lastly, Joseph says to Jesus: ‘No, just tell all the Hutus to unite.’³⁸⁵ Here, the Kangura editor uses a Christian image, but the message is profane. While Jesus speaks of love, both Mary and Joseph focus on the plight of the Burundian Hutus. It is quite telling that it is Joseph, the carpenter and working man, who urges Jesus to tell the Hutus to unite. It resonates with the Hutu identity as Benezebabinzi – ‘Sons of the Hoe’ or ‘Sons of Labourers’.

The message conveyed through the picture of the Holy family and the caption is not a call for peace, but it is rather an implicit call for retaliation. The caption in which it is stated that the international community is not acting despite the violence in Burundi, combined with the call for Hutu unity, was an act of self-victimisation. The Hutus are represented as alone, as victims, and it is no longer time for peace or love. The person in the picture who gets the final word is Joseph, a man who makes only a very brief appearance in the Bible, with no divine connection, as he is not even the true father of Jesus, but merely the husband of Jesus’ mother. Thus, it is implied that Christianity no longer is of as great importance as Hutu unity in the face of the Tutsi oppression of Hutus in Burundi.

This is also the message in another illustration, published in the June 1993 issue of Kangura. Habyarimana is represented as a member of the clergy and is depicted in front of a church, wearing a cassock. The ground he stands on is slightly elevated, placing him above the other four people in the drawing, making him a head taller than them, thereby stressing his importance and that he is the one with political power. The connected article contains discussions on the political climate, and claims that some treacherous politicians are selling the country, and that it is time for President Habyarimana to listen to the suggestions of the Hutus. Although probably not in response to the call to listen to suggestions, Habyarimana exclaims: ‘No way! But they will take the same route Kayibanda took.’³⁸⁶ It is unclear who ‘they’ are. Nor are the identities of the three men to the immediate right of Habyarimana known to me, but they are standing in front of the Interahamwe flag, which presumably makes them Hutu extremists. On the far right, however, is the Kangura editor-in-chief Hassan Ngeze, Hutu extremist and founding member of the extremist CDR party.

For the purpose of this analysis, it is their response that is of interest, as one of them exclaims: ‘Take off that dress! Fellow Hutus, let’s finish our problem!’³⁸⁷ It is an obvious criticism aimed at the president, while it is suggested that religion, peace, and unity are of marginal importance, and that the problems the Hutus faced should be solved by other means. That

³⁸⁵ Kangura no. 3, June 1990, international issue. Translated by Sarah J. Harting and the author.
³⁸⁶ Kangura no. 40, June 1993. Translated by Sarah J. Harting.
³⁸⁷ Kangura no. 40, June 1993. Translated by Sarah J. Harting.
Habyarimana is a head higher up than the others, and that he is the President and dressed in a cassock gives the impression of elite versus grassroots. This is likely the impression the illustrator wanted to convey; that Habyarimana needed to set any hope of peace and unity aside, and listen to the suggested solutions of the common Hutus – represented as Hutu extremists in this image – to the problems they faced, namely the RPF and the Tutsis. Furthermore, if this interpretation is correct, this meant that he had to rid himself of Christian notions of forgiving his enemies, of turning the other cheek, represented by the cassock, the garment traditionally worn by members of the clergy.

The working-class identity was strengthened further through President Habyarimana’s efforts, when he followed the examples of other totalitarian dictators and idealised the peasantry, and attempted to make Rwanda self-sufficient through agricultural reforms and a focus on the peasants. It was a peasant class that took power in 1959 and kept the Tutsi nobles from regaining it. Now, the Hutu extremists argued that the peasant class, or working class, had to defend Rwanda against the returning Tutsi monarchy, and it could not be done in a Christian message of love, but by acting as the descendants of Gahutu.


388 Staub 2011, p. 155.
4.3 Royalty and Nobility

In the previous subchapter, a rhetoric reminiscent of the story of David and Goliath can be seen. In Hutu extremist propaganda, the Hutus were represented as an inferior working class, facing a superior race that had the support of the international community through a worldwide conspiracy.

This was not the only way in which the Hutu extremist propagandists attempted to mobilise the Hutus. They recurrently used history to claim victimhood and devalue the Tutsis, and thus the oppression of Hutus under the Tutsi royal and noble clans in the monarchy during the colonial era was, for obvious reasons, frequently referred to. Through the mythologies outlined above, and the connection between Imana, the mwami, and the royal clans, the manner in which the Hutu represented the Tutsi as nobility or royalty carries religious connotations. Not only did the precolonial royal clans claim to be of divine origin, but the Catholic Church accepted this argument and incorporated it into its own mythology of the origins of the Tutsis, which would be used to place them at the top of the social hierarchy in Rwanda.

In this subchapter I will demonstrate how the Hutu nationalist propagandists used the concepts of nobility and royalty in their rhetoric in order to devalue the Tutsis.

**Devaluing the Tutsi Nobility**

We now know that the RPF did not bring Mwami Kigeli V Ndahindurwa back from exile or reintroduce the monarchical system after the genocide. Nor did they oppress or enslave the Hutus. This was nevertheless the threat presented by the Hutu extremists in the early 1990s.

The fear of the exiled king was clearly expressed in Kangura: ‘All Tutsi kings had to exploit and oppress the majority, but, in particular, any king called Kigeli had to excel in the torture of Hutus.’ According to Alison Des Forges, there was collaboration between the White Fathers and the Tutsi historians, who provided selective information of Rwandan history to the White Fathers in order to give credence to the notion of Tutsis as rightful rulers. This resulted in a history of conquest, a history of Tutsi kings subjugating the Rwandan Hutus. Both through Rwandan

---

389 We know too little of the original intentions of the RPF to know if this threat was real at any point.


mythology and the Hamitic Hypothesis, the Tutsi supremacy was reaffirmed as given by God, as demonstrated above. Thus, in order to argue that the Tutsis had no right to power in Rwanda it would have been important to negate the notion of the Tutsis as a people chosen by God.

One such attempt was praised in Kangura, in the January 1992 issue, in which it is explained that the magazine Le Tribun du Peuple has published a caricature depicting the ‘leader of the armed forces on his knees before the child of God. The child, who is none other than Jesus, stretched out his arms to him as a blessing to defeat the monarchy that threatens us’. Whether or not the Kangura journalist had interpreted this caricature correctly is not as interesting as the fact that Kangura mentioned it, and congratulated Le Tribun du Peuple for a correct depiction, while also suggesting that next time they should depict a leader of the RPF kneeling before Satan. Jesus is thus said to be on the side of the Hutus, whereas the RPF and by extension the Tutsis worship the Devil.

Another example, from the February 1993 issue of Kangura, contains a clear attempt to separate God from the so-called ‘nobles’. While the Parti Libéral (PL) began to split into two factions during the civil war, Landuald ‘Lando’ Ndasingwa, Vice-President of the PL led the democratic, moderate faction of this party while others created the Hutu Power Movement and turned against the Tutsis. Lando was a Tutsi, and in fact the only Tutsi in the BBTG, where he held the position of Minister of Labour and Social Affairs. Following the first RPF invasion and an attack on Kigali in October 1990, staged by the Rwandan army, there was a series of mass arrests of alleged RPF supporters. In the Kangura article, the author first argued that the Tutsis would perish from inbreeding rather than at the hands of Hutus and their machetes, thus hinting at an impending genocide, while also reminding the readers of the alleged tradition of incestuous marriage among Tutsi nobles. The author then claimed that Lando lied about having suffered disabilities as a consequence of the beatings during his arrest. The author of the article argued that he was disabled since birth, and added that ‘even nobles can

392 Déo Karangira, ‘Ilse cachent derriere les partis politiques croyant que nous, nous sommes endormis!’, Kangura no. 30, January 1992. ‘Le chef des Forces armées à genoux devant l’enfant d’Imana. L’enfant qui n’est autre que Jésus étendait son bras sur lui en guise de bénédiction pour vaincre la monarchie qui nous menace.’


394 This was the official explanation, although it soon became clear that those arrested were Hutus in opposition to the regime (Prunier 2010, pp. 107–108).

395 One witness claimed that Lando had been beaten with a pistol by General Théoneste Bagosora, but due to lack of evidence this could not be proven. Bagosora was found responsible for Lando’s murder on 7 April 1994, however. ICTR-98-41-T (Military I), Judgement and sentence, 18 December 2008, p. 6.
be disable [sic], for God does not discriminate. 396 Such a statement indicates not only that Lando was a liar, but that the so-called nobles were not made of other fabric than the Hutus, and thus could suffer illnesses as well, but above all, it implies that God was not partial to the Tutsis. In fact, not even the finest of the Tutsis were better than the Hutus, in the eyes of God.

Unlike the dehumanisation of the Tutsis – the frequent references to them as cockroaches – their devaluation here was not done through attempts to bring them to a level below humans, but rather to bring them down from a divine to a human level. In precolonial Rwanda, the nobles were the purest Tutsi clans, finest among the upper class, and in the colonial era they were the finest both among the upper class and the so-called superior race. Nobility was therefore a concept associated with segregation and oppression, and the oppressors were not only Tutsis, but the Tutsi elite, thus reminding the Hutus of their collective victimhood. In Petersen’s theory on fear, hatred, and resentment, the latter of these can be seen here. He argues that the target of ethnic violence often is the group that is perceived to be top in the ethnic hierarchy, without the right to such a position, but that can be ‘subordinated through violence.’ 397

In spite of having been discriminated against, and restricted by quotas in many levels of society, because of the RPF invasion, the general Tutsi population was perceived as a threat, and therefore they were represented as being in an undeserved superior position. As Petersen notes, in the resentment narrative, a sense of injustice occurs when a minority group subordinates a majority group, or in this case is perceived as doing so. This sense of injustice will nurture the belief that the ethnic hierarchy must be reordered. 398 What is seen in the examples above is first and foremost attempts to again place the Tutsi at the top of the hierarchy, to then argue that this is an injustice, and lastly to suggest that the hierarchy must be reordered. Mentioning machetes implies that the reordering should be done through violence, which as we now know is what happened.

Memories of oppression

In December 1990, two months after the first RPF invasion, in one of the more explicit Kangura articles entitled ‘Appeal to the Conscience of the Hutu’, the purpose was clearly to remind the Hutus of the times of oppression and the 1959 Hutu revolution:

Never, never, will the people of Rwanda accept to reverse their history to the times when the Hutu were subjected to forced labour and slavery! Never again, shall we consent to the return of the Mwami and never again shall the \textit{kalinga} resound on Rwandan territory.\footnote{\textit{J. H. Gitera, ‘Appeal to the Conscience of the Hutu’, Kangura no. 6. December 1990. This article included the infamous Hutu Ten Commandments.}}

Two things are of interest in this statement: firstly, the fact that the author talks of the people of Rwanda, and secondly the mention of the \textit{mwami} and the \textit{kalinga}, the royal drum. Regarding the people of Rwanda, it is clear in the same article that the Tutsis were not included in the Rwandan population; Rwanda belongs to the Hutus.\footnote{\textit{J. H. Gitera, ‘Appeal to the Conscience of the Hutu’, Kangura no. 6. December 1990.}} At the same time the author argues that the Hutus, the Tutsis, and the Twas are of the same origin,\footnote{Although the Twas are argued to have been the indigenous group in Rwanda, they have not held any higher status in Rwanda. Instead, as the origin myths have it, they were the most repressed group throughout the history of Rwanda, subjected to severe racism. For that reason, and because they constituted only 1 per cent of the population, they were often ignored in these discussions.} so to speak of the people of Rwanda in a manner that does not include the Tutsi is a way of, intentionally or not, representing the Tutsi as foreign.

When it came to the \textit{mwami} and the \textit{kalinga} on the other hand, the intention was clearer. As previously mentioned, in Rwandan mythology the \textit{mwami} was appointed by Imana and was the embodiment of Rwanda. The \textit{kalinga}, decorated with the genitals of defeated Hutu kings, was a symbol of his royal and divine authority. To revolt against the \textit{mwami} would be to revolt against God.\footnote{Prunier 2010, pp. 9–10.} The \textit{kalinga} was never to be played, but acted only as a symbol of power, but to the Hutus it became a symbol of the oppression under the Tutsi monarchy.\footnote{Mamdani 2001, p. 119.} Thus, when the author of the article writes of the sound of the \textit{kalinga}, it is a metaphor for the authority of the \textit{mwami} and the power of the Tutsis when they subjugated the Hutus.

In ‘Appeal to the Conscience of the Hutu’ the writer argues that the Tutsi had conspired for some time to conquer Rwanda quickly, through investments in Rwandan companies and through Tutsi women who they sent to marry influential Hutu men. Once the country was infiltrated, the RPF would attack and ‘establish a regime based on their feudal monarchy, within days. […] The Tutsi are bloodthirsty and hanker over power in order to impose their hegemony over the People of Rwanda’.\footnote{\textit{J. H. Gitera, ‘Appeal to the Conscience of the Hutu’, Kangura no. 6. December 1990.}}

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{399} J. H. Gitera, ‘Appeal to the Conscience of the Hutu’, \textit{Kangura} no. 6. December 1990. This article included the infamous Hutu Ten Commandments.
\bibitem{400} Although the Twas are argued to have been the indigenous group in Rwanda, they have not held any higher status in Rwanda. Instead, as the origin myths have it, they were the most repressed group throughout the history of Rwanda, subjected to severe racism. For that reason, and because they constituted only 1 per cent of the population, they were often ignored in these discussions.
\bibitem{402} Prunier 2010, pp. 9–10.
\bibitem{403} Mamdani 2001, p. 119.
\end{thebibliography}
author backs up his argument with a letter written in 1958 by twelve Tutsi chiefs, addressed to the mwami in which it says:

The relationship between us [Tutsis] and they [Hutus], have always been, throughout the ages, and even now, based on serfdom. There are therefore no grounds for fraternity between they and us...since our kings conquered the land of the Hutus by killing their monarchs and thereby reducing the Hutus to slavery. How can they now become our brothers?405

This letter served as confirmation of the Hamitic hypothesis, in that the Tutsi were said to have conquered and enslaved the Hutus. Although the letter was written more than thirty years prior to the civil war, the Hutu extremists sized the opportunity to let the twelve Tutsi chiefs speak for all Tutsis in the 1990s. Thus, with such a letter at hand, although it would not be published until six months later, it was easily claimed in the editorial of the second issue of Kangura, published in June 1990, that ‘the Tutsi royalists still wish to institutionalise Hutu slavery, to the extent of rendering them inferior to domestic animals. What a horrible thing!’406

This letter was again used by the RTLM in late April 1994 by the journalist Emmanuel Rucogoza. It was used in the same manner as in Kangura, arguing that the RPF intended to oppress the Hutus, with the slight difference that Rucogoza did not claim that they wanted to reintroduce the feudal monarchy, but to do away with democracy. The first time this letter was referred to was in December 1990, six months after President Habyarimana had announced his decision to democrtise, a decision he made to appease the French. However, the democratisation process was stalled at every opportunity and no effects of this process could be discerned at that time.407 Thus, it would take more time for the extremists to begin using what Jean-Pierre Chrétien referred to as the ‘democratic alibi’, where they depicted themselves as defenders of democracy to morally legitimise a mobilisation against the RPF and the Tutsi, while maintaining a favourable image before the international community.408 Kangura did not have democracy as a mobilising tool, and therefore relied more heavily on history.

405 Quoted in J. H. Gitera, ‘Appeal to the Conscience of the Hutu’, Kangura no. 6. December 1990. Other translations exist, but I have chosen the ICTR’s, because the differences are minor and do not affect the meaning. The letter was written to counter the Bahutu Manifesto written by Grégoire Kayibanda and eight other Hutu intellectuals in 1957.


408 Chrétien 2007.
The letter to the mwami was not the only historical document used by Kangura. Only a few months later, in February 1991, an anonymous writer referred to the statutes of the UNAR, a monarchist party founded in 1957 by people in the mwami’s inner circle. In these statutes it is stated that it would be inappropriate to treat the Hutus and the noble Tutsis as equals, since the Hutus are said to be ‘no more intelligent than the animals.’

The alleged lack of intelligence, or that they were less intelligent than animals, was an obvious example of animalistic form of dehumanisation, and this may provide an answer to the question of the form of dehumanisation that I have touched upon above. The descriptions of the Hutus as ‘extroverts who like to laugh and lead a simple life’ by the Belgian colonial administration, and as less intelligent than animals by the Tutsi nobility under the monarchy, was exploited by the Hutu extremists who used these quotes and references to the Tutsi as nobles or royal to convey the message that they were arrogant and condescending, convinced of their self-evident right to rule. Presenting the Tutsis in this way, in turn, made it possible to claim victimhood and thereby to devalue the Tutsis. It was not done in the animalistic manner in which they themselves had been represented by the Tutsis, but in a way that emphasised the dehumanisation and oppression under the Tutsis monarchy, the one they had experienced, and the one they might face.

The Hutu extremists wanted to establish that they were victims of past and current harms and injustices, referring to the past oppression and the present invasion and thereby making the past contemporaneous. This was done in order to gain a sense of moral superiority over the Tutsis. It would also explain the importance of repeatedly reminding their audience of the 1959 Hutu revolution, pointing out that in spite of their inferior position they could actually defeat and conquer the superior Tutsis. They had done it before and could do it again.

In addition to stories of their subordination and suffering under the Tutsis, they told stories of hope, such as the one recounted in an RTLM broadcast in October 1993, of Hutu sub-chief and Parmehutu activist Dominique Mbonyumutwa. In November 1959, Mbonyumutwa was assaulted and severely beaten by royalist Tutsis, which was the event that

---

triggered the Hutu revolution. As told in the RTLM broadcast, when Mbonyumutwa was beaten, he prayed to God:\textsuperscript{413}

\begin{quote}
He had just prayed because he was a Christian. He had just prayed to God and he prayed, conscious of what was happening. God then said, ‘Let this revolution be a revolution of the Hutus who are going to relinquish this regime, this feudal yoke’.\textsuperscript{414}
\end{quote}

It is unclear whether the story told in the RTLM broadcast was the invention of the RTLM presenters, or if Dominique Mbonyumutwa himself told this story at some point. However, the origin of the story is not as relevant as its content, which served an important purpose for the Hutu propagandists. God is represented as being in support of the Hutus and the revolution against injustice, because God would no longer allow the Hutus to be subjugated under the Tutsis in the old feudal system.

This type of rhetoric would not have been possible, had it not been for the past harms experienced by Hutus, for which Hutus present at the time could make legitimate claims to victimhood. As Malešević argues, ‘black’ propaganda – lies told by concealed sources – seldom works. Here, the source is not concealed, but rather the opposite. The letters presented were real, and so was the assault on Dominique Mbonyumutwa. There are not necessarily any lies told, but what is presented was certainly not objective. It was ‘white’ propaganda meant to legitimise a new or relaunched revolution. Thus, the RTLM propagandists reminded the listeners of the very real oppression under the monarchy while at the same time conveying the more hopeful message that the Tutsis could be defeated with the help and support of God.

\textsuperscript{413} Dominique Mbonyumutwa subsequently acted as interim President after the 1959 revolution and abolition of the monarchy until presidential elections could be held. He took office in January 1961 but lost to Grégoire Kayibanda, who assumed the presidency in October 1961.

\textsuperscript{414} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0198, n.d., October 1993.
4.4 The race of God

I have thus demonstrated that the Hutu extremist propagandists in the early 1990s did not stick to one origin myth in their attempts to create or establish Hutu and Tutsi identities. Instead, they used whichever one suited their purposes, or picked parts from both to get their message across.

What differentiates the notion of the Hutus as descendants of Gahutu from the notion of the Tutsis as descendants of Ham is that the latter is far more nationalistic than the former. Regarding the descendants of Ham, the Hutu referred to themselves as a Bantu race, in contrast to the foreign, invading, Hamitic Tutsi race. The descendants of Gahutu were not a separate race from the descendants of Gatutsi, but rather a separate class, and both originated in Rwanda. Using both these myths enabled the Hutu extremists to claim that the Tutsis were both foreign invaders, and an oppressive upper class, in contrast to the Bantu Hutu working class. We thus see a conflation of class and race regarding both groups, something that underlines the dichotomisation of the two. In light of this, I will investigate how the Hutu extremists used these mythologies to devalue the Tutsis throughout the civil war and the genocide, beginning with the argument that the Tutsis claimed to be a divine race, followed by a discussion of these forms of devaluation.

The Tutsi as a divine race

*Kangura* published its 26th issue in November 1991. President Habyarimana had recently asked the Minister of Justice, Sylvestre Nsanzimana to form a new cabinet. Nsanzimana, a moderate Hutu, had alienated a majority of the hardline Hutus in the MRND and other Hutu nationalist parties by releasing several regime critics who had been arrested in connection to the RPF invasion in October 1990. The outrage among the Hutu hardliners over the appointment of Nsanzimana was most likely the response the President had intended, since he made several and often successful attempts to stall the democratisation process. While the Rwandan population directed their anger at Habyarimana and the MRND, *Kangura*, which was still loyal to the Habyarimana regime, instead attempted to refocus the anger on the Tutsi and opposition politicians.

---

416 Prunier 2010, p. 144.
For the purpose of this analysis, the back and front covers of the 26th issue of Kangura are especially noteworthy.

On the back cover, President Habyarimana is depicted as a bishop with a crucifix around his neck, holding a Bible with the text *Ubumwe* (‘Unity’) written on it.\(^{418}\) In light of events at the time, and the rage against the President among Hutu nationalists, Kangura’s loyalty to the President is clearly shown through this image. Had the picture been published closer to the genocide, one might have argued that it was made as satire, due to the failing peace negotiations and the political turmoil of the democratisation process. However, it was published in 1991, when the CDR had not yet been founded, and Kangura was still an MRND-financed magazine. Reading the articles in this issue, and other issues from this time, there is little doubt of its loyalty. For example, one article in this issue said that the RPF made a grave mistake by mocking President Habyarimana, whom they argued was a hero who had performed great deeds for Rwanda.\(^{419}\)

The call for unity is a subliminal message, but considering the fact that nearly 50,000 people had united in protests against Habyarimana’s decision to allow a moderate Hutu and suspected RPF supporter to form the new cabinet,\(^{420}\) and the fact that more than 90 per cent of Rwandans were Christians, this image speaks loudly. The divine qualities of the *mwami* appear to some extent to have been adopted by the Hutu regime. Alison Des Forges notes that the *Umurava* magazine, another Hutu nationalist publication that never reached the success of Kangura, claimed that ‘it is God who has given Habyarimana the power to direct the country, it is He who will show him the path to follow.’\(^{421}\) Considering that the traditional belief system in Rwanda entailed that all power was given by, and controlled by Imana,\(^{422}\) portraying Habyarimana as a bishop would act as

\(^{418}\) Kangura no. 26, November 1991.

\(^{419}\) Kangura no. 26, November 1991.

\(^{420}\) Prunier 2010, p. 145.

\(^{421}\) Des Forges 1999, p. 72.

\(^{422}\) Bangwanubusa 2009, p. 185.
a reminder of the connection between leadership and God.423 This appeal to the Christian Hutus not to abandon their President thus reveals yet another way in which different religious traditions and mythologies were brought together in Hutu propaganda.

The front cover depicts the first elected Hutu President, Grégoire Kayibanda, next to a machete (vertically, far left). Between the two images the following text appears: ‘What weapons shall we use to conquer the Inyenzi once and for all?’424 Below the image of Kayibanda it says, as if in response to the question: ‘If we relaunch the 1959 Hutu revolution to conquer the Inyenzi-Ntutsi.’425 This was one of the earliest warnings of the genocide to come. What is of even greater interest for this analysis, however, is the headline over Kayibanda, which states: ‘The Tutsi – God’s Race!’426 There is blatant sarcasm in this headline, and out of context one may see it as little more than a cynical and perhaps provocative statement. There is more to be said, however, especially since this is not the only occasion in which the concept of the Tutsis as the race of God was used.

A rather cryptic statement made by the popular radio announcer Kantano Habimana can be found in one of his RTLM broadcasts.427 In March 1994, little over a fortnight before the beginning of the genocide,

---

423 For profane and divine power in Rwanda, see Taylor 2013.
426 Kangura no. 26, November 1991. Note that bwoko does not necessarily translate as race, but since the editors of Kangura never objected to such a translation at the trials or elsewhere, I have chosen to translate it as such.
427 According to calculations by Mary Kimani (2007, p. 117), Kantano Habimana appeared on the air on 387 occasions, nearly twice as many times as Valérie Bemeriki in second place with 195, and RTLM editor-in-chief Gaspard Gahigi with 170.
Habimana talked of the intrigues of Prime Minister Dismas Nsengiyaremye, suspecting him of supporting of the RPF, and said that Nsengiyaremye ‘made unhealthy statements about religion when he said that Rwanda belongs to the Children of God.’\footnote{RTLM Transcript. 21 March 1994.} If one assumes that all human beings in a Christian context such as Rwanda are children of God, then Habimana’s claim that this statement is unhealthy is indeed confusing. On the other hand, if one considers the notion of the Tutsi as the descendants of Ham, as the Hamitic Hypothesis suggests, or perhaps as God’s race, as was suggested in Kangura’s 26th issue, then the claim becomes perfectly clear: saying that Rwanda belongs to the Children of God would then be tantamount to saying that it belongs to the Tutsis.

At the end of May 1994, nearly two months into the genocide, these concepts were used again. On the May 24, in one of his many discussions with Kantano Habimana on the air about the war, Ananie Nkurunziza claims that the Inkotanyi (RPF) have been killing Hutus since 1990 and that they are still killing them. He urges the RPF to put an end to the disaster in Rwanda and instead help save people, for because of the behaviour of the RPF he cannot see how they can ‘believe that they, the Inkotanyi, are more Children of God, that these Inyenzi are more God’s Children than [the Hutus].’\footnote{RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0133, 24 May 1994: ‘Je pense qu’a part le fait qu’ils croiraient que les Inkotanyi sont plus enfants de Dieu, que ces Inyenzi soient plus enfant de Dieu que nous.’}

This was one of the more explicit attempts to undermine the credibility of the RPF through religious references. At this point it had been 20 days since the UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali had publicly acknowledged that genocide was being committed by Hutu extremists in Rwanda. It had also been two days since the RPF had taken Kigali Airport, and one day after the RPF had taken the Presidential Palace in Kigali, both highly strategic locations. It was, in a sense, the beginning of the end of the war. Hence, in this context the RTLM speaker attempted to discredit the RPF by claiming that the Tutsis thought themselves closer to God than the Hutus were, and thus describing them as arrogant and self-righteous.

Four days later, on 28 May, the RPF’s victories in Kigali were still in the news and RTLM had heard scandalous report about General Augustin Bizimungu of the FAR, who was claimed to have officially handed the airport over to the UNAMIR. The UNAMIR had not been informed of any such handover, however, and believed it was still under FAR control. So when the RPF took Kigali airport, RTLM reported that the UN had handed the airport over to the RPF.\footnote{Dallaire2005, p. 386; RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0011, 28 May 1994.} On this day, Kantano Habimana

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnote{RTLM Transcript. 21 March 1994.}
\footnote{RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0133, 24 May 1994: ‘Je pense qu’a part le fait qu’ils croiraient que les Inkotanyi sont plus enfants de Dieu, que ces Inyenzi soient plus enfant de Dieu que nous.’}
\footnote{Dallaire2005, p. 386; RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0011, 28 May 1994.}
\end{footnotesize}
stated on air that he had listened to Radio France Internationale, and said that they ‘serve as Inkotayi’s tools’; they had reported that the RPF had taken Kigali, which Habimana rightly disputes (the RPF did not take Kigali until 4 July). He argues not only that the RPF had been lying to the French radio station, but that ‘the wish of these white men is that the preferred race, by God, must rule Rwanda. It is like saying that the race of God has won in Kigali.’

Considering that he then assures the listeners that the FAR and the Hutus, who he considers to be the true owners of Rwanda, are still holding the capital, it becomes clear that the so-called race of God is a reference to the RPF. These references are key to an understanding of the concept of God. There are no explanations to these recurring references in Kangura, nor in the RTLM broadcasts. This indicates that the notion of the Tutsi as the children, or race, of God is one that Rwandans understood and with which they were familiar. During his trial in 2003, the editor-in-chief of Kangura, Hassan Ngeze, confirmed this, saying that in Rwanda ‘Tutsis are considered the nobility, children of God. This is what we are taught.’

The references to the Tutsis as the children, or race, of God presented here may occur sporadically and may, out of context, seem to be of little importance. Although it is difficult to know what effect they had on those who read or heard the statements, it is safe to conclude that the concept of the Tutsis as chosen by God was well known, even self-evident. Had this not been the case, it would not have been used in the way it was, on so many occasions and by different media outlets. The person who made the front cover of Kangura no. 26, seen above, was the editor-in-chief, Hassan Ngeze, according to his own testimonies. He was a founding member of the Hutu hardline party CDR, and a Hutu extremist, and the latter can also be said of RTLM announcer Kantano Habimana.

When the Tutsis are referred to as the chosen race, it fits well with pre-Christian mythology. In the same ‘Legend of the Gift of Power and Milk’, Imana gives three jars of milk to Gatutsi, Gahutu, and Gatwa to keep safe through one night. Gatutsi managed to keep the milk safe while Gahutu spilt his and Gatwa drank his, leading to the Tutsi being favoured by Imana for their sense of responsibility. However, in the same legend, although they are created by Imana, they are children of Kigwa and grandchildren of Nkuba who was a heavenly king, but not a God.

If we turn to the mythology of origins after the introduction of Christianity the Tutsis are Hamites, descendants of the cursed Canaan, and again, not children of God. Nevertheless, the Catholic Church favoured

431 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0011, 28 May 1994.
432 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0011, 28 May 1994.
the Tutsis during the first decades of the colonial era, and this, combined with the ‘Legend of the Gift of Power and Milk’, would enable the extremists to use this interpretation to prove the arrogance and self-righteousness of the Tutsi.

It may seem contradictory that the extremists were using strong Christian imagery, while at the same time using pre-Christian mythologies in their pro-Hutu and anti-Tutsi propaganda. However, it should be remembered that in order to make the transition from traditional religion to Christianity, the Catholic Church had argued that Imana was the Christian God. Furthermore, the language of the Catholic Church was Latin until the mid-1960s. After the Second Vatican Council, which ended in 1965, the Rwandans could listen to sermons in Kinyarwanda instead of Latin, and they were allowed to sing Kinyarwandan hymns and dance in church. The issue of language before 1965, and allowing Rwandan customs when celebrating mass thereafter, could have made it possible for some of the local mythologies to live on in a Christian tradition. If one adds to that the proverbs saying that God travels the world by day and rests at night in Rwanda, and ‘Imana Y’i Rwanda’ (Rwanda is God’s country),435 it becomes obvious that the Hutu extremists could find ways of utilising religion and mythology to devalue the Tutsi by attributing a divine arrogance to their character.

Understanding the devaluing message

The recurring claims that the Tutsi perceived themselves as nobility, children of God, or God’s race, negates much of the research on the devaluation of the Tutsi, which focus on the animalistic comparisons, especially with cockroaches. Although most researchers agree that the perceived threat was the reintroduction of a Tutsi monarchy, the manner in which the Hutu extremists argued for the existence of such a threat has not been understood as dehumanising or devaluing.

The Hutu propagandists represented themselves as the victims, but not victims of an animal-like group, but rather of an elite group without animal qualities. There is certainly a frequent use of the word *inyenzi* (‘cockroach’) for the Tutsi, and they are on a few occasions referred to as snakes or hyenas. As mentioned, *inyenzi* was a name used by both Hutus and Tutsi for the guerrilla of exiled Rwandans in the 1960s, since the guerrilla moved at night in large numbers, and that if one was killed a hundred more would take its place. While the RPF in the 1990s adopted the name Inkotanyi, meaning ‘invincible warrior’ – the name of the precolonial royal regiment – the Hutu extremists instead reintroduced the name *inyenzi*. Initially it was

---

435 Adekunle 2007, p. 29.
only a reference to the RPF, but soon all Tutsis were accused of being in league with the rebels, and so they were all referred to as *inyenzi*. In fact, as early as July 1991, in the Editorial in *Kangura* no. 19 it is claimed that 85 per cent of the Rwandan Tutsis were RPF accomplices.

The comparison with snakes, on the other hand, is certainly more demeaning, since it comes from the notion of the Tutsi as ‘smooth tongued and seductive, yet [...] extremely wicked.’ However, the most demeaning by far was the use of the word ‘hyena’. According to Jean-Marie Vianney Higiro, calling someone a hyena in Rwanda would be equal to wishing death upon that person. Depicting a person carrying a hyena on his or her back would be even worse, since that is how babies are commonly carried.

Such caricatures can be found in *Kangura*, and on three occasions, hyenas were also mentioned in the RTLM broadcasts, one as a description of Habyarimana’s weakness, one in reference to the RPF, and the last in reference to civilian RPF accomplices. However, the hyena references were only used for those who supported the RPF, whether they be Hutu or Tutsi. Referring to, or depicting someone as a hyena in sheep’s clothing or carrying a hyena on his or her back was to say that that person was treacherous.

In his discussions, Ervin Staub downplays the historical connotations of the concept of cockroach, while underlining its devaluing aspect. No

---

439 Higiro 2007, p. 85.
440 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0217, 3 July 1994: ‘(Habyarimana) ne peut pas pretender être Hutu tant qu’il portera publiquement une hyène’; RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0198, n.d., October 1993. ‘[The Inkotanyi] are hyenas among hyenas’; RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0027, 9 June 1994: ‘The civilian accomplices who put on sheep’s skin while they are actually hyenas.’
other animal epithets are mentioned. As Staub rightly notes, however, there is an emphasis on the threat of a new Tutsi monarchy and a new era of oppression. In Higiro’s study of dehumanising language and imagery in the print media in Rwanda, he only mentions the words ‘hyena’ and ‘cockroach’ as having been used for the Tutsis. However, Higiro rightly stresses the deep-rooted racism that these references rekindled. Nevertheless, I would argue that calling a person a cockroach, no matter how many times, does not deprive that person of humanness to the extent that it becomes morally acceptable to kill him or her, unless the nature and qualities of that person are just as frequently described as those of a cockroach. The latter was not the case in Rwanda.

Unlike in Staub’s and Higiro’s analysis, the inhuman qualities presented in the examples above are more often related to the arrogance of the noble and therefore divine inheritance of the Tutsis, rather than any form of coarseness, irrationality, or childlikeness associated with the animalistic forms of dehumanisation. The Tutsi are not denied their humanness, but are represented as inhumane. To be inhumane one must be human, and this is how the Tutsi were portrayed: as inhumane humans, as an arrogant, self-righteous, and overbearing elite and at the same time as foreign, as alien to Rwanda, constituting a lethal threat, not only to the interests of Hutus, but to the Hutus as such.

The oppression is mentioned in relation to the monarchical system of the colonial and precolonial eras. By claiming that the Tutsis perceived themselves as possessing a God-given superiority, the Hutu extremists were at the same time emphasising the inferior, subordinate position of the Hutus and their victimhood, by claiming that they in effect were the group being dehumanised. However, the frequent allusions to the 1959 Hutu revolution were a reminder that the Hutus could defeat the allegedly superior race, and that there was a need to defend themselves by any means available.

This correlates with Mahmood Mamdani’s conclusion that the foundation for the ethnic animosity that led to genocide can be found in a question of identities. Through the Belgian colonists’ tracing of origins, the Tutsi were given a settler identity while the Hutus were described as natives, and with these identities came racialisation and greater segregation. The Hutus were indeed oppressed in the colonial era. The Catholic Church and the Belgian colonial administration did favour the Tutsis and considered them a more advanced race of a biblical or divine origin, much because of the collaboration on the history of Rwanda between Tutsi historians and poets and the European colonists and clergy.

441 Staub 2011, p. 216.
442 Higiro 2007, p. 86.
As this history of Rwanda was taught to both Hutus and Tutsis in the Rwandan schools, the Hutus accepted it, although they did not benefit from it.\textsuperscript{444}

I would argue that the Rwandan Hutus internalised the image of themselves as inferior, or victims of an oppressive colonisation, both from the Belgians and the Tutsis, and used the image of themselves as victims to spark the 1959 revolution against the so-called superior race, but also to devalue the Tutsis more than 30 years later. This is clearly seen in a letter written in 1964, published again in Kangura in 1991, in which the author argues that ‘the Tutsi believe that their superiority stems from the fact that God has conferred on them a nature that dominates others, a superiority that we encounter in all feudal practices.’\textsuperscript{445} Since the superiority of the Tutsi was fortified through religious mythology, there was a need for the Hutu extremists to assail the notion of the Tutsi as a people with God-given superiority, while at the same time uphold it. The social identity of the Hutu, as inferior victims, could only be upheld if an oppressor existed, and the depiction of Hutu as victors over the Tutsi monarchy required the threat of the monarchy.

To refer to Roger Dale Petersen’s model, it was a matter of creating fear of the monarchy through nationalist mythology and past harms; of inciting hatred by representing the Tutsis as an ancient enemy; and to stir the emotion of resentment by claiming that the Hutus are again being dominated by the Tutsis, who have no right to be in a superior position, and thus should be brought down from the top of the hierarchy, by violent means if need be.\textsuperscript{446}

\subsection*{4.5 Dividing the Church}

Vincent Nsengiyumva was appointed Archbishop of Kigali with the help of President Habyarimana. Nsengiyumva was a board member of the MRND until he was forced by the Vatican to resign from his political assignments before the war.\textsuperscript{447} He remained loyal to the MRND and wore a pin with a picture of the president on his cassock during his sermons.\textsuperscript{448} The bishop of Kabgayi, Thaddée Nsengiyumva (no relation) and his

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{444} Des Forges 1999, p. 37.
\item \textsuperscript{445} Anastase Makuza, ‘Gatutsi-Nyenzi a Lance Une Attaque Suicidaire’, Kangura no. 10, February 1991.
\item \textsuperscript{446} Petersen 2002.
\item \textsuperscript{447} There is some agreement as to when the Archbishop left the board of the MRND. Some say 1985, others 1990.
\item \textsuperscript{448} Des Forges 1999, p. 45.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
clergy, on the other hand, wrote a document in 1991 in which they argued for the need of a separation of Church and state, and that the Christian truth, rather than the lies of politics, should be the priority of the Church.449

During the genocide, men of the cloth such as Father Athanase Seromba participated, while many others risked and gave their lives to stop the perpetrators. These are only a few names to exemplify the diversity of positions held by church representatives and the lack of unity within the Catholic Church. When it comes to the genocide, representatives of the Catholic Church, and other churches, should be seen as individuals who acted in accordance with their own individual ideologies or agendas. Depending on which side they chose, the clergy ‘joined the killers or the killed’.450 The disunion within the Catholic Church is clearly reflected in Hutu nationalist media. Those among the clergy who opposed the regime or the Hutu nationalist agenda received the same treatment as anyone else, regardless of their status, as the following subsection will show.

**Tribalism and gender**

In the anti-Tutsi propaganda, the extremists accused Tutsi clergy of tribalism. They were said to have been favouring Tutsis and even aiding the RPF, which the Hutu extremists argued was unacceptable behaviour among clergy. In the accusations of tribalism, the attacks upon clergy also reveal differences in how men and women were portrayed in the extremist media.

The struggle between Hutus and Tutsis was not exclusively Rwandan. Similar ethnic conflicts were found in neighbouring countries, especially in Zaïre and Burundi where the Tutsis was the majority group and the Hutu was the minority, although the lack of a successful Hutu revolution had left the Tutsis in charge. One major issue raised in Kangura in the early 1990s concerned the Bishop Faustin Ngabu in the Zaïrean town of Goma, on the border to Rwanda. In an article from 1990 in Kangura he was accused of offering refuge to alleged RPF terrorists.451

The use of history, explicit or implicit, by the Hutu propagandists was frequent both in Kangura and in the RTLM broadcasts, and regarding Bishop Ngabu of Goma one article in the June 1990 issue of Kangura reflects the segregation of the colonial era. The author of the article argued

---

450 Hatzfeld 2005, p. 142. It should be added that many of those who joined the killers were eventually killed in retaliation by the RPF.
451 Anon., ‘Zaire: Why is There a Problem Identifying Nationals in the Regions of North and South Kivu?’, Kangura no. 4, international issue, August 1990.
that Bishop Ngabu, who was described as ‘a satanic clergyman’,\textsuperscript{452} had dismissed Hutu priests and principals from the seminars or forced them to resign, and that a recurring theme in his sermons was the protection of the Tutsi, arguing that non-Tutsis lack the vocation.\textsuperscript{453} The bishop was also accused of visiting Tutsi families to force them to join his political party, and of using Church funds to support the war against the Hutu: ‘During his visits, he delivers news to his fellow Tutsis and informs them of strategies enabling them to physically, politically or socially eliminate the Hutus and our brothers belonging to other tribes’.\textsuperscript{454} He was also accused of having visited a bishop named Barnabas in Uganda, who, in turn, is accused of storing weapons for the RPF.\textsuperscript{455}

In March 1991, Bishop Faustin Ngabu was again in the news, this time in a letter published by Kangura and addressed to the reverend Bishop Mosengi, President of the Episcopal Conference of Zaïre. The accusations were similar to those in the article above, but with the addition that the actions of Ngabu and his clergy in Goma contributed to the reinforced segregation between Hutus and Tutsis both in Zaïre and Rwanda, and how this tainted the image of the Catholic Church:

Some Tutsi priests\textsuperscript{sic} curse the members of other ethnic groups in sermons and at the Lord’s table. Moreover, some of these priests look after families based on racial considerations. The composition of the religious community (brothers and nuns) also clearly reflects how the recruitment is conducted. Some people are fired while others escape punishment for the same mistakes. Tutsis are encouraged to join the orders while other people are discouraged from doing so. Admissions to the minor seminary are based on ethnic considerations.\textsuperscript{456}

\textsuperscript{452} Kangura Editorial Staff, ‘Reaction of the Hutu Community in Goma Regarding the Recent Incidents in Jomba/Rutsuru’, Kangura no. 5, international issue, October 1990. Bishop Ngabu is not a Tutsi but belongs to the Hema or Hima people, who, like the Tutsi, were pastoralists.

\textsuperscript{453} Kangura Editorial Staff, ‘Reaction of the Hutu Community in Goma Regarding the Recent Incidents in Jomba/Rutsuru’, Kangura no. 5, international issue, October 1990.

\textsuperscript{454} Kangura Editorial Staff, ‘Reaction of the Hutu Community in Goma Regarding the Recent Incidents in Jomba/Rutsuru’, Kangura no. 5, international issue, October 1990.

\textsuperscript{455} Kangura Editorial Staff, ‘Reaction of the Hutu Community in Goma Regarding the Recent Incidents in Jomba/Rutsuru’, Kangura no. 5, international issue, October 1990.

\textsuperscript{456} Déo Muhumbo et al., ‘Tribalism on the Part of the Bishop of Goma’, Letter published in Kangura no. 12, March 1991. Accusations that he excluded groups other than Tutsi and Hema were aimed at the bishop by Kangura and others, and in 2010, when he resigned due to his age, Bishop Ngabu apologised for having hurt people during his tenure. See, for example, Longman 2001.
Although there seems to have been some truth to the accusations in the case of Bishop Ngabu, it appears to have been common practice among Hutu extremist propagandists to accuse members of the clergy of such tribalism. One of the cruder articles in *Kangura* is found in the January issue of 1992, in which the headmistress of a girl's school in Kibeho, Sister Therese Mukabacondo, was accused of several of the same things as Bishop Ngabu, such as having shown disdain for people of other ethnicities, and excluded all who are not Tutsi. She was also accused of organising a mass in memory of RPF leader Fred Rwigema, after which the participants ate, drank, and commemorated. Objections were allegedly raised by Hutu students, to whom Sister Mukabacondo responded with threats to dismiss them from the school.457 *Kangura* responded with the suggestion that she should remove her white gown as well as her veil, to wear culottes and the RPF cap and then go to prostitute herself in Biryogo. Although she has started growing grey hair, we think that she would not lack lovers as numerous are those who, believing she is a virgin, would go and see her, curious to know what a Sister tastes like.458

Whether or not there was any truth in the accusations of tribalism and the exclusion of Hutus is of less interest than the manner in which these representatives of the Church were represented. Bishop Ngabu was portrayed as demonic, with schemes ‘only a man with an evil mind could create.’459 This ought to be contrasted to the image previously discussed, depicting President Habyarimana as a bishop, published a year after the accusations against Bishop Ngabu, and two months before accusations against Sister Mukabacondo. Unlike that of Bishop Ngabu, the description of Sister Mukabacondo is far more graphic and crude, but is also in line with several of *Kangura*’s descriptions of women, especially those opposed to the Hutu extremism.

For example, in an article in the May 1992 issue, the suitability of Agathe Uwilingiyimana as Minister of Education is questioned. She was a Hutu, mother of five children, married to a university employee, and she held a Master's in chemistry and had worked as a teacher for a decade before heading into politics. The description of her in *Kangura* does not reflect on her achievements. She was instead accused of having been adulterous to a fiancé, which allegedly resulted in pregnancy and an illegitimate child. Due to her alleged inability ‘to control her desire’ she was said to have become the mistress of a teacher ‘and increased the family size by having another child […] What a peculiar Rwandan mother! Is she really fit for the job of Minister of National Education, given her weakness and infidelity?’

The claim that Uwilingiyimana was a peculiar Rwandan mother implies that infidelity was highly unusual in Rwanda. This reflects the notion of women in the Hutu Ten Commandments, published in *Kangura* no. 6, in December 1990. There, Hutu women are praised and described as more dignified, conscientious, and honest, in sharp contrast to the Tutsi women who are described as ‘working in the pay of their ethnic group.’ This also reflects President Habyarimana’s attempts to create a society based on Catholic moral values, in which he had Tutsi women arrested, many falsely accused of being prostitutes, and placed in re-education camps, where they were humiliated and many were raped. Christopher Taylor argues that Habyarimana’s attempts resulted in the lingering notion of Tutsi women as ‘loose’ and symbols of societal decline. They were said to represent immorality, hypersexuality, and arrogance, according to Lisa

460 Anon., ‘MINEPRISEC (Ministry of Primary and Higher Education): Agathe Uwilingiyimana is not fit for the job’, *Kangura* no. 2, June 1990.
463 Taylor 2013, p. 44.
Sharlach,\textsuperscript{464} and as such, they were targeted differently than men in propaganda, but they were all targeted.

The language used here in regard of the bishop and the nun, the demeaning concepts used, and that they questioned the virginity of a nun, suggesting that she become a prostitute, were obviously gendered attacks on the human dignity of these two. However, it was also an attack on their positions. The bishop was referred to as ‘satanic’, and thus not a man of God. Likewise, Sister Mukabaconda was described as the opposite of what a nun should be, in terms of sexual behaviour. It is implied that she is not immaculate but promiscuous, and hence represented to be an unfit Bride of Christ.

Two conclusions can be drawn from these examples. The first conclusion is that these two instances, in which a bishop and a nun are accused of discrimination against Hutus, display both similarities and differences in how men and women are described by the Hutu propagandists. The bishop and the nun are both represented in highly demeaning ways. In both cases their humanity as well as their positions are attacked; however, the attacks differ in one important way, namely regarding references to sexual morals. In the descriptions of Bishop Ngabo, there are no references to sexual behaviour. By contrast, in the attack on Sister Mukabacondo, sexual innuendo is of vital importance; the attacks on her are sexualised. The insinuation that she, a nun, is not a virgin and the suggestion that she should become a prostitute invoke the notion of the sinful clergy, a pornographic genre dating back centuries.

Madame Agathe Uwilingiyimana was not a member of the clergy, but she was a woman, and was devalued as such, through insinuations about her sexual morals. Allegations concerning infidelity not only portrays her as promiscuous and incapable of controlling her sexuality, but more importantly conveys the message that she was an unreliable politician and unfit for a position as Minister of Education.

\textsuperscript{464} Sharlach 1999, p. 394.
The second conclusion to be drawn from these examples concerns tribalism and favouritism, the projecting of discriminative actions suggests that to the propagandists the 1959 revolution was still ongoing, or as Mamdani notes, "for the unreconciled victim of yesterday’s violence, the struggle continues." The Hutus had taken power after the 1959 revolution and forced the monarchy into exile. However, in spite of the discrimination and quotas marginalising the Tutsis from schools and workplaces, the Tutsis were still present, and they had not officially acknowledged the injustice done to the Hutus in the colonial era, nor recognised the Hutu regime. Thus, for the Hutu propagandists nothing had really changed. According to them, even in Rwanda the remaining Tutsis were still attempting to oppress the Hutus. As evidence of this, RTLM journalist Valérie Bemeriki claimed that, at the time of the first RPF invasion in October of 1990, 90 out of 120 students at the Nyakibanda seminary were Tutsis, while only 30 were Hutus: “These Tutsis who were preparing to become priests of the Lord, to lead God’s people, were much thrilled, after the invasion of Rwanda.” Bemeriki claimed that this was caused by an obsession with ethnicity among the Tutsi.

What Bemeriki does in this last quote is to argue that all Tutsis in the seminary were thrilled when the RPF invaded. Although speaking of the Tutsis in the Nyakibanda seminary at this particular occasion, she makes it clear that they are representative for all Tutsi priests. Secondly, describing the students as thrilled over the invasion is to say that they were RPF supporters. Thirdly, it is claimed that they, and indeed all Tutsis, are obsessed with ethnicity, implying is that the Tutsis, priests or not, therefore are loyal to their own ethnic group.

As Henri Tajfel notes, groups are defined by their difference from other groups and group identities are constructed through comparisons with others. If no differences exist, they are invented, and the similarities within the group as well as differences from other groups are exaggerated. This is what we see here. Tutsis are represented as obsessed with ethnicity, loyal to an invading force of their kin, and even the Tutsi clergy support the RPF and discriminate the Hutu. The Hutu extremists were thus projecting the institutionalised ethnic discrimination the Hutu regime had subjected the Tutsis to since the 1959 revolution, and even more so during the war. In spite of the discrimination and quotas

---

466 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0084, 10 June 1994.
467 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0084, 10 June 1994. I have adjusted the punctuation of the translated transcript slightly, without changing the meaning.
468 Tajfel 1974, pp. 70–1.
469 Tajfel 1974, p. 75.
restricting the Tutsis in Rwandan society, the Hutu extremists now began competing for victimhood, arguing that they were the ones who were discriminated against.

As noted by Daniel Bar-Tal and Philip Hammack, victimhood is an important element in the mobilisation of one’s in-group against an out-group. It provides a sense of moral superiority and relieves one of responsibility for any violence committed by oneself or the group to which one belongs.470 In the case discussed here, it becomes clear that the ethnic identity overrode other identities, in the eyes of the Hutu extremists, even that of clergy. Tutsi clergy were Tutsis rather than clergy, in the eyes of the Hutu propagandists. Their appropriateness as priests or nuns was therefore questioned in an attempt to desacralise them, and indeed all Tutsis.

**A Church of peace and unity**

The churches in Rwanda, and particularly the Catholic Church, have been widely criticised after the genocide for their failure to act to prevent or stop it, and for the involvement of the Catholic Church in segregation during the colonial era. Regarding the segregation, the critique is justified, as the White Fathers promoted the Tutsi and contributed to the oppression of the Hutus, only to later shift their loyalty and contribute to the oppression of Tutsis.471 In the early 1990s, however, there were attempts by some representatives of the Church to unify the country and to stop the escalating violence and hatred.

As Tharcisse Gatwa has noted, however, there was very little consistency in the messages conveyed by the Catholic Church. They argued that the Rwandans should support of the MRND, and they remained silent about the human rights abuses and killings. At the same time they emphasised a common ancestry of the peoples of Rwanda, that they were all children of God, and should unite as such, regardless of class, gender, or ethnicity.472 To claim either that the Catholic Church was complicit in the genocide, or that the Church acted against, it would be to claim that there was a united church in Rwanda at the time. This was not the case.

The lack of unity is the reason why there was no unified attempt by the Catholic Church to stop the escalating violence and hatred. There were some representatives of the Catholic Church who tried, as representatives of other churches also did in Rwanda at that time, and although their

---

471 Gatwa 2006, p. 130.
efforts to work for peace and unity were futile, they did not sit idly by. A joint committee established by the Rwandan churches, the Comité des Contacts, was established in February 1991 and was active until 1994. The committee, which was made up of ten church leaders, was co-chaired by the bishop of the Catholic diocese of Kabgayi, the President of the Presbyterian Church of Rwanda, the Chairperson of the Roman Catholic Episcopal Conference, and the Chairperson of the Protestant Council in Rwanda. The committee attempted to mediate between the RPF and the Rwandan political parties during the civil war, to find an acceptable and peaceful solution to power sharing in the transitional government. While the suggestions they presented were backed by several neutral representatives present in the negotiations, they were rejected by the political parties on the basis that the churches had no right to interfere in politics.473

The Hutu propagandists did have their opinions on the matter of church and politics. As is to be expected, they did not mind the churches involving themselves in politics, as long as they did so for the benefit of the Hutu regime. Although Gaspard Gahigi, editor-in-chief of the RTLM, stated that the Church should not take sides, in a broadcast made in early December of 1993, his opinion was that the churches should side with the weak and oppressed, and 'help them elect their authorities.' 474 In this context, the weak and oppressed and the victims are all the same – the Hutus – and they are thus the only ones with whom the church should side. Again, the oppression and the weakness of the Hutu were stressed, to further claim victimhood. In the broadcast, Gahigi argued that the churches played a significant role in making sure that democracy was upheld, and that they must help the population 'not to promote people that will decimate the population, people that are killers, criminals and betrayers.' 475 Furthermore, he argued that the Church ‘should help the population by backing them up to recover the power from those who take it by force’. 476

The reason why Gahigi raised this topic was because of the BBTG that was agreed upon in early August 1993, but was never installed. The failing negotiations of the conditions for the BBTG were a topic of RTLM discussions even in December 1993. Due to the statement of a bishop, who asked when the Rwandan population would have the power to choose their leaders, Gahigi found it appropriate to talk about the role of

474 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0144, 8 December 1993.
475 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0144, 8 December 1993.
476 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0144, 8 December 1993.
the church. As the RTLM did not favour the Arusha Accords,\textsuperscript{477} which would have entailed peace with the RPF and the sharing of power, the RTLM announcers were likely disappointed by President Habyarimana’s decision to agree to the peace agreement. Several of Gahigi’s statements suggest that there was disappointment in that the terms were agreed upon without the influence of the population.\textsuperscript{478} When the government failed the population, the extremists turned to the Church, the institution that was meant to side with the people and according to Gahigi were ‘not only concerned with the soul, but also with the body of the people as well as social justice.’\textsuperscript{479}

Unlike \textit{Kangura}, which in July 1993 argued that ‘the will of the people is the will of God’,\textsuperscript{480} Gaspard Gahigi drew upon his knowledge of the history of the church, and claimed that ‘the authorities stand for God himself. […] So the Church has the responsibility of finding for the masses authorities that truly represent God.’\textsuperscript{481} The RTLM repeatedly urged the authorities to invite church representatives to the peace negotiations and meetings of security and the sharing of political power, or commended religious leaders for having attempted to reconcile the conflicting parties through the Comité des Contacts.\textsuperscript{482}

These statements thus all approved of the Church’s involvement in politics, for instance by helping the public elect who uphold Christian values. The Church was seen as being on the side of the poor and weak, i.e. the Hutus. The Christian message of freedom from oppression, help for the downtrodden, and so on, is thus here given a nationalist or ethnic slant. The argument was that since the Christian God was on the side of the poor and the weak, and since the Hutus were oppressed and downtrodden by the Tutsis, the Christian God is the God of the Hutus (see Chapter 5). However, the Church was not always on the side of the Hutus, and when it was not, it was attacked.

\textsuperscript{477} According to the Belgian RTLM employee, Georges Ruggiu, the presenters were instructed not to use the word \textit{peace} when talking of the Arusha Peace Process or the Peace Agreement (Georges Ruggiu, \textit{This Criminal Ideology and the Methods Used by RTLM to Broadcast Them}, ICTR-99-52-T, Prosecution Exhibit P92 B).

\textsuperscript{478} For example, Gahigi argued that ‘when people put themselves together, sit down and share power, that is no democracy because if democracy is the power given by the population, we feel that those people are not mandated by the population.’ RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0144, 8 December 1993.

\textsuperscript{479} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0144, 8 December 1993.

\textsuperscript{480} Anon., ‘He Who Kills by the Sword Shall Die by the Sword’, \textit{Kangura} no. 3, international issue, July 1993.

\textsuperscript{481} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0144, 8 December 1993.

\textsuperscript{482} See, for example, RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0047, 15 May 1994; RTLM Transcripts, Tape no. 0109, 16 June 1994; and RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0155, 15–17 January 1994.
Discrediting oppositional clergy

There was a Belgian priest in Kicukiro, in Kigali district, named Petters. That he was white and not Rwandan likely made him unafraid of speaking out against the treatment of Tutsis by the regime, and during the genocide he hid Tutsis in his Church and refused to hand them over to the extremists. Prior to the genocide, he was quite outspoken about RTLM, especially after RTLM urged him not to involve politics in his sermons.

Father Petters replied by denouncing the radio station, stating that the RTLM announcers were like dogs urinating on other people’s fences, which according to RTLM journalist and former Kangura editor, Noël Hitimana, was a highly unfitting thing to say in a sermon in church. Hitimana argued that this priest and others, particularly one unnamed priest in Nyamirambo, were exacerbating the conflict by ‘pitching [the Rwandans] against each other’. Hitimana claims that Petters is a supporter of the RPF, and that he should not base his sermons on the Bible since political parties are not in the Holy Scripture. There is also a threatening tone in Hitimana’s speech, as he states that God is watchful, that the RTLM consists of researchers that can reveal Petters’ most intimate secrets. He ends with: ‘Let Priest Petters beware.’

Regarding Father Petters, the fact that he was white was emphasised in the broadcasts, and Hitimana claimed that Father Petters lacked sufficient knowledge of Rwandan history, and that he therefore should avoid involvement in Rwandan politics. Around this time, the conditions of the BBTG were agreed. Among the Hutu extremists there was disappointment, since the extremist party CDR was excluded, and the Hutu extremist faction of the PL, responsible for the Hutu Power movement, was accused of having impeded the negotiations in Arusha. In fact, in the same broadcast in which Noël Hitimana talks about Father Petters, Justin Mugenzi, leader of the PL, spoke on RTLM, and refuted the accusations of having stalled the negotiations. Mugenzi also expressed ‘concern about the sovereignty of the democratic power born out of the 1959 revolution’, and claimed that

it is written in the Bible [sic] ‘woe to them, woe to them’; to those who do what? (Applause) Woe to those who neglect the interests

483 Elsewhere his name is given as Peters, but I have chosen to use the spelling in the RTLM transcripts.
484 ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 17 January 2008.
of the people, the interests for which Rwandans have fought so hard, reducing them to nothing to please the Inkotanyi. Woe to them. (Applause)\textsuperscript{489}

The quoted expression ‘woe to them’ appears in different versions in several places in the Bible, and is used in sermons where the repetition is used for rhetorical effect. This effect is also achieved when this religious reference is used in a political statement. Furthermore, the religious connotations enforce the condemnation.

The statements about Father Petters also reveal that there was little respect for men of the cloth who did not support the Hutu nationalist agenda. Although there was a threatening tone in Hitimana’s broadcast, the attack upon Petters was more one of the inappropriateness of his use of language in church, and the alleged support of the RPF. Once the genocide was being committed, however, there were more accusations against priests.

In a broadcast made on 20 May 1994, four priests were mentioned by name by the RTLM journalist Valérie Bemeriki. She accused Father Ngoga, Father Muvara, Father Ntagara, and Father Mungwarareba of having hid weapons and ammunition in the sacristy of their Church in Kibeho.\textsuperscript{490} Bemeriki, a former writer for the Interahamwe newsletter, shares her outrage on the air:

\begin{quote}
We know that in God’s Palace, there is a place where the body of Christ is kept. […] Could Father Ntagara explain to the Rwandan people the reason why eucharists [sic] have been replaced with ammunition? And the sacristy? Isn’t it there that good priests – the ones we swamp with praise – keep their sacred vestments when they go to say mass, and also keep consecrated items? […] Since when have these items been intermingled with guns?\textsuperscript{491}
\end{quote}

There are a few subtle things done in this statement. First of all, Bemeriki refers to the Church as God’s Palace, rather than God’s house, which emphasises the importance of the building. Referring to the Eucharist as the body of Christ is in line with Christian doctrine, but to do so in this context is yet another way of underlining the severity of the alleged storing of weapons.

There is also a separation between the so-called good priests whom the RTLM ‘swamp with praise’ – priests who supported the Hutu regime – and priests who were alleged RPF supporters. However, she goes even

\textsuperscript{489} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0155, 15–17 January 1994.
\textsuperscript{490} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0132, 20 May 1994.
\textsuperscript{491} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0132, 20 May 1994.
further, claiming that ‘God looked at you [Father Mungwarareba] and said, ‘no. What belongs to me cannot be mixed up with all these instruments, which are used for shedding blood!’”\textsuperscript{492} This last statement does not only imply that they are failing in their duties as clergy, or that they are failing the Rwandans, but that they are failing God.

It is possible that they would have been failing God, if there was any truth to these allegations. Bemeriki claimed that she herself had investigated this matter, but in later official investigations of the church, no weapons were found, nor any ammunition. In fact, there was a massacre at the church that left 4,000 Tutsis dead, among them, Father Ngoga, Father Muvara, Father Ntagara, and Father Mungwarareba. There was no sign of them having defended themselves with firearms.\textsuperscript{493} So when Valérie Bemeriki claimed that RTLM could not imagine that a priest would ever dare take up a gun, begin to shoot or even distribute guns to people taking refuge in the church, the latter then begin launching sporadic attacks in order to eliminate the Hutus, and then retreating into the church… daring to desecrate God’s house\textsuperscript{494}

she was not reporting the truth of the events, but was instead portraying the Tutsi priests as the enemy, as the ones responsible for murders. This statement, in which the Hutus are represented as the victims, provides a reason for the Hutus to rid themselves of this perceived threat. As shown in the subsection on tribalism, accusations against clergy tended to focus on traits opposite to those commonly associated with clergy. Being satanic or sexual were two gendered attacks. Here it is the common notion of clergy as promoters of peace and love that is attacked, by claiming that they are distributing weapons. Saying that clergy were acting outside their roles is to discredit and desacralise them, and thus devalued to the level of common humans rather than God’s representatives. Furthermore, in arguing that God’s house is being desecrated, Bemeriki implies that it would be a favour to God, a moral obligation even, to rid the church of the refugees, and the priests providing them with weapons.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{492} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0132, 20 May 1994.
\textsuperscript{493} ICTR-99-52 (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 18 August 2003.
\textsuperscript{494} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0132, 20 May 1994.
\end{flushright}
4.6 Conclusions

In the early twentieth century, the Rwandans were introduced to the Hamitic Hypothesis, in a version specially adapted for the Rwandans. In this version, one of the three groups found in Rwanda, the one that later would be classified as Tutsi, were said to be Hamites who had invaded and conquered the African East–Central region and its Bantu kings. Thus, they were perceived, by the colonisers, as a superior race to the inferior Bantus and were given privileges that the Hutus were denied. Tharcisse Gatwa argues that the shadow of the Hamitic Hypothesis lingered on, right through the genocide.\textsuperscript{495} This chapter supports his argument, and adds a further important factor: the influence of pre-Christian mythology.

The pre-racial \textit{ubuhake} system, in which the Tutsi was the upper class and the Hutus a working class, was upheld through religious mythology. The indigenous god, Imana, had favoured the Tutsi class, according to religious legends. The superiority of the Tutsi class was enhanced and stressed through these mythologies, and when the Europeans introduced the racial system, the hierarchy was already in place. The Rwandans were told that Imana was the Christian God, and therefore religion was not replaced, but adapted, and so was the social hierarchy. The Tutsi race, the biblical descendants, was still favoured by the Christian Imana, and this combination of indigenous religious mythology and the Hamitic hypothesis remained and was reinvigorated when the RPF invaded Rwanda in October 1990.

As Petersen argues, ethnic violence is often a consequence of structural changes.\textsuperscript{496} The democratisation process, combined with the war against the RPF, who demanded political influence in Rwanda, certainly constituted structural changes. Such changes produce fear, according to Petersen and Scott Straus corroborates this when demonstrating that fear certainly existed in Rwanda, as approximately half the perpetrators feared the RPF prior to the genocide.\textsuperscript{497} These fears, Petersen argues, can be manipulated and exacerbated by elites to mobilise populations and to achieve certain goals.\textsuperscript{498} The examples presented in this chapter provide evidence of this. What the Hutu elite experienced was likely a fear of the loss of political power in the new democracy, and, as Rui de Figueiredo and Barry Weingast argues, democratic elections would inevitably see RPF members and Tutsis in prominent political positions.\textsuperscript{499} However, this fear

\textsuperscript{495} Gatwa 2006.
\textsuperscript{496} Petersen 2002, p. 25.
\textsuperscript{497} Petersen 2002, p. 25; Straus 2013, p. 124.
\textsuperscript{498} Petersen 2002, pp. 74–5.
was unlikely to mobilise the general Hutu population against the RPF. Instead, ethnicity became the prime focus.

Petersen notes that elites often control information in the media, in which the elites use ‘nationalist myths and constant reminders of past and present victimizations.’

Hutu extremist media continuously referred to the past, to religion and mythologies, to remind their audiences of the oppression and hardships the Hutus experienced under the Tutsi monarchy and claimed that the RPF would reinstate the oppressive Tutsi monarchy. These referrals to the monarchy not only emphasised Hutu victimhood, but they also established a Hutu social identity.

While the Hutu extremist propagandists sarcastically referred to the Tutsi as the people or race of God, they emphasised their own heritage and identity as the ‘sons of the hoe’, the descendants of Gahutu, the ancestor of the Hutus in indigenous mythology. Although they were no longer classes, but ethnicities, the rhetoric in the Hutu hate media was still that of a class struggle. Having been the lower class, the Hutu extremists were able to further claim victimhood for all Hutus. As Bar-Tal and Hammack note, the experience of a harmful event gives the victims a sense of moral superiority and relief of responsibility for any violence against the victimisers.

The harmful acts allegedly committed against the Rwandan Hutus under the Tutsi monarchy in the colonial era made victimhood a part of the Hutu group identity, while arrogance was attributed to the Tutsi group. Thus, the Hutu extremist propagandists did not have to provide much evidence of the return of the oppressive Tutsi monarchy, and that the Hutu therefore needed to relaunch the 1959 revolution. As past harms provide moral superiority, the Hutu extremists could also easily argue that any violent acts against the Tutsi would be acts of self-defence.

Aside from the above-mentioned emphasis on the return of the oppressive Tutsi monarchy, the extremist propagandists reached back to the Hamitic Hypothesis, where they found the means to claim that the Tutsis were not Rwandans, and thus had no rights in Rwanda.

None of the ways in which the Hutu extremist propagandists spoke or wrote of the Tutsis were in any sense animalistic, but rather the opposite. Although the RPF, and soon all Tutsis, were referred to as cockroaches, the extremists clearly wanted to maintain the notion introduced by the colonists, the Catholic Church, and Tutsi monarchists, that the Tutsis were a superior race. By doing so, they emphasised the position of the Hutu as victims. However, since the Hutu had managed to depose the mwami after the revolution in 1959, they also emphasised that they could once again defeat the superior race.

---

500 Petersen 2002, p. 35.
There were obstacles that the extremists had to overcome, however, and one of them was the Church. It was not enough to separate Hutus from Tutsis; they also had to separate the churches into those who agreed with the Hutu extremist agenda, and those who preached ethnic unity. The propagandists therefore reminded the audience of the favouritism of the Church towards the Tutsis, by arguing that some Church representatives were still favouring Tutsis just as they had in the colonial era, going so far as to aid RPF. These Church representatives were those who did not agree with the Hutu extremists. Like in most of the Hutu extremist propaganda, there were inconsistencies: they argued that members of the clergy should not be involved in politics, unless, of course, it served the purpose of the extremists. The authority of clergymen should be respected, unless they argued for peace and unity between Hutus and Tutsis. In fact, those who resisted the ethnic hatred received the very same treatment by the propagandists, as Tutsis and moderate Hutu politicians did.

Another threat, which further emphasised the victimisation of Hutus, was that Tutsis were not alone. They were said to have convinced large parts of the international community to install a Tutsi empire in the African Great Lakes Region and therefore wanted to clear the area of Hutus. Based on this claim, the propagandists began referring to the Tutsis as Nazis. Daniel Bar-Tal lists the use of political labels as one of the five main forms of delegitimisation. To apply labels such as Nazis, communists, colonists, or other political labels that are unacceptable in a given society is to discredit the legitimacy and value of the targeted group.502

While the Hutu extremists were devaluing the Tutsis, they were not dehumanising them in the traditional sense, but kept arguing that the Tutsis had dehumanised, and still were dehumanising the Hutus. This made the Hutus victims of past and present harms and as victims, they were morally superior, and any violence they would commit would be legitimate acts of defence, even if it was a matter of defence by any means, including genocide.503 The question is how they were going to convince the Christian Hutu population to commit genocide. The Tutsis were still Christians, and being a superior race with divine connections was not enough. Separating Hutus from Tutsis was not enough. What they had to do was to separate the Tutsis from God.

---

CHAPTER 5

The Rwandan gods: The separation of Hutus and Tutsis through faith

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter demonstrated that attempts were made by Hutu propagandists to establish a distinction between the two groups by arguing that the Tutsi were of foreign origin, and therefore should have neither civil rights nor the right to power in Rwanda, while the Hutus were an oppressed group under threat of a returning Tutsi monarchy. The Hutu extremists depicted the Tutsi as an arrogant and cruel race, as people who perceived themselves (and acted as if they were) a superior race that was closer to God than the Hutu. In other words, they did not dehumanise the Tutsi by likening them to animals, but devalued them by arguing that the Tutsis were dehumanising the Hutus. This was done in an attempt to separate the Tutsi population from the Hutu, and to represent the Hutus as victims of the Tutsis’ cruelty.

In this chapter, the focus shifts from the separation of the Tutsis from the Hutus by religious mythology to the separation of the two groups through an attempted manipulation of faith. First, I argue that although most Hutus and Tutsis were Christians, the Hutu extremists attempted to create a Rwandan God for the Hutus, one who approved of the genocide. Then, I focus on the religiosity of the Hutus and Tutsis, and how Tutsi faith, or lack thereof, was described and used by the Hutu extremists. I will argue that there was an attempt made to separate the Tutsis from the Christian God, in order to make extermination morally acceptable. Finally, I argue that the Hutu extremists employed a strategic use of religious references, avoiding references to God at times when it might prove counterproductive, while emphasising the piety of the Hutus at other times, such as religious holidays or in connection to the RPF killings of the clergy in June 1994.
5.2 A Rwandan God

The Rwandan civil war was a conflict between an invading exiled population, predominantly Tutsi, and the Rwandan Hutu regime, over the rights to citizenship, political influence, and civil rights. These types of incompatibilities are common in civil wars. Similar to other armed conflicts was also the claim of the combatants to have God on their side. Regardless if religion is a central issue in a conflict, the notion of God on one’s side is used to argue for the right to mobilise against an enemy.504

However, what differentiates the Rwandan conflict from many other wars is that the combatants in Rwanda adhered to the same religion, and often to the same denomination. In the following, I argue that since most Rwandans were Christians and all spoke the same language, there was a need to establish distinctions between the two groups to make it possible to carry out the genocide with the support of a Christian population. In doing so, the Hutu extremist propagandists attempted to create a separate God for the Hutus – the Rwandan God. While this God was a Christian God, the Hutu propagandists depicted Him as a god who not only sided with the Hutus, but who approved of the genocide.

The emergence of a Rwandan God

It is said in Rwanda that ‘God travels the world by day, but He rests at night in Rwanda.’505 Another has it as Imana y’i Rwanda, ‘Rwanda is God’s country’.506 Considering the religiosity of the population, sayings such as these would make sense to most Rwandans. As I will demonstrate, the Hutu extremists emphasised the notion of God being partial to Rwanda, as they repeatedly argued that the God of Rwanda was protecting the Hutus. As the Hutus were considered the indigenous people of Rwanda, the God of Rwanda was a God of the Hutus.

As the result of a congress held in late April 1991, a new constitution was proclaimed on 10 June, which made Rwanda a multi-party state. Opposition parties had been forming since the President announced the plans for a multi-party system nearly a year before.507 They could now register to be allowed to legally challenge the power of the MRND.508

504 Aslan 2013.
506 Adekunle 2007, p. 29.
507 The plans were announced on 5 July 1990 (Prunier 2010, p. 127).
508 Prunier 2010, p. 126.
While registration was still open, Kangura published its 17th issue, in which the new constitution was discussed. The cover, however, depicted the grave of Colonel Stanislas Mayuya. This Colonel had been close to the President, and many assumed he would be Habyarimana’s successor, until he died in 1988 from a shot to the head. The gunman was later killed, along with the prosecutor in the case, in what was the beginning of a series of political assassinations. The pattern that has since then been discerned indicates that the people killed were all seen as obstacles to the akazu and their position. Colonel Mayuya likely was killed because he was not a member of the akazu, and therefore would not guarantee the political influence of the Hutu extremist group if he became president. However, this was not how the Hutu extremist propagandists saw it. They instead suspected that the Colonel had been killed by the RPF. On his grave, drawn on the cover of Kangura, was following message: ‘Colonel Mayuya demands revenge.’ Below the grave, in bold letters, it reads: ‘Were it not for the God of Rwanda, who is always vigilant… the Hutus would be in great danger.’

It is unclear what this was meant to refer to – whether it was related to the depiction of Colonel Mayuya’s grave, and thus should be read as the threat of the RPF, or if it is related to the article about the new constitution. In the latter case, then the threat was the same, albeit politically instead of military, as the RPF was one of the new parties recently registered in Rwanda.

Both indicate that God was seen as Rwandan, protecting the Hutus against threats, whichever they might be. This is the first of several examples found in the sources of a Rwandan God. It is also one of the examples in which it is clear that when Rwanda is mentioned, Tutsis are not included in its population. Had they been, then the ones said to have

510 Kangura no. 17, June 1991: ‘Koloneli Mayuya agomba guhorerwa.’
511 Kangura no. 17, June 1991: ‘Imana y’i Rwanda ibora iri maso, iyo idakinga akaboko… ak’abahutu kari gushoboka.’
been in grave danger would have been the Rwandans, but instead it is the Hutus, and no other group. Thus, the Hutu extremist propagandists in Kangura attempted to separate themselves from the Tutsi by creating separate religious identities. In this instance, however, it was not only a matter of religious identities, but of separate gods, as the Rwandan God was a god of the Hutus, or at least in favour of them.

Seven months later, in January 1992, the war was still raging in between the ever-failing peace negotiations. It was not the war, however, but the new Rwandan cabinet that caused the most commotion in the country at this time. This cabinet was meant to be part of a transitional government from the old regime to a democratically elected government. However, since all seats but one were held by the MRND,512 President Habyarimana was facing criticism for maintaining a one-party rule.513 Furthermore, demonstrations were held in Kigali, in which 50,000 outraged hardline Hutus participated, protesting the appointment of Sylvestre Nsanzimana, an alleged RPF collaborator, to the post of Minister of Justice in the new cabinet. The protesters argued that the cabinet could not be neutral with Nsanzimana in that post.514

In spite of the political turmoil, the journalists at Kangura maintained their focus on the RPF, the Tutsis, and Burundian politics, rather than the new Rwandan cabinet.515 The Kangura journalists also maintained their loyalty towards President Habyarimana throughout the war. It is possible that in this and the subsequent issues of Kangura they avoided the topic of the cabinet because they did not want to criticise the President or the hardline Hutus, and instead chose to attempt to divert the attention of their readers to the RPF and the ethnic problems in Burundian politics. Another, more likely, possibility is that Kangura’s aim was not to comment on Rwandan politics, unless there was an opportunity to discredit the RPF or scapegoat the Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

One article in the January 1992 issue is of particular interest here. In it, the author accuses the RPF of having destroyed FAR army vehicles prior to an attack. The unnamed journalist then states: ‘Only the God of Rwanda enabled ONATRACOM [Rwanda Public Transport Authority] to provide buses to satisfy their needs by way of transport to the front.’516 Unlike the previous example, it is not clear that this God of Rwanda is a Hutu god. However, the God of Rwanda, in this context, is clearly in favour of the Hutus and the FAR. Had the author been content with

---

512 The only cabinet seat not held by the MRND was instead held by the Christian Democratic Party (PDC), which was closely connected to the MRND.
writing that God enabled the transport authorities to provide the army with buses the meaning would have been different.

It is subtle, but arguing that it was the ‘God of Rwanda’ does make a difference. In precolonial days Rwanda was the world, and such a statement would have meant little then, but colonisation brought borders, and a far larger world beyond them, and instead of being the world, Rwanda became one of the smallest countries in Africa. The God of Rwanda for that reason is no longer the God of the world, but the God of a small African country. This seemingly insignificant statement thus suggests that there is not one God of all mankind, but a specific God for Rwanda, willing to step in to support the FAR, which, although they still had a number of Tutsis in their ranks, was the army of the Hutu regime, and often referred to as Habyarimana’s Army.517 Considering too that the RPF, although not exclusively Tutsi, was portrayed as a Tutsi army, and the Rwandan Tutsis were associated with them and claimed to be accomplices simply by virtue of being Tutsi, it is reasonable to take the God of Rwanda to be the God of the Hutus.

While Kangura only mentioned a Rwandan God on these occasions, the RTLM, taking over as the main outlet for Hutu extremist propaganda, would continue the separation of gods, and would do so far more explicitly.

**The God of Rwandans and the genocide**

On 22 April 1994, the RTLM speaker Kantano Habimana accused ‘the whites’ of having abandoned Rwanda.518 There is some truth to this accusation, since France and Belgium had made sure to retrieve all their nationals from Rwanda, and the UN had the previous day adopted Resolution 912, cutting the UNAMIR from 2,548 to 270 UN soldiers and observers.519 The reason given by Kantano Habimana did not correspond with the reasons given in the UN Security Council, though: Habimana said that the Americans and the Belgians were in league with the Tutsis, and were saying, ‘We will take our dollars elsewhere, since you do not want the Tutsis to rule; we will make things hard for you and wait for the consequences.’520

---

517 Tutsis had to have credentials from influential Hutus in order to join the army, at least until 1993, after which Tutsis were no longer recruited under any circumstance. Once the genocide commenced, the Tutsis in the FAR perished. See ICTR-00-55B-T (Hagegekimana), Transcript, 16 April 2009.
518 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0205, 22 April 1994.
520 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0205, 22 April 1994.
I argued earlier that the Hutu extremists attempted to picture themselves as victims of a worldwide Tutsi conspiracy, and this statement further substantiates that argument. The Tutsis were not the only adversary for the Hutus, according to the propagandists, but the Tutsi had western allies as well. However, the Americans and Belgians were not in league with the Tutsis, and Resolution 912 proves that they had no interest in intervening to save the Tutsis who were still alive at that point. However, this did not seem to bother Habimana. In the midst of his criticism of western states, he praised the UN Special Representative, Jacques-Roger Booh-Booh from Cameroon, for understanding the problems in Rwanda, but concluded that Booh-Booh had little power to stop the RPF. Nevertheless, Habimana ends on a hopeful note, adding that ‘we will continue to make the best of a bad situation; Rwanda’s God is never far, is never far; I have a feeling He will continue helping us in this crisis’. He claims that nowhere, in the history of the world, has a minority group of ‘bandits’ taken power from a majority group, and adds that ‘Rwanda’s God will ensure victory against it.’

By mid-June the genocide had lost its initial momentum. It was no longer as organised as it had been at first, and the army did not control the Interahamwe to the extent they had. Since the army was concentrating its efforts on fighting the RPF surrounding Kigali, they left the Interahamwe

---

521 The reduction of the UNAMIR was the indirect result of Belgium’s decision to withdraw their troops from Rwanda after the murder of ten Belgian soldiers. Without the Belgians, the UNAMIR would have been at half strength, which would make it impossible for it to operate within its restricted mandate. *UN Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda*, S/1994/470; S/RES/912.

522 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0205, 22 April 1994. He does not mention that Booh-Booh had spent time with President Habyarimana, that he was criticised by UN General Roméo Dallaire for obstructing the work of the UNAMIR, and would – a few days after this broadcast – face RPF demands for his resignation on grounds of incompetence.

523 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0205, 22 April 1994.
to handle the genocide any way they saw fit.\footnote{ICTR-96-3-T (Rutaganda), \textit{Judgement and sentence}, 6 December 1999.} France on 17 June announced its plans to intervene. However, it did not do so in the UN operation UNAMIR II, which had been approved but was unable to launch since every single UN member state had refused to contribute soldiers and equipment. Instead it intervened under the UN mandate, in an operation of its own – the highly controversial Opération Turquoise.\footnote{This French operation was meant to provide security for the Rwandans until the UN was able to launch UNAMIR II, but in reality the safe zone on the border with Zaïre provided an escape route and refugee camps for Hutus – many of them the perpetrators, organisers, and orchestrators of the genocide.}

On 19 June the RTLM thanked the Interahamwe for their hard work, but suggested a little more discipline would be in order. They also reported that the FAR General Augustin Bizimungu had declared that the time for negotiations was over. The RTLM journalist urged the listeners to do their jobs well, ‘and to the person who is incapable of doing his job, it will be goodbye!’\footnote{RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0031, 19 June 1994.}

Before welcoming the French troops, the speaker stated that ‘the Inkotanyi do not know what makes Rwanda to be Rwanda. What makes Rwanda unique is the God of Rwanda, the people of Rwanda and their strength coupled with their intellect.’\footnote{RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0031, 19 June 1994.}

The Rwandan God was thus mentioned again, but there are other things of interest here. While the Hutus are still depicted as victims even at the end of the war and the genocide, they are no longer represented as having an inferior position. The rhetoric had begun to change when it became apparent that the war and the genocide was coming to an end.

Whether it was hopefulness due to the announcement of the French operation (the French had been a strong ally of the Habyarimana regime) or if it was an act of desperation, the propagandists stopped proclaiming that the Hutus could win against the invading Tutsis, and instead tried to convince their audience that they would never be defeated. At the end of the war and the genocide, the earlier rhetoric of a Hutu majority as oppressed by the Tutsi minority, invoking the victory in 1959 to galvanise the Hutu population, served no purpose. Hutus were fleeing or had already fled. To argue that they could still win would not have been as effective as convincing that they could not be defeated. The Hutu David was standing up to the Tutsi Goliath, with the help of the God of Rwanda. There are several examples of the changed rhetoric, and the use of the Rwandan God, in some of the last RTLM broadcasts.

Towards the end of the genocide, the RTLM journalist Kantano Habimana had made up new lyrics for a popular Rwandan hymn, and he sang it on a few occasions. One was on 23 June. He sang: ‘Come friends! Let us rejoice, the Inyenzi are all dead. Come friends, rejoice, God is...’
just. Habimana claimed that Museveni, who in *Kangura* was depicted as a horned Devil-worshipper, and RPF leader Paul Kagame had been saying to each other: ‘We are displeased with the Arusha Accords. Let us resume the war and seize power.’ They did not know, however, that the God of Rwanda watches over our country. Now they are paying the price.

In the same broadcast Museveni is further accused of having asked the RPF leaders why they had not yet taken Kigali, a question that got no response, since Kagame and the RPF leadership, according to RTLM, simply did not know. RTLM claimed to have the answer, though: ‘Well, Rwanda is not yet conquered because the God of Rwanda protects it as well as its population.

The broadcasts on 27 June provided the most references to a Rwandan God. For three days the French had placed troops along the border to Zaïre. On the very day of their arrival, they made their presence known by hanging the French flag all over the capital. Tutsis who had managed to survive the genocide began coming out of hiding, believing that Kigali now was safe. When leaving their shelters, however, many of them were killed by FAR soldiers or the Intera hamwe who still roamed the streets, initially unhindered by the French. Or at least until the French soldiers saw the reality of the situation first hand, and realised that their mission was largely to aid the perpetrators of genocide.

Meanwhile, the RPF strengthened its position in and around Kigali, laying siege to the FAR and the few who still remained of the Hutu

---

528 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0300, 23 June 1994. ‘Venez, amis! Réjouissons-nous, les Inyenzi sont tous morts. Venez amis réjouissons-nous, Dieu est juste.’

529 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0300, 23 June 1994. ‘Nous ne sommes pas satisfaits des Accords d’Arusha. Reprenons la guerre pour nous emparer de tout le pouvoir.’ Ils ignoraient cependant que le Dieu de Rwanda veille sur notre pays. Maintenant ils sont en train de payer le prix.’

530 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0300, 23 June 1994. ‘Eh bien le Rwanda n’est pas encore con qu’ils car le Dieu du Rwanda le protège ainsi que sa population.’

531 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0300, 23 June 1994. ‘Eh bien le Rwanda n’est pas encore con qu’ils car le Dieu du Rwanda le protège ainsi que sa population.’

532 Prunier 2010, p. 290.

533 Prunier 2010, p. 292.
population. Kigali became a battlefield, and its population began to flee west, towards the French safe zone in Zaïre, only to face newly set up roadblocks, where the Interahamwe killed everyone who failed to show identification, including Hutus, to make sure that not one single Tutsi survived.534

The fighting and looting left Kigali in ruins, and there was little food left for those who remained. The situation in the Rwandan capital was reflected in the RTLM broadcasts. ‘When the Inkotanyi believed they could kill us with hunger, I told them that they did not know the ways in which God watches over Rwanda’,535 Kantano Habimana blustered, and added: ‘In my opinion, the more the Inkotanyi try to make us die of starvation, the more God, on the other hand, provides for our needs.’536

These statements, when placed in context, suggest that the intention was to encourage people not to give up, and to stay in Kigali and keep fighting. This is supported by a quote from Habimana in which he said that ‘the ways of the God of Rwandans are therefore impenetrable. As a consequence, the Inkotanyi had better calm down, because they cannot be stronger than the God of Rwandans. God loves the Rwandans.’537 Kantano Habimana again sung his song before ending his broadcast with an appeal to his listeners to keep up the fight:

‘Dear friends, let’s rejoice, the Inkotanyi have been exterminated, oh la la, God is fair!’ Indeed, God is fair. The suicidal Museveni and his suicidal Inyenzi-Inkotanyi believed that they had come to subdue us again. However, they did not know that the God of Rwanda is always present, that the Rwandan forces are always ready and that we, the population, are always vigilant. We defend our country, our capital Kigali, and we will break the nose of every Inyenzi who show themselves.538

535 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0304, 27 June 1994. ‘Lorsque les Inkotanyi croyaient qu’ils pouvaient nous faire mourir de faim, je leur ai dit qu’ils ne connaissaient pas les voies de Dieu veille sur le Rwanda.’
536 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0304, 27 June 1994. ‘A mon avis, plus les Inkotanyi tentent de nous faire mourir de faim, plus Dieu, de son côté, subvient à nos besoins.’
537 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0304, 27 June 1994. ‘Les voies du Dieu des Rwandais sont donc impénétrables. Par conséquent, les Inkotanyi feraient mieux de se calmer, car ils ne peuvent pas être plus forts que le Dieu des Rwandais. Dieu aime les Rwandais.’
538 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0304, 27 June 1994. ‘Chers amis, réjouissons-nous, les Inyenzi ont été exterminés, oh là là, ha Dieu est juste.’ Effectivement, Dieu est juste. Museveni le suicidaire et ses suicidaires Inyenzi Inkotanyi croyaient qu’ils étaient venus pour nous assujettir de nouveau. Or, ils ne savaient pas que le Dieu du Rwanda est toujours présent: les forces armées rwandaises sont toujours prêtes et que nous, les membres de la population, nous sommes toujours vigilants. Nous défendons notre pays, notre capitale Kigali, et nous cassons le nez à tout Inyenzi qui sort la tête.’
Habimana thus thanked God for allowing the genocide, possibly even for making it happen. Furthermore, the extermination of the RPF is described as an expression of God’s fairness, thereby implying that the killing was justified and legitimate in the eyes of God. Habimana sometimes made sure to explain that he did not mean all Tutsis, but merely the RPF, especially near the end when he presumably must have realised that the war was ending and he might be held accountable for his broadcasts. On this particular occasion, however, he did not, but instead argued that the noses of Inyenzi (Tutsi) should be broken. That incitement should be understood against the background of the efforts in the colonial era to distinguish the different groups by turning them into racialised categories. Since the nose was one of the physical features measured by the Belgians when racially segregating the Rwandans, a slim nose was considered a stereotypically Tutsi feature. This is the reason why it became a common practice to break the noses of Tutsis before killing them.539

In spite of Habimana’s attempts to encourage the Hutus, the RPF were winning the war. He was well aware of it, not least since RTLM was still broadcasting from Kigali, which by this stage was almost deserted. He repeatedly encouraged people to return to Kigali, claiming that it was safe, that the Hutus were winning.540 Considering the statements above, in which he argues that the RPF not only are fighting the FAR, or the Hutus, but indeed the Rwandan God, he is clearly appealing to people’s faith in order to bring them back to the battle. In one of his last Kigali broadcasts on 2 July, the day before leaving the capital with mobile equipment and resuming broadcasts from Gisenyi on 10 July, Habimana again accused Museveni of being the actual leader of the RPF. He claimed that Museveni had ordered the destruction of a museum in order to get rid of evidence of the cruelty of the Tutsi monarchy. This, Habimana said, would not happen:

The good Lord of Rwanda, the inhabitants and the Rwandan armed forces stand firm in their positions. [...] So I think that the God of Rwanda, the people of Rwanda and the Rwandan armed

539 On 4 June 1994, Kantano Habimana said the following on the air: ‘Look at the person’s height and his physical appearance. Just look at his small nose and break it.’ RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0134, 4 June 1994. Ten days later an unnamed RTLM presenter notes that: ‘Hutus are killing other Hutus mistaking them for Tutsis, for Inyenzi.’ He urges his listeners to check identity cards, as: ‘All those having a small nose, slender, with a light skin are not necessarily Tutsis.’ RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0257, 14 June 1994. Yet, again, on the 27 June, Kantano Habimana again urged listeners to break the nose of every Inyenzi. RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0304, 27 June 1994.
forces are holding their positions and that these rascals will not be able to do anything.\textsuperscript{541}

The trinity of the God of Rwanda, the population, and the FAR recurs in these transcripts. It may not have been a conscious reference to the Holy Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, but it is possible that the Christian context led the propagandists, consciously or not, to represent their defence against the Tutsi as a trinity similar to the Holy Trinity.

This last quote also gives clear evidence of the Rwandan God being a Hutu God. The FAR only allowed Tutsis in their ranks until 1993, and only if they came highly recommended by well-respected Hutus.\textsuperscript{542} Tutsis remaining in the Rwandan army at the time of the genocide were killed. Thus, when Habimana spoke of the FAR, it was not Tutsis he was referring to. Furthermore, as Tutsis were continuously represented as non-Rwandans, they were not included in what is here referred to as the Rwandan population.

The extremist propagandists maintained and propagated the notion introduced in the Hamitic Hypothesis that the Tutsi originated in Abyssinia, and not in Rwanda. Therefore, as the Tutsi were not Rwandan, and the FAR did not have Tutsis in their ranks, then the God of Rwanda was a God of the Hutu.

It is common, and has been throughout history, for combatants to argue that they have God on their side.\textsuperscript{543} As the Hutus and Tutsis shared a God, such an argument would have been difficult to make. As Henri Tajfel notes, groups are defined in comparison with other groups, and if there are no discernible differences, the differences are created.\textsuperscript{544} The statements in this subchapter provide examples of the creation of group differences. The othering of the Tutsi created a positive self-image for the Hutu as people of faith but was also and possibly primarily a way to distance the Tutsi from God. After all, the Hutu propagandists had already argued that the Tutsis were not Rwandan, and therefore also claim that they did not pray to the same God as the Hutus. However, they took it one step further by questioning the Tutsis’ faith, as will be seen.

\textsuperscript{541} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0040,02July 1994. ‘Le Bon Dieu du Rwanda, les habitants et les Forces armées rwandaises tiennent bon sur leurs positions. [---] Je pense donc que le Dieu du Rwanda, les habitants et les Forces armées rwandaises tiennent bon sur leurs positions et que ces vauriens ne pourront rien faire.’

\textsuperscript{542} ICTR-00-55B-T (Hategekimana), Transcript, 16 April 2006.

\textsuperscript{543} Aslan 2013.

\textsuperscript{544} Tajfel 1974, p. 75.
5.3 The Religiosity of the Tutsi

Equally important as the construction of a Rwandan God of the Hutus in Hutu extremist propaganda, however, was the business of distancing the Tutsis from the God created in the propaganda. The Rwandan God of the Hutus was still a Christian God, and regardless of denomination, murder would be unacceptable in His eyes. Thus, in convincing the Hutu population that the genocide of the Tutsis was morally acceptable, the Tutsis had to be represented as non-Christians, or as atheists, or even as Devil-worshippers.

I have found that this was primarily done using five specific arguments. The following claims were made. First, the Tutsis are in league with the Devil. Second, they are Protestants. Third, and far more explicit than the first two, Tutsis adhere to pre-Christian religions. Fourth, the Tutsis are not a people of faith, but irreligious, even atheists. Fifth, they worship a specific Tutsi god.

The propagandists used whatever arguments worked, regardless of coherence. History, religion, and mythology provided an ample set of tools to construct an image in which the Hutu had to exterminate the Tutsi, lest they would suffer the same fate. This picking and choosing can clearly be seen in the following examples, when the Hutu propagandists seemingly found that some arguments worked better than others, and therefore used them more frequently.

The Tutsis in league with the Devil

Although it is not necessarily an expression of faith or religiosity, the Tutsis were referred to as demons, or said to be in league with the Devil. Unlike much of the rhetoric used by the Hutu extremists, these references were implicit and figurative.

One example was a statement on RTLM in which Kantano Habimana laments the situation in Kigali on 2 April, five days before the genocide began: ‘Here in Kigali nothing goes well especially at present. One would think Satan has invaded this place,’545 referring to the number of killings in the Rwandan capital.

There were more explicit statements years before the genocide, however. In January 1991, it was claimed in Kangura that ‘the Inkotanyi are synonymous with demons, and they have no desire to put an end to the massacre of their fellow countrymen who ardently support peace and

545 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0190, 2 April 1994.
noble justice. This statement was aimed at the RPF and not the Tutsis as a whole. It is also published in the month of the second RPF invasion, when the civil war initiated in October 1990 resumed. However, since no mentions of the second RPF attack is mentioned, this issue was most likely published prior to the attack on 23 January 1991. In fact, the second attack came as something of a surprise, since the RPF had lost a great number of soldiers during the Rwandan army counter attacks in late 1990. Hence, arguing that there were massacres in Rwanda is an exaggeration, and what massacres there were targeted alleged RPF collaborators and politicians.

As has been argued in Chapter 4, propaganda does not have to make sense in order to be effective. What is being done in the statement above, however, is that the RPF are being compared to demons, and in a statement in which the Hutus were referred to as the fellow countrymen of the RPF. This goes against the propaganda that argued that the Tutsis, and most certainly the RPF, were not Rwandans. Nevertheless, if we consider this a statement in which the aim was not only to devalue the RPF, but also to portray the Hutus as good Christian protagonists, the killing of their countrymen would sound far worse than the murder of foreigners.

While Kangura and RTLM journalists referred to the Tutsis as demons, they never went so far as to compare the Tutsis with the Devil. Nevertheless, they did argue that they were affiliated. Discussing the RPF and Paul Kagame, one Kangura journalist claimed that the RPF attacks ‘caused those who accept God to see for themselves that the Devil has strong power and accomplices who are in the races, in regions and in religions.’

The reason why the Tutsis and RPF are not said to be devils is likely because of the religiosity in Rwanda being closely tied to the Bible. The Devil is never depicted as taking human form in the Bible: he is a tempter who fills the hearts of human beings with the urge to commit sinful acts, and the closest Satan comes to physical form is in descriptions of him as a serpent. In fact, as he is said to be a fallen angel and the main adversary of God, it may have been too great a power to affiliate the Tutsis with, and the power of the Devil is often emphasised. Such is the case in the 17th issue of Kangura, where it is stated that ‘the Devil you know (it knows you) is stronger than the angel who surprises you.’ Nevertheless, it did

547 Mamdani, p. 186.
548 Prunier p. 136.
not stop the Hutu extremists of Kangura from claiming that the Tutsis were flirting with the Devil:

Those who believe they are gaining anything at all in flirting with the devil are not showing maturity that can transcend the recurrent turbulence, in order to work towards ensuring security in the medium and long term, as well as the full emancipation of the Rwandan people in general and the majority in particular.551

This excerpt is taken from Kangura’s May 1992 issue. It never refrained from referring to the Tutsis as RPF accomplices, or representing the Tutsis as the enemy, as seen in the Hutu Ten Commandments published in December 1990.552 The excerpt above refers to a series of terror attacks, allegedly perpetrated by the PL, in cooperation with the RPF, during the spring of 1992.553

In the article, the Devil is the opposite of maturity, security, and emancipation. From a Christian perspective it makes sense that those who would flirt with the Devil would stand against security and emancipation. Where the statement gets confusing is where the author, Bonaparte Ndekezi, emphasises that it is a matter of emancipation for the majority, meaning the Hutus. To be clear, the Tutsis had little or no influence or power at this point, and the RPF never made any claim to fight for the emancipation of the Hutus, but for the rights to Rwandan citizenship for the exiled Rwandans. However, if one considers other statements made in the same article – where the RPF are compared with Nazis, running a ‘satanic race against time’554 to no avail according to Ndekezi who states that the universal policy is democracy based on majority rule555 – it becomes clear that the matter of emancipation is one of Rwanda being free from the Tutsis and the alleged Tutsi monarchy.

In relation to the Tutsi monarchy, the Kangura journalist, Déo Karangira, gives a description of the clothes, amulets, and hair of the Tutsi royalty, to then ask: ‘Do all of these things not go hand in hand with Satan?’556 The oppression of the Hutus under the Tutsi monarchy should

---

552 Kangura no. 6, December 1990.
553 Bonaparte Ndekezi, ‘Who Benefits From the Current Attacks?’, Kangura, no. 35, May 1992; Prunier 2010, pp. 143–144. Prunier argues that the evidence is insufficient, and could as easily point to the FAR.
not be understated. However, the risk of the monarchy and oppression being reinstated in the 1990s was minimal. Still, this threat was real to many Hutus, as they had been raised hearing stories about oppression, marginalisation, and forced unpaid labour.\(^{557}\)

It was not a matter of Hutu extremists creating this fear. It was a fear extracted from the collective memory of the Hutus; a collective memory that with the exacerbation of existing fears of the RPF and the Tutsis was meant to strengthen the Hutus’ group identity.\(^{558}\) Referring to the Tutsis as demonic or in league with the Devil emphasised the threat of the Tutsi monarchy, as it was implied that the RPF had the Devil on their side, in contrast to the Hutus who had the support of the God of Rwanda.

That said, the Hutu extremist propagandists chose whichever arguments worked, and these examples seem not to have worked too well. Unlike the ‘black’ propaganda, in which outright lies are used, it seems to have been more productive to avoid the Devil or demons in their rhetoric. Another equally subtle and fruitless attempt was to argue that the Tutsis were Protestants.

**The Tutsis as Protestants**

More than half of all Rwandans were Catholics, and most of the remaining population were Protestants. Both denominations had Hutus as well as Tutsis in their congregations, and therefore the matter of denomination ought not to have mattered during the war and the genocide. Nevertheless, the extremists did use Catholicism and Protestantism in their attempts to divide the two groups.

In February 1993, *Kangura* published an open letter to the Tutsis of Rwanda, originally written by Grégoire Kayibanda in 1964, two years after becoming President. A large portion of this letter is dedicated to the question of religion in the newly formed republic. Kayibanda argues that the Hutus never changed their faith to appease the white people, which may seem odd, considering the fact that the Hutus did convert to Christianity, albeit out of necessity, with marginalisation and poverty as the only other option. However, Kayibanda’s statement is most likely a reference to the voluntary conversion of the Tutsi Mwami Mutara II Rudahigwa.

Kayibanda assures the Tutsis that the republic, in accordance with the new constitution, does not discriminate against anyone on religious grounds, as long as the laws are obeyed.\(^{559}\) Although it was written into

\(^{557}\) Hatzfeld 2009, p. 95.


the new constitution, and would remain so even under the Habyarimana regime, that the ‘Republic of Rwanda ensures the equality of all citizens regardless of race, origin, sex, or religion [and] respects all religions that are not incompatible with public order and the security of the state.’ Muslims and other non-Christian religious groups were marginalised by the Catholic missionaries during the colonial era and by the State in collaboration with the Catholic Church in the postcolonial era. While the Protestants were not discriminated against, they were marginalised and could never reach the same level of popularity as the Catholic Church, and never entered any kind of close relationship with the Hutu regime.

In his letter to the Tutsis, Kayibanda reminds Protestant Tutsis ‘that their religion must not be used as a political instrument of the metropolis from whence this religion emanated.’ Adding that the Tutsis ‘know how the Hutus are viewed in the upper echelons of [their] religion.’ However, Protestantism was not a Tutsi religion. Although the Protestant missionaries, like the Catholics, had favoured the Tutsis, the Tutsi chiefs had already made their choice to follow the Catholic faith. Since the Protestant churches did not have the resources and were fairly recently established in Belgium, they simply could not compete with the Catholics in the Belgian colonies.

In the Protestant revival of the 1930s they gained some followers, but mainly among the Hutus, through the appealing message of unity against the feudal system and ethnic injustice. However, since the Protestant church in Rwanda did not live up to its teachings, it failed to remain a threat to the segregating social system promoted by the Tutsi monarchy, the Belgians, and the Catholic Church. In fact, unlike the Catholic Church, which sided with the Hutu prior to the revolution, the Protestant church still supported the Tutsi monarchy, which is the likely explanation of why Kayibanda implied that it was denomination for Tutsis. As a consequence, the Protestants found themselves divided and marginalised, and remained outside of Rwandan politics.

There are reasons why Kangura chose to republish Kayibanda’s letter in 1993. The quoted sections bear some resemblance to the rhetoric used by Hutu extremists during the civil war, although it is no longer a question of

---

560 Constitution de la République Rwandaise 1962.
561 Kubai 2007b, p. 222. Muslims did not have access to education in the colonial era, as the educational system was controlled by the Catholic Church, which also meant they could not get jobs. They remained marginalised under the Kayibanda and Habyarimana regimes, due to the governments’ close relationship with the Catholic Church.
562 Gatwa 2006, pp. 94–6, 136–137.
566 Gatwa 2006, pp. 94–96.
Tutsi Protestants. Protestantism had grown far stronger among both Hutus and Tutsis, and in the early 1990s, 18 per cent of the population belonged to a Protestant church.\textsuperscript{567} Nevertheless, the rhetoric was quite similar, in the sense that Tutsis were given another religious identity. On 19 June 1994, Jean Kambanda, the Prime Minister of the interim government, made a speech on RTLM, in which he argued that the RPF were attempting to start an interreligious conflict.\textsuperscript{568} He did not explain what he meant by this, but argued that the RPF was burning Catholic churches in order to prevent Hutus from congregating,\textsuperscript{569} which implies that Kambanda wanted to cast the Tutsis as non-Catholics.

Former President Grégoire Kayibanda’s letter, like the speech made by Interim Prime Minister Jean Kambanda, imply that the Tutsis were not Catholics. Although they are both quite vague – in the letter it seems as though the former president was more against Protestantism than against the Tutsis – it is worth taking a closer look at what was being attempted with these statements.

Jean Kambanda’s claim that Tutsis were burning Catholic churches was not an isolated statement. In the transcripts from 10 June 1994, the RTLM journalist Valérie Bemeriki said that the RPF had killed several priests during the war, and argued that the reason why the RPF was attacking Catholic churches and priests was because of the ties between the Rwandan government and the Church. Bemeriki claimed that the Church had always ‘preached peace, reconciliation of all Rwandans.’\textsuperscript{570} As previously noted, some church representatives did, while others did not. However, there is truth to her claim that the Church never officially opposed the Habyarimana regime, and in that way demonstrated that they did not support the RPF.\textsuperscript{571}

It is possible, but probably not confirmable, that the RPF saw the Rwandan Catholic Church as an enemy, due to its close links to the Habyarimana regime, as Bemeriki argues.\textsuperscript{572} However, what is highly unlikely is Bemeriki’s following claim: ‘Some \textit{Inyenzi-Inkotanyi} feel that everybody who preaches peace and unity, who does not support their cause, must also die.’\textsuperscript{573} The RPF did kill a number of clergymen during the genocide, although not for lack of support of their cause, but because

\textsuperscript{567} Des Forges 1999, p. 45.
\textsuperscript{568} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0109, 16 June 1994.
\textsuperscript{569} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0109, 16 June 1994.
\textsuperscript{570} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0084, 10 June 1994.
\textsuperscript{571} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0084, 10 June 1994.
\textsuperscript{572} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0084, 10 June 1994. The killings of ten priests and three bishops – including Habyarimana’s close friend, the Archbishop of Kigali – by the RPF are mentioned. The manner of the killings does indicate RPF hostilities were directed towards Catholic priests.
\textsuperscript{573} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0084, 10 June 1994.
they were believed to have been involved in the genocide. As for the priests killed by the Hutu extremists, it was either because they were Tutsis or they did not support the Hutus’ extremist cause.

The fact that Tutsis and Hutus shared a religion, and a Christian religion at that, was an obstacle for the Hutu extremists in their preparations for the genocide. It was therefore imperative to create or emphasise every kind of difference between Hutus and Tutsis. To portray Tutsis as Protestants was problematic, however, as many Hutus were Protestants as well. Nevertheless, it may have been a sacrifice worth making. In the end, Christian denominations were irrelevant, as only ethnicity mattered. This subtle method of devaluation was merely one means to an end, and the separation of denominations was most likely a matter of supporting the Hutu regime via the Catholic Church. As the Church had become something of a state department, an attack upon the Church would be an attack upon the government, and it is likely that the Hutu propagandists believed that even Protestant Hutus would find this offensive.

The Tutsis as pagans

Having argued that the Tutsis perceived the Catholic Church as an enemy in an attempt to separate Tutsi from Hutu through denominations, the Hutu propagandists took it a step further by arguing that the Tutsis were not Christian at all, but rather adhered to indigenous religious beliefs. This is most clearly seen in relation to the murder of the Burundian President in 1993.

The Tutsi President Pierre Buyoya lost the presidential election in Burundi in June 1993. In the May issue of Kangura in Rwanda the outcome of the election was predicted, and an article on this topic was accompanied by an illustration showing Buyoya carrying a cross to the top of a hill, where a sign saying ‘Election’ awaits. Buyoya asks himself how he is going to win with all his sins. The sins are written on
the cross and suggest that while waiting for a ‘rushed democracy’ he had killed Hutus, seized the leadership, and trampled the Twas and the Hutus.\footnote{Kangura no. 43, May 1993.} That he is depicted as a Jesus character is contradictory: Jesus was unjustly crucified, and was not killed for his own sins, but for the sins of humanity. In the drawing, Buyoya is accused of having committed several egregious sins for which he is to be crucified. It is therefore not a matter of him being compared with Jesus, but rather that his sins are his own cross to bear.

When Pierre Buyoya lost the election, Melchior Ndadaye became the first Hutu to be elected President of Burundi, although his time in office was short. He was sworn in on 10 July 1993, and was assassinated in October that year by Tutsi soldiers in a military coup. Not only did this spark a civil war in Burundi that lasted until 2006, but it is also often said to have contributed to the escalating Hutu extremism in Rwanda. The murder of a Hutu president and the stream of Burundian Hutu refugees into Rwanda were used by the Rwandan Hutu extremist propagandists as evidence of the cruelty and treacherousness of the Tutsi. It also gave the extremists an opportunity to question the Tutsis’ faith.

On the day of President Ndadaye’s funeral, in early December 1993, the tone of the RTLM was not as cheerful as on other days. The head of the radio station, Gaspard Gahigi, said that the RTLM was in mourning and would play classical and religious music, in sympathy with the Burundians. Although Ndadaye was bayonetted to death, the RTLM chose to portray his murder quite differently: ‘Actually his brain was removed, his heart was pulled out, his head was smashed, to the extent that the missing parts had to be filled with cotton wool. His chest was also

\begin{image}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image15.png}
\caption{‘I feel the Hutu are going to rule Burundi’. Source: Kangura No. 18, July 1991.}
\end{image}
smashed. Later Gahigi added castration to his description of the murder, and later in the same broadcast he added the removal of fingers, arms, and internal organs.

Gahigi said that he could not look at the images shown on television because they were so gruesome. Considering his lies about the murder, it is highly likely that his statement about not wanting to see them again was actually a request to his audience not to seek out the images, for fear that his story would be debunked. In between his vivid and detailed descriptions of the murder, Gahigi gave a heartfelt portrayal of Ndadaye as a ‘saviour, a saviour slain for the cause of democracy [...] a martyr of democracy’, and went as far as comparing him with the Messiah, which then prompted him to play Handel’s *Messiah* on the air. A Hutu president in Burundi had been eagerly awaited by Hutus in Rwanda. In its 18th issue, *Kangura* included a drawing of Jesus saying that he felt that the Hutus were going to rule Rwanda. The use of religious imagery when speaking of Ndadaye not only emphasised the importance of the Burundian president, but indeed the Hutu as a group, as it was implied that God favoured Ndadaye not because of his skills as a politician, but because of his ethnicity.

The fact that the first Hutu president of Burundi was killed by Tutsis within three months of becoming president, and that he worked hard for the Burundian Hutus in this short time in office, resulted in exaggerated praise from the RTLM journalists. The words they chose to describe him had blatant religious connotations, bordering on blasphemy. The descriptions of Ndadaye were contrasted with the description of his killers, arguing that they removed Ndadaye’s ‘brain, heart and genitals as offerings to ancestral spirits.’ When Kantano Habimana later reported from the funeral in Burundi, Gahigi asks him whether there was any truth in the allegations of mutilation, to which Habimana replied:

The truth is, Gahigi, the truth is [...] after he was killed, according to what I was told, they are alleged to have tried to fulfil an ancestral ritual. Some of them are alleged to have said: ‘He was an intelligent man, supposing we removed the brain and used it in ancestral rituals so that no other Hutu can ever be as intelligent?’ or ‘we can also be as intelligent as he was’. Then [...] they actually

---

575 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0143, 6–7 December 1993.
576 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0143, 6–7 December 1993.
577 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0143, 6–7 December 1993.
579 Although he attempted to reduce the segregation of Hutus and Tutsis, several of his actions angered the Tutsis, and certainly since Tutsi media in Burundi interpreted his actions to be against the Tutsis, rather than as attempts to reduce inequality.
580 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0143, 6–7 December 1993.
carried out rituals relating ancestral spirits; some people do practice that type of thing, but what we said was true: he was killed in a horrible way. If you had seen the groin, if you had seen what it looked like below the belt, you would not have believed your eyes! Gahigi, it is true they performed some ancestral ritual after killing him. He was mutilated.\footnote{RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0143, 6–7 December 1993.}

The manner in which the story was presented says a good deal about how RTLM worked. In the report by Habimana, he begins by stating that he has ‘been told’ that the Tutsi perpetrators ‘allegedly’ had attempted to perform an ancestral ritual, although there is no proof; nevertheless, at the end of his statement, there is no doubt when he announces that the rumours are indeed true.\footnote{RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0143, 6–7 December 1993. Kantano Habimana was in no position to have seen that, and if he had, he would have noted that Ndadaye had suffered no other wounds than the fatal ones inflicted on his chest by the bayonet.} However, no such ritual that calls for the mutilation of a person seems to have existed in Rwanda or Burundi at any point in time.

However, there are two Rwandan traditions that Habimana most likely referred to. The first is the precolonial tradition of the mwami castrating his enemies to decorate the royal kalinga drum with their genitals. Christopher Taylor noted that the symbolism of castration was used in a Rwandan Hutu propaganda magazine, \textit{La Médaille-Nyirumacibiri}, which in November 1993 published an illustration of their interpretation of Ndadaye’s assassination.
174


The drawing shows Melchior Ndadaye impaled on a cross, with his genitals being removed by RPF soldiers. A civilian Tutsi says: ‘Kill this stupid Hutu and after you cut off his genitals, hang them on our drum.’ Ndadaye responds: ‘Kill me, but you won’t kill all the Ndadayes in Burundi.’ The RPF leader Paul Kagame, to the right, adds: ‘Kill him quickly. Don’t you know that in Byumba and Ruhengeri we did a lot of work. With women, we pulled the babies out of their wombs; with men, we dashed out their eyes.’ Of course, Kagame’s speech bubble contains the words of Hutu nationalists, not of Kagame.

The use of the word ‘work’ is here, in November 1993 – five months before the genocide, being used as metaphor for killing, as it was during the genocide. To the left of Kagame, between him and the ongoing murder, lies the Burundian kalinga. It is highly likely that Habimana wanted to convey a similar impression in his reports from Ndadaye’s funeral. The

583 Translated by Christopher Taylor. Taylor 2001, pp. 137–8. It is worth noting there is no evidence of the RPF and Paul Kagame had anything to do with the death of Melchior Ndadaye. Burundi had its own ethnic conflict with extremists on both sides, while Kagame and the RPF were fighting in the civil war in Rwanda at the time of Ndadaye’s death.
impalement is a mixture of Rwandan and Christian traditions, according to Christopher Taylor. It was common punishment in precolonial Rwanda to impale cattle thieves, although it was not done in the manner depicted here, but with a single stake pushed through the anus, through to the head. That Ndadaye here is impaled on a cross is most likely an attempt to depict Ndadaye as the Messiah that RTLM journalist and Editor-in-chief Gaspard Gahigi repeatedly claimed that he was.

The second Rwandan tradition that Habimana likely referred to is the pre-Christian sacrifice of sorghum beer, milk, or animal blood to the spirits of ancestors. While these traditional rituals could explain the inspiration for the story told by Habimana, it is of more importance to understand why he chose to make up the story in the first place.

I would argue that Habimana attempted to depict the Tutsis as cruel through the inhuman acts. The removal of the brain suggests that Hutus are intelligent while the Tutsis are not, and by creating a story in which there were rituals involving ancestral spirits, and sacrifice of human body parts, the Tutsis are portrayed as non-Christian. Considering the common rhetoric in which the threat is the return of the Tutsi monarchy to Rwanda, it would make sense to include pre-Christian religious rituals. The monarchy was not only a threat to the Hutus, but also a threat to Christianity.

The ‘black’ propaganda we see here, the blatant lies, were likely the result of anger at Ndadaye’s death, to the extent that the journalists exaggerate rumours and tell a story that is far from true. Siniša Malešević argues that ‘black’ propaganda does not work because it is too easily debunked, and notes that long-term effects need propaganda based on truth. I can only agree, but would argue that the broadcasts about Ndadaye’s death were not going for long-term effects. The Hutu extremist propagandists were hoping to stir immediate anger and hatred. The ‘white’ propaganda, although often aggressive, was their main tool, but now they were given an opportunity to unite the Hutu convince them to embrace their Hutu identity as victims of a cruel Tutsi monarchy, that allegedly did not refrain from ritual sacrifices of Hutus.

They were, in other words, hoping to stir the three emotions in Petersen’s theory: fear, hatred, and resentment. Fear has been discussed here, as the return of the Tutsi monarchy was meant to trigger this emotion, which in turn may cause defensive action. The lies told in the broadcasts from Ndadaye’s funeral were meant to trigger hatred, as mentioned, to cause the Hutus to take back what they perceived to be theirs. Lastly, resentment as an emotion in Petersen’s theory causes people

---

584 Taylor 2001, p. 139.
585 Adekunle 2007, p. 29.
to try to subdue the group perceived as highest in the hierarchy, as they are believed not to deserve a superior position.587 The Tutsis were a minority group in Rwanda who had been discriminated against since the 1959 revolution. Even so, they were represented as a superior race in Hutu extremist propaganda. In Burundi, however, they were the majority group, and they remained in power after achieving independence. Thus, when Ndadaye was murdered by Tutsis, the Hutu propagandists could emphasise the notion of the Tutsi as superior, albeit less intelligent than Ndadaye.

**The Tutsis as atheists**

So far the faith of the Tutsi has been questioned in several ways, but they were still assumed to have faith in one form or another. In a highly Christian country, claiming that someone did not have faith in God was a serious accusation. Not only were the churches places to hear the latest news, both national and local, but they were places where the Rwandans could find a community. Atheists were not a part of this community, and were generally shunned.588

When Rwanda and other African countries gained independence in the mid twentieth century, there was a fear of communism gaining influence in the former colonies. Among those who feared it the most were the Catholic missionaries, as they perceived communism as a threat to Catholic interests.589 Archbishop André Perraudin, who aided Grégoire Kayibanda in his rise to power, argued in 1959 that communism was the force of Satan.590 This notion of communism as an enemy to the Catholic Church entailed that it was an enemy to Rwanda, in the Christian rhetoric of the Hutu extremists.

In the late 1980s, the Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni selected Paul Kagame, the future RPF leader, to undergo military training in Cuba. This kindled a notion of the RPF as communists. The RTLM journalist Ananie Nkurunziza argued in mid-April that the US were supporting the RPF, emphasising the illogicality in that the US supported communists, while noting that ‘American political morality is surprising.’591 He also mentions the education some of the RPF members underwent in Cuba, before stating: ‘It’s a shame to see the manner people, who supposedly believe in democracy and God, who are Christians, used to kill our

587 Petersen 2002.
588 ‘Is religion losing ground to atheism?’ 2013.
589 Carney 2016, p. 141.
590 Linden & Linden 1977, p. 269.
591 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0195, 16 April 1994.
However, even more explicit claims that the RPF were communists were made by RTLM.

In early June, Ananie Nkurunziza reminded listeners of the alleged communism of the RPF.

We once said, on your radio, that these people are even atheists, who do not believe in God, they are communists. You have often heard that many of them have been educated in Cuba. Before being bought by the Americans who brought them home. So they are communists who never believed in God.

The alleged threat of communism contradicted the threat of a resurrected Tutsi monarchy, also presented by the RTLM journalists. Other than the military training that Kagame underwent in Cuba, there is very little evidence or even reason to suspect any communist tendencies in the RPF. The emphasis in this statement is therefore not so much on communism as a political ideology, but on communism as atheistic, and as an enemy of the Catholic Church.

Although the Cold War was over, the Stalinist approach to religion had cast a long shadow even over Rwanda. Rhetoric similar to the American anti-Communism propaganda was also found there. The battle between good and evil was depicted as a battle between the God-fearing and the godless, to borrow a phrase from Dianne Kirby. By politicising religion, socialist tendencies inherent within Christianity were reduced, and religion became a mobilising tool in the fight against the Stalinist anti-religious communism. The end of the Cold War did not entail the end of the fear of communism, or the use of rhetoric meant to produce this fear.

Anti-communism in Rwanda was a legacy from the Catholic White Fathers who had fought communism during the colonial period. They, and most notably the Vicar Apostolic André Perraudin, who helped Grégoire Kayibanda to presidency and would become Archbishop of Kabgayi, advocated a strong relationship between church and state, in defence against the looming threat of communism in the 1950s. Perraudin and his colleagues accomplished this goal, as there grew forth a strong bond between church and state, and both President Kayibanda and President Habyarimana were outspoken anti-communists. It would then be a natural step in anti-Tutsi propaganda to depict the Tutsi rebels as atheist communists, as that would make them enemies of both Church and state, and so also enemies of the Hutus.

592 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0195, 28 May 1994.
593 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0113, 9 June 1994.
594 Kirby 2017.
595 See Kirby 2013; Kirby 2017.
In June 1994, a few RPF soldiers captured ten priests and three bishops in Kabgayi, who they suspected had participated in the genocide. Archbishop Vincent Nsengiyumva, a close friend of President Habyarimana, was among them. He was likely the main target while the others happened to be in his vicinity and were suspects by association. The Tutsi soldiers guarding them decided to kill the thirteen clergymen in retaliation for the alleged participation in the genocide, an event that was condemned internationally. Following this massacre, RTLM journalist Valérie Bemeriki repeats Ananie Nkurunziza’s claim:

We have often denounced the extreme barbarism of this group of Tutsi-Hima. We have broadcast on your radio antennas that they (Inkotanyi) are irreligious. So they are communists who don’t believe in God. They will allow no other human beings than themselves.596

Nearly two decades after the genocide, there is still a stigma attached to being an atheist in Rwanda, and the few atheists who left the churches after the genocide have a hard time finding a community of acceptance.597 Although it is difficult, if not impossible, to establish the number of atheists living in Rwanda in 1994, it was no doubt fewer than it is today, as it was likely more shameful.598

According to Matthew Michael, atheism did traditionally not exist in Africa, as religion is such an integral part of the lives of Africans.599 In Rwanda after the genocide, many have lost faith and call themselves atheists and some of them have allegedly been accused of devil-worshipping.600 If so, the view of atheists is far worse than just the lack of faith. Thus, referring to the RPF or the Tutsis as atheists would have been a great insult. The RPF are, in Bar-Tal’s words, violating ‘pivotal social norms’ and they have ‘personality traits that are evaluated as extremely negative and unacceptable in a given society.’601 This was not only the case when the RPF were referred to as pagans, but it is equally true here. Atheism, being highly stigmatic in a Christian society, was likely more devaluing or delegitimising than the accusations of being in league with

---

596 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0026, 9 June 1994. The Hima (or Hema) is a group of pastoralists in Congo, Uganda and Rwanda who were closely related to the Tutsi, and who were treated favourably by the Ugandan government, which likely was the reason for them being associated with the Tutsi in this broadcast.

597 ‘Is religion losing ground to atheism?’ 2013.

598 I have not found evidence of atheists in Rwanda in any number. Unaffiliated or unknown does not necessarily imply atheism.

599 Michael 2013, p. 64.

600 ‘Is religion losing ground to atheism?’ 2013.

the Devil. Atheism was closer to a graspable reality, and thus closer to ‘white’ propaganda.

However, along with the devaluing use of atheism – the claims that the Tutsis or the RPF were atheists – the extremists were at the same time implicitly emphasising the piety of the Hutus. The Tutsis and the RPF violated Rwanda’s norms, a country that President Habyarimana had tried to base upon Christian moral values, and where the Catholic Church was close to becoming a state department. The Hutus were represented as upholding norms and faith, in stark contrast to the Tutsis.

Closely related to atheism is nihilism, a concept applied to the Tutsis and the RPF by Kantano Habimana and Gaspard Gahigi of RTLM towards the end of the genocide. Habimana exclaimed on 2 July, one day before the last RTLM broadcast from Kigali, that the Tutsis ‘are people called nihilists, they are very bad people. […] I do not know how God will help us exterminate them. This is why we should stand up ourselves and exterminate those bad people.’ The term nihilism was originally used for heretics in the Middle Ages, and has since become almost synonymous with Nietzsche’s death of God. What Nietzsche meant by this was that the reduced influence of Christianity would lead to a crisis of morality, as human moral values derive from Christianity, subsequently leading to nihilism. Gahigi and Habimana were clearly aware of Nietzsche’s work, and used it cunningly.

Arguing that Tutsis were nihilists would then suggest that they were amoral and certainly not Christians. According to psychologist Nick Haslam, one of the features unique to human beings is a moral sensibility, and by claiming that someone is amoral is then to reduce that person’s humanity.

While Haslam argues that this can be a form of animalistic dehumanisation, in which the subjected group is reduced to the level of the animals, I would argue that in this instance it was not a matter of portraying the Tutsis as less human, but simply as non-Christian. Although that could be interpreted as the Tutsis being barbaric savages, one ought to remember that the alleged threat was not that of a savage race, but that of a superior one. The RPF and the Tutsis were often claimed to be in allegiance with the US and Belgium, neither of which were ever portrayed as savage countries. Instead, they were portrayed as bureaucratic

---

602 See RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0215, 2 July 1994; RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0042, 3 July 1994.
603 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0215, 2 July 1994.
604 Nietzsche 2012.
605 Haslam 2006, p. 257.
imperialists, driven by financial self-interest.\textsuperscript{606} Amorality does not by necessity entail animalistic irrational behaviour.

As Zygmunt Bauman writes in his study of the Holocaust, the modern civilising process entailed ‘emancipating the desiderata of rationality from interference of ethical norms or moral inhibitions.’\textsuperscript{607} Bauman’s argument that concepts such as moral duty or the sanctity of human life are completely alien in a bureaucratic office, which makes it clear that morality has given way for rationality.\textsuperscript{608} Thus, Haslam’s notion of amorality as an animalistic trait falls short. It is devaluing, certainly, since it removes people from humanity, but it does not reduce them to the level of animals. Such, I would argue, was the case with the Hutu extremists’ portrayal of the Western nations, along with their alleged allies, the Tutsis: in their depiction by the extremists, they were a superior, non-Christian race, devoid of moral values.

\textit{The Tutsi God}

I have shown how the Tutsis were separated from Christianity by claims that they were in league with the Devil, or representations of them as Protestants, pagans, or atheists. However, during the genocide there were also mentions of a Tutsi God, although this God was never defined. This undefined God was said to have abandoned the Tutsi. This God was never mentioned in the propaganda studied here. However, he is referred to in the trials, and as will be demonstrated in the following, the purpose of mentioning this God was different from the strategy adopted in Kangura and the RTLM broadcasts.

In the so-called Butare trial in the ICTR, one witness told of a speech given by the newly appointed préfet of Kibaye commune in mid June 1994. According to this witness, the préfet, Alphonse Nteziryayo, thanked the participants in the meeting for killing the Tutsis. He then allegedly urged them to kill all Tutsi children and all Tutsi women, with one exception: Tutsi women should be spared if they were legally married to a Hutu, because if they were, then they ‘prayed to the Hutu – to the Hutu god and not to the Tutsi god.’\textsuperscript{609}

Several other witnesses testified to having heard of this Tutsi God on different occasions. One such occasion was at a roadblock, where a

\textsuperscript{606} See, for example, RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0195, 28–29 May 1994; RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0205, 22 April 1994; RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0188, 31 March 1994.
\textsuperscript{607} Bauman 2007, p. 28.
\textsuperscript{608} Bauman 2007, p. 29.
\textsuperscript{609} ICTR-98-42-T (Nyiramahabuka et al.), Transcript, 8 March 2007.
number of people refused to show their identity cards. The soldiers began selecting whoever they perceived to be Tutsi and gathering them in a house, telling them that their God was dead, before throwing a grenade into the building.\footnote{ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindilyimana et al.), Transcript, 3 October 2005.} Another witness claimed that a soldier, having raped her, said that the God of the Tutsis had forsaken them, that He was no longer in Rwanda, that God had abandoned the Tutsis, and they should go back to Abyssinia.\footnote{ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindilyimana et al.), Transcript, 4 April 2005.} Even Father Athanase Seromba, who convinced a bulldozer driver to demolish the church in Nyange, was said to have refused to say mass for the Tutsis in the church because their Tutsi God no longer existed.\footnote{ICTR-01-66-T (Seromba), Transcript, 15 October 2004.}

There are numerous references to a Tutsi God having abandoned the Tutsis or having died. Most of the witnesses understood this to mean that they were going to be killed; almost always they would have been correct if they had not managed to escape, and in a few rare instances the Tutsi God was referred to by perpetrators who eventually chose to let their victims go.\footnote{See, for example, ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindilyimana et al.), Transcript, 30 March 2005.} It is clear that the claims that the Tutsi God was dead or had abandoned the Tutsis was a way of letting the victims know that there was no hope, and it was possibly a way for perpetrators to ease their nominally Christian consciences.

All processes of devaluation evolve. As Ervin Staub has noted, very often the road from prejudice to genocide begins in difficult social conditions, leading to scapegoating, fear and enmity, devaluation, and violence, culminating in genocide.\footnote{Staub 1998, pp. 703–706.} The devaluation of Tutsis began in the 1950s, just prior to the Hutu revolution, and intensified in certain periods of conflict, such as the 1960s when the Tutsi guerrillas attacked Rwanda; in the 1970s with the failed Hutu revolution in Burundi; and in the 1990s with the RPF invasion that resulted in civil war. In the compressed period of time studied here the devaluation process was extreme, but there was evolution all the same.

What began with attempts to argue that the Tutsis had no rights to power in Rwanda, as they were said not to be of Rwandan origin, continued with attempts to separate the Tutsis from the Christian God, leading to an attempt to create a Hutu God and questioning the Tutsis’ religiosity. Having separated the Tutsis from God, the Hutu extremist perpetrators could then claim that the Tutsis had a God of their own, but that this God had abandoned them. It was the culmination of a process in which killing the Tutsis became morally acceptable. One perpetrator explained in an interview a few years after the genocide that ‘the
interahamwe would sing that God had abandoned the Tutsis or that He’d left Rwanda and wouldn’t be back until after the final massacre, and we – we began to believe them.615 Another perpetrator, a former deacon, said, ‘We had removed the Tutsis from God’s work, from the creation of mankind, and even of animals.616

The Tutsis were thus placed outside God’s creation. However, the testimony encouraging the Tutsis to leave Rwanda just as their God allegedly had done, and go back to Abyssinia implies that they were still part of His Creation, at least according to the narrative established by the Catholic missionaries. These missionaries and the Belgian colonists claimed that the Tutsis were the descendants of Noah’s grandson, and that their origin was in Abyssinia, and thus they were of Christian origin. Stating that there is, or was, a Tutsi God and recognising the Tutsis as Abyssinians would thus imply that the Tutsi God was the Christian God. Another way of understanding the statement, that was often repeated by extremists and perpetrators and thus seem to have reflected a widespread belief,617 would be to see it as a rejection of the religious legitimisation of Tutsi power in both its precolonial and colonial forms; a Tutsi God driven out, a Tutsi people killed, and the Hutus and their God who had purged Rwanda of these foreign invaders left to rule Rwanda.

However, as I argue throughout this thesis, the devaluation of the Tutsis often made very little sense, and was often contradictory. The only apparent logic seems to have been to use whatever worked to mobilise the Hutus and devalue, discredit, and dishonour the Tutsis. Of course, it varied over time and according to circumstances. This meant that what was done through the statements uttered by propagandists and perpetrators was imperative. Kangura and RTLM had, and were meant to have, Hutu audiences, and as mouthpieces of Hutu extremism they were meant to convince the Hutus that the Tutsis should be exterminated. Thus, they argued to the Hutu audience that the Tutsis were not Christians. However, most Tutsis were Christians, and when a perpetrator faced a Tutsi there was no reason to argue that the Tutsi in question was not a Christian. Instead, it would be better to argue that their God, Christian or not, had abandoned them. It was no longer a matter of

615 Hatzfeld 2009, p. 178.
616 Hatzfeld 2009, p. 181. This is a seldom-mentioned form of devaluation, as it said that the Tutsi were not inhumane foreigners or animals, but alien creatures beyond God’s creation or control.
617 The Tutsis were said to have originated in Abyssinia. MRND Vice-Chairman of Gisenyi prefecture, Léon Mugesera, gave a speech in November 1992, in which he stated that the Tutsis should be sent back to Abyssinia by the River Nyabarongo. This is said to have given rise to the extensive use of this phrase, and the practice of throwing the corpses of Tutsis into the river.
separating the Tutsis from God, but a matter of letting them know that all hope was lost.

On another level, however, the emphasis placed on a Tutsi God serves to tie individuals to the group, to lump every individual Tutsi, known or unknown, together. Very often Hutu perpetrators killed Tutsis in their own communities. Many perpetrators faced Tutsis they knew. Then it may have been a matter of letting the victims know that there was no hope, and of easing their own consciences. By giving the Tutsi a god of their own, a Tutsi god, they were also given a group identity rather than an individual identity, which may have made killing easier.

5.4 The Strategic Faith of the Hutu

Thus there were attempts made to argue that the faith of the Tutsis was different from that of the Hutus, whether it was a matter of Christian denominations, a different religion, or a lack of faith. However, the Hutu propaganda did not exclusively focus on Tutsi faith, or lack thereof, contrasted with the faith of the Hutus. The question was how strongly they could promote a religious belief while at the same time promoting the genocide of a human collective. I will argue here that the Hutu extremist propagandists carefully selected the moments when it was appropriate to refer to God, and did so strategically.

Clergy killed by the RPF

The second invasion by the RPF in January 1991 had great momentum, halted only by the threat of French involvement in the war. The RPF commanders and soldiers made it very clear that no killings or abuses of any kind were permitted by the RPF, and yet they did leave a trail of dead bodies. In many instances, this was likely the result of the RPF recruiting new soldiers from among Tutsi survivors, who were vengeful, and who killed in retaliation, without caring about fair trials.

On 2 June 1994 in Kabgayi, ten priests and three bishops were arrested, accused of having participated in killings of Tutsis. According to the official RPF reports, the accusers and arresting soldiers were new recruits who claimed to recognise the priests as having been involved in the genocide. Sometime between 3 and 8 June, some of the RPF soldiers guarding them took the law into their own hands, and executed the clergy

in the room where they were held captive.\textsuperscript{620} Although the RPF leaders immediately admitted responsibility and promised to bring the killers to trial, no one was held accountable for the massacre until 2008, when four RPF officers were prosecuted and two of them were sentenced to eight years’ imprisonment each.\textsuperscript{621}

The killings of the clergymen became world news in the midst of a genocide that did not receive excessive coverage by the international media. Two of the bishops were Archbishop Vincent Nsengiyumva, who was a close friend of President Habyarimana, which likely made him a target, and Bishop Joseph Ruzindana of Byumba. The third was Bishop Thaddée Nsengiyumva who had tried to separate the Catholic Church from the government and who had welcomed the political reforms of the early 1990s.\textsuperscript{622}

This event was not only covered in the international media, but for obvious reasons also by the Hutu extremist journalists of RTLM. In their early reports they claimed that four bishops had been killed, solely because of their ethnicity. They argued that the RPF not only had killed the Rwandan and Burundian Presidents together with a large number of innocent people, but also killed priests and bishops, which in their opinion begged the question of who the RPF would not kill.\textsuperscript{623} On 9 June 1994, the Pope had condemned the killings in Rwanda, something the RTLM journalist Valéerie Bemeriki used to promote the views of the Hutu extremists.

This situation worried the Pope himself because he was completely frustrated when he heard the news about the Catholic Church being destroyed by some Inyenzi-Inkotanyi who had killed God’s chosen people comprising three bishops […]. The Pope said that Rwanda is a country of Martyrs.\textsuperscript{624}

In the statement made by Pope John Paul II he mentioned the bishops, and he did refer to Rwanda as a ‘martyred nation’.\textsuperscript{625} However, the statement made by Bemeriki implied that ‘God’s chosen people’ and the ‘Martyrs’ are the Hutus, as the bishops were Hutus, and they were here said to belong to the chosen people. This was further emphasised by the mention of the Inyenzi-Inkotanyi as the culprits.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{620} Des Forges 1999, p. 1086.
\item \textsuperscript{621} Ndahinda 2016, p. 167.
\item \textsuperscript{622} Des Forges 1999, pp. 1086–1087. Des Forges claims the massacre took place on the 8\textsuperscript{th}, but the date differs between sources. All evidence places the event between the dates mentioned above.
\item \textsuperscript{623} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0027, 9 June 1994.
\item \textsuperscript{624} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0084, 10 June 1994.
\item \textsuperscript{625} Pope John Paul II, \textit{Message to the Rwandan people}, 9 June 1994.
\end{itemize}
The version of the Pope’s message given by Valérie Bemeriki thus differs from the original message, placing the focus on the RPF killing Catholics. It is worth noting, however, that less than a month earlier, after reciting the Regina Coeli prayer, Pope John Paul II stated the following concerning Rwanda: “This is genocide, for which I am sad to say also Catholics are responsible.”\footnote{Pope John Paul II, \textit{Statement in connection with the recitation of the Regina Coeli Prayer}, 15 May 1994.} In fact, the Pope was the first person in an official position to call the genocide by its proper name. This was, of course, not mentioned at any point in RTLM’s broadcasts. Valérie Bemeriki’s statement was an attempt to convince the listeners that the Pope was not on the side of the RPF. As I have shown, the Hutu propagandists had made substantial efforts to portray the Hutus as good Catholics, and therefore, they could not mention having antagonised the Pope by committing genocide. To be sure, the Pope never mentioned who the perpetrators and victims were, which made it possible for the extremists to interpret his statements in ways that served their purpose. It also gave them opportunity to use ‘white’ propaganda, as there was a real source, and the Pope truly seemed frustrated. However, although there were truths, much of the Pope’s message was omitted, and the rest was certainly not presented in an objective manner.\footnote{Jowett & O’Donnell 2012, p. 17.}

While Bemeriki noted that these were not the first murders of clergy committed by the RPF, which was a correct observation,\footnote{Des Forges 1999, p. 1081. In late April, the RPF killed four priests in Byumba – three Rwandan priests, and one from Spain.} she did not mention the substantial number of Tutsi and moderate Hutu priests, bishops and other clergy already killed by Hutu perpetrators. Journalist and director of the pro-MRND \textit{Kamarampaka} magazine, Bernard Hategekimana did, later in that broadcast, proclaim the end of the RPF:\footnote{\textit{Kamarampaka} was one of many publications to come out of the multiparty reforms in 1991, when it became legal for political parties to publish their own newspapers. Higiro 2007, p. 83.}

The \textit{Inkotanyi} are done with. Valerie [sic]! You see that they have just killed some bishops and priests. When you kill a member of the clergy, it means you are done with. They [RPF] will not get to see the end of it with the spirits of the dead priests.\footnote{RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0084, 10 June 1994.}

Even though the killings were internationally condemned, the RPF suffered no real consequences, as they assumed responsibility but claimed that the killers had acted on their own and would be brought to justice. What the international community did not condemn, however, was the...
number of clergy killed by Hutu extremists, which by far exceeded the number killed by the RPF. The statement by Hategekimana clearly did not take the murder of priests committed by Hutu extremists into account, but as discussed in Chapter 4, priests who did not support the Hutu extremists were not considered righteous. What Hategekimana was doing in this statement is quite clear. In the quote, the priests and bishops are referred to as ‘God’s chosen people’, and Bemeriki mentions that the Pope was ‘worried’ and ‘completely frustrated’. Thus, these statements imply that the RPF not only antagonised the international Catholic community, but God himself.

Furthermore, crucially, the rhetoric exacerbated the division between Hutus and Tutsi, as the Hutus were implied to be a people chosen by God, martyred by the RPF – particularly the executions of the priests and bishops in Kabgayi.

The most obvious conclusion from these statements is that the RTLM journalists used the killings of these clergymen to the advantage of the Hutu extremists. This event was one of the few times when international media singled out a specific event in Rwanda, rather than reporting more generally on what was often erroneously referred to as a tribal war. It was also one of very few instances in which the RPF had taken responsibility for crimes in Rwanda, which was widely acknowledged internationally. Bemeriki took note of this, and reported, if somewhat exaggeratedly, that ‘the whole world was stunned by this criminal act. That clearly shows the barbarism of the Inyenzi-Inkotanyi. […] All the nations condemned the said massacres of religious figures.

For a moment, then, the Hutu extremists could abandon the ‘black’ propagandist rhetoric of the Rwandan Hutus being subjected to a worldwide conspiracy to place the Tutsis in power. Although they were unhappy that the Pope and other officials never mentioned the RPF as perpetrators, they did seize the opportunity to claim that the international

---

631 Apart from the 3 bishops and 10 priests, I have found accusations that the RPF killed at least 6 other priests. According to several reports, just over 100 priests were killed in the genocide (and nearly 250 church employees in all), making the known number of priests killed by the RPF to be less than one-fifth of the total. See Agenzia Fides, The Martyrology of the Church in Rwanda 1994, (http://www.fides.org/en/news/2157-THE_MARTYROLOGY_OF_THE_CHURCH_IN_RWANDA_IN_1994), 26 January 2018.


633 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0084, 10 June 1994.
community had turned against the RPF.\textsuperscript{634} They could now claim a victimhood that was seemingly recognised by the international community.

\textit{Prayers for unity}

The reversal of the roles between victims and perpetrators is a recurrent theme in Hutu propagandist media; the invading RPF were perpetrators of genocide and the Hutus were victims who had to act in self-defence. This image reappeared throughout the civil war, and even throughout the genocide, in spite of the brutality of the massacres of Tutsi men, women, and children, which was much unlike defensive violence.\textsuperscript{635} As part of the strategy of maintaining this image and enabling violence in defence of Hutu lives and property, the Hutu extremists urged people to pray to God for the Tutsi rebels to see reason and stop their attacks.

Four days prior to the assassination of President Habyarimana, Kantano Habimana spoke on RTLM about security in Kigali. He talked at length about the Prime Minister, Agathe Uwilingiyimana, who allegedly had seen a man with a knife near her house. Habimana initially mocked the Prime Minister, arguing jokingly that most Rwandans carry knives, and pointed out that she is under the protection of the UNAMIR, and that any threats to her life were exaggerated. Shortly thereafter, Habimana’s tone turned more threatening, as he argued that the reason people wanted her dead was her treachery, being a moderate and in favour of sharing power with the RPF.\textsuperscript{636} At the end of the broadcast, Habimana asks his audience to pray during that Easter weekend for the RPF, who he argues ‘want to exterminate their opponents and govern [Rwanda] by force’, adding that ‘prayers should also be said for those who want to avenge themselves. May God help all of them so that they can leave out their heinous crime.’\textsuperscript{637}

It is unclear if this last statement referred to the RPF, Tutsis, or Hutus, but most likely it was both the RPF and Hutus wanting revenge. If so, it is may be that the emphasis on Hutus wanting revenge was a subtle way of claiming that the RPF had committed crimes that Hutus would want to avenge.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{634} See RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0084, 10 June 1994.
\item \textsuperscript{635} See, for example, RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0004, 12 April 1994: ‘That is why we have to fight tooth and nail to defend our lives and property’, and RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0340, 14 March 1994: ‘Be advised that you have been infiltrated, that you must be extra vigilant in order to defend and protect yourself.’
\item \textsuperscript{636} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0190, 2 April 1994. Agathe Uwilingiyimana became head of government following the death of President Habyarimana on 6 April and was murdered by Hutu extremists the following morning.
\item \textsuperscript{637} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0190, 2 April 1994.
\end{itemize}
Vengeance was something that Habimana did not bring up often, unlike his colleague Bemeriki, who frequently said that the Tutsis had to be exterminated in retaliation for the murdered president. It is therefore likely that this statement did not refer to anyone specifically, but merely was meant to uphold an image of RTLM as defenders of Christian moral values.

Although the Bible is ambivalent on the matter of vengeance, Habimana clearly found it appropriate to argue for a turning of the other cheek, rather than to urge the listeners to resort to violence. Especially over the Easter weekend. What is being done in this statement is thereby to portray RTLM as striving for peace, even going as far as to pray for ‘ill-doers and Inkotanyis’, as Habimana says. What is further done is to once again distance the Tutsis from God, and God is placed on the side of the Hutus, who Habimana argues are the victims of the RPF’s attempts to exterminate the Hutus. Saying prayers for the RPF means that God should convince the RPF not to act on their alleged plans of extermination as these plans are unacceptable in the eyes of God. It is also a subtle way of arguing that God is on the side of the Hutus.

It is striking that this broadcast, on Easter Saturday 1994, was one of the most restrained to come out of RTLM. Most of it was dedicated to the question of security in Kigali. While Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana and other moderate Hutu and Tutsi politicians were mocked for having been threatened, Habimana condemns threats against the popular Hutu extremist singer Simon Bikindi and several Interahamwe members. Aside from that, there is very little talk of the RPF and the Tutsis. Instead there is far more talk of peace, love, and unity than in other broadcasts. Although the RTLM often praised their loyal listeners, the journalists and announcers never expressed such love for them as Habimana did that Easter:

> We love those who do not know us and who love us. We also love those whom we know who love us. That is better than anything. And we pray for those who do not like us and whom we do not know. [God should] help them get rid of that hatred, because in our opinion they hate us unfairly.

638 In June 1994 Valérie Bemeriki said, ‘So, we must take revenge on the Inyenzi Inkotanyi and exterminate them’, RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0035, 20 June 1994. Later Bemeriki stated that the extermination of the Tutsis was not revenge for the murder of Habyarimana, but self-defence, and that vengeance had not yet come, but that it most likely would. RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0137, 28–30 June 1994.

639 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0190, 2 April 1994.

640 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0190, 2 April 1994. In the translated transcript it says ‘Should God help them get rid of that hatred’, which is a slight mistranslation, hence the reversed order of the first two words in brackets above.
While not explicitly stated, those who did not like RTLM were Tutsis, RPF, and moderate Hutus. Arguing that they hate RTLM unfairly is to argue the innocence of the radio station and the unreasonableness of those who did not appreciate the anti-Tutsi incitement of the radio announcers.

Striking, yes, but hardly surprising that the broadcasts on 2 and 3 April 1994 were fairly moderate, and far less hateful than other broadcasts. As the RTLM journalist Noël Hitimana said on 3 April, ‘at Easter we have to pray.’ During a Christian holiday such as Easter, it would not have served the extremists’ purpose to use their usual hateful rhetoric about the Tutsis or the RPF. Instead they employed a different tactic, speaking of Hutus’ peace and love, and contrasting it to the crimes of the RPF. Although not explicit, the biblical references are present in the rhetoric of loving one’s enemies, forgiving those who do wrong, or turning the other cheek.

Once President Habyarimana was dead and the Hutu extremists initiated the genocide, the RPF relaunched the civil war on 8 April. This time the French did not intervene or threaten with involvement as they had previously, and this meant that the RPF were free to advance. On 11 April they laid siege to Kigali, and while fighting the FAR in and around the capital for nearly three months, parts of the RPF moved east, taking control of Eastern Rwanda without much effort. While strategically strong, the RPF did not have enough soldiers to take the capital, so they held their positions while recruiting new soldiers from Tutsi survivors eager to take revenge upon the Hutus.

RTLM firmly stuck its position on negotiations from the beginning of the genocide until early June, arguing that ‘to negotiate with snakes, is difficult.’ The FAR had launched a counter-attack that failed and resulted in the RPF taking Gitarama and forcing the interim government to flee to Gisenyi, a western region. After this, the RTLM changed their views concerning negotiations. They now stated that the Hutu extremists were willing to negotiate, if the RPF would be willing to do so with

---

641 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0192, 3 April 1994.
642 See, for example, Matthew 6:14 (‘For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you’); Matthew 5:44 (‘Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you’); Luke 23:34 (‘Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do’).
643 Prunier 2010, pp. 268–70. Prunier notes that this was one of the RPF’s biggest mistakes, as the new recruits committed several retaliatory murders, including those of the 3 bishops and 10 priests on 9 June.
644 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0084, 10 June 1994.
reasonable demands.\textsuperscript{646} On the 19 June 19, Gaspard Gahigi ended that day’s broadcast as follows:

I will dedicate this song of God to you and thank God for all of us who are still alive, entrust to God all those who are dead and those who gave themselves for the country […] I dedicate this song to you, I thank God and pray that He will continue to watch over our country, that the foreign enemy does not drive us away, that God makes him understand that the best way forward is negotiation. Let us all have faith in God.\textsuperscript{647}

As for unity, it is clear that Gahigi had begun to see the downfall of the Hutu regime as inevitable, and therefore suggested negotiations as the best way forward. The RPF had made it very clear that possibilities for negotiations had ended when the genocide began, and they were not going to let anyone stop their advance on the Rwandan capital.\textsuperscript{648}

Gahigi still argued that the Tutsis were foreign enemies. While it would be easy to discard this as a common rhetoric, it should be noted that Rwandan Army Chief of Staff, General Major Augustin Bizimungu, was in the RTLM studio that day, and he emphasised that Rwanda consisted of three ethnicities, and that none of them were better suited to govern than the others.\textsuperscript{649} He then said that many Hutus, Tutsis, and Twas had died because of the RPF invasion, and urged people not to accuse anyone of being an RPF accomplice without substantial proof.\textsuperscript{650}

This was yet another change in the Hutu extremist rhetoric that needs to be taken into account when studying the linguistic context of the broadcasts. Since the onset of war, the Tutsis as a group had been accused of being RPF accomplices, but not on this day. This day, 19 June, was the day that France announced that they would send troops to Rwanda in the controversial Opération Turquoise. Thus, the small number of UNAMIR soldiers would no longer be the only foreign witnesses to the genocide. With the arrival of French troops, the Hutu extremists needed to represent themselves, alongside the Tutsi and Twa, as victims of the invading RPF, rather than as perpetrators of genocide. The broadcast on 19 June reflects that.

It can be concluded that in this instance Gahigi was not referring to all Tutsis, but merely the RPF. That being the case, the intended meaning of

\textsuperscript{646} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0109, 16 June 1994; RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0030, 19 June 1994.
\textsuperscript{647} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0030, 19 June 1994.
\textsuperscript{648} Dallaire 2005, p. 247.
\textsuperscript{649} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0030, 19 June 1994.
\textsuperscript{650} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0030, 19 June 1994.
the last sentence, in which all should have faith in God, would mean all Rwandans, regardless of ethnic belonging. It was not a matter of a Rwandan God, or a God of the Hutus, nor did he make any explicit difference between ethnicities when talking of the dead and those still alive. Mentioning the foreign enemy is in fact the only instance when it is clear that a certain group, the RPF, is singled out, and as God is asked to help them see reason, they should also be considered to be Christian, in this statement.

In this broadcast, General Major Augustin Bizimungu was speaking of Paul Kagame in fairly moderate terms, stating that he is welcome to stay in Rwanda under friendly conditions.651 Both Bizimungu and Gahigi seem to have come to the realisation that the war was not going their way, and that the end was drawing near. There is not any talk of a guaranteed victory, but rather a matter of keeping the RPF at bay until the arrival of the French troops in Opération Turquoise, as the RPF were, according to the extremists, trying to encircle the Hutus to exterminate them. Gaspard Gahigi even brought up the topic of prosecutions, arguing that there would be no need to prosecute the RTLM journalists or other Rwandans, since what they had done was in self-defence.652 They realised that there would be a time after the genocide, and that there would be consequences unless they managed to convince the international community that they were the real victims.

Habimana took over the broadcast after Gahigi, and mentioned that many had gone to church to pray for peace that Sunday. He also said that peace was necessary, but made difficult by the RPF.

Thus, we must pray for peace, we must pray for [the RPF] to know the truth, for them to understand that it serves no purpose to continue risking their lives by claiming to be warriors, whereas you could die at any moment, each day.653

While the statements presented in this subchapter are related to a notion of peace and unity, uttered with one intention or another, the RPF were still portrayed in a devaluing manner.

The RPF was to a large extent made up of people with no military training. They were exiled Rwandans, and Rwandans who were recruited during the RPF’s advance; many were young men, some even children.654 Habimana had sounded a note of concern, albeit probably a dishonest one, for the lives of the RPF soldiers and civilian recruits. However, it was

651 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0030, 19 June 1994.
652 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0030, 19 June 1994.
653 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0031, 19 June 1994.
654 Dallaire 2010, p. 42.
concern with a concealed threat: the RPF should stop their advance, or they would die.

Considering the fact that the Rwandan army was losing the war and the French had announced the launch of Opération Turquoise, it is obvious that the tone had to change. Even though the French would provide a safe exit from Rwanda for Hutu perpetrators, which the RTLM journalists did not know at that point, the international community would once again have an insight into Rwanda through a non-Rwandan actor.\(^{655}\) The consistent line had been that it was the RPF and their Tutsi accomplices – all Rwandan Tutsis – who were the true perpetrators, having invaded Rwanda and forced the Hutus to defend themselves. In practice, it entailed the extermination of all Tutsis, but in these broadcasts the Tutsis treated separately from the RPF. At this point, the Hutu extremists explicitly attempted to claim that the genocide had been perpetrated against Hutus by the RPF. Thus, once more, the RTLM journalists emphasised the notion of the Hutus as good Christian victims.

5.5 Conclusions

In this chapter, the notions of a Hutu God and a Tutsi God have been analysed. The Hutu God, often referred to as the God of Rwanda, was mentioned frequently throughout the genocide and to some extent prior to it. While clearly a Christian God, as in most of the propaganda, the concept of God changed and was often contradictory. On the one hand, God was represented as a god of peace and unity when the Hutus attempted to prove the evil nature of the RPF. On the other hand, God supported the Hutus in the war and was represented as a god who approved of, and even encouraged, the extermination of the Tutsis.

The Rwandan God served as a symbol of a Rwanda in which the Tutsis had no place, a Rwanda in which the Hutus were morally superior to the invading Tutsis, and any violent act against the Tutsis would be considered justified acts of self-defence, approved by the Rwandan God. In contrast to the Hutu God there were attempts to distance the Tutsis from God through different strategies. Some were subtle and not necessarily effective, such as depicting the Tutsis as Protestants, which does not make much sense as Protestants were found among both Hutus and Tutsis. Other strategies were more explicit and elaborate. To evoke memories of

\(^{655}\) The UNAMIR were marginalised, and focused mainly on keeping refugees safe at this point, while waiting for the failed launch of UNAMIR II. The Hutu extremists knew that the hands of the UNAMIR were tied due to their strict mandate, and that the international community cared little for the UN force’s appeals for reinforcements.
oppression under the Tutsi monarchy, the Hutu extremist propagandists represented the Tutsis as pagans, adhering to precolonial and pre-Christian indigenous religious beliefs.

According to Daniel Bar-Tal, delegitimised groups are not necessarily rejected by society, but remain part of it, although they are depicted as groups that rejects the norms and values of a delegitimising group. It is important to note the word ‘necessarily’, as the targeted group indeed can be rejected, which was the case of the Tutsis in Rwanda. However, they were not represented as animals or savages, but as a foreign group that rejected the Christian values of modern day Rwanda.

The Hutu extremist propagandists never explicitly claimed that the Tutsis were demons or the Devil. However, they did suggest that they were in league with the Devil. This, I argue, was not to be taken in a literal sense, but served as a metaphor for, or emphasis of, the alleged evil of the Tutsis. The Tutsis were still human, and needed to be so, in order to maintain the image of them as an arrogant and oppressive, yet human race, as suggested in Chapter 4. It was therefore better to attack their human qualities than to ascribe inhuman, or unhuman, traits to them. Their faith was one such quality.

The claim that they adhered to a different religion was one strategy. Claiming that they were irreligious was another. Atheism was and is still today a stigma in Rwanda. Although it was a country with freedom of religion, religions and denominations other than Catholicism were marginalised. This was the result of the close ties between the Catholic Church and the Hutu regime. There was such close-knit collaboration that some priests and bishops strongly argued for a separation of church and state, as they claimed that the church had become a political organ under the Habyarimana regime, leading to people in other denominations being marginalised, both politically and socially. It was even worse if one admitted to having no faith at all.

Communism was perceived as a threat by the Catholic missionaries in the colonial era, and this fear of communism continued. Communism was clearly associated with atheism, and this was also used by the Hutu extremists. Being an atheist in Rwanda both prior to and after the genocide would entail exclusion from many parts of society. One atheist claimed he had been called a Devil-worshipper due to his lack of religious conviction. This could explain why the Hutu extremist propagandists emphasised atheism to the extent they did; it was perceived to be a violation of Rwandan societal norms, which allowed propagandists to increase the distance between Hutu and Tutsi. The Tutsi were irreligious, in contrast to the faithful Christian Hutus, and they did not adhere to

656 Bar-Tal 1989, p. 171.
657 ‘Is religion losing ground to atheism?’ 2013.
Rwandan norms, which should deprive them of their rights, and reduce
their value as human beings.

There is another aspect to the alleged irreligiousness of the Tutsi that
deserves attention, namely what this irreligiousness entailed, which was a
lack of moral values. As previously mentioned, in the late 1970s and 1980s,
President Habyarimana attempted to restructure Rwanda in accordance
with Catholic moral values. Christian morality was closely linked to
Rwandan society, and if the RPF and the Tutsi did not respect Christian
moral values, then they did not respect Rwanda. It is evident from the
RTLM broadcasts that the alleged atheism of the Tutsi was equated to
them being evil. As the next chapter will show, several Rwandans claimed
that being a Christian entailed honesty and freedom from sin. Thus, the
propagandists argued that the Tutsis were atheists, in contrast to the pious
Hutus, and therefore sinful and dishonest.

A Rwandan God, a Hutu God in favour of the genocide, would have
helped ease the consciences of the perpetrators, and so would the notion
of a Tutsi God who had abandoned his people. If the Tutsis had no God,
or adhered to some ancestral religion, or if their own God had abandoned
them, and if the Christian Hutu God approved of them being exterminated, then there would be no one who would judge the Hutu
perpetrators. These arguments were strategic. There were times when it
served a purpose for the extremists to speak of God, and they seized these
opportunities. Times at which the Rwandan Hutu extremists took
particular efforts to emphasise the religiosity of the Hutus included
Christian holidays, at times when the RPF committed crimes, or when the
Burundian Hutu President Melchior Ndadaye was murdered by Tutsis.
These instances enabled the extremists to further strengthen the Hutu
group identity, as victims, as Christians, and as the inferior group that had,
and could again, defeat the superior Tutsis, since they had the God of
Rwanda on their side.

In July 1994, the genocide ended, when the RPF took control of the
country. A few years after the genocide, the Hutu perpetrators were facing
the judgements of Rwandan and international law. Fearing the judgement
of God, many returned to religion, asking God’s forgiveness. Often, these
two went hand in hand, as the next chapter will demonstrate.

---

658 Prunier 2010, pp. 89–90.
CHAPTER 6

Between the Devil and the deep blue sea: The use of religion in the genocide tribunal

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters, I have demonstrated how the Hutu extremists attempted to separate Hutus from Tutsis, and Tutsis from God, to legitimise and instigate the genocide. In so doing, the extremists represented the Tutsis as a superior race, set on subjugating the Hutus. In this chapter, I move on to argue that the self-victimising narratives used by the Hutu extremists continued after the war and the genocide, in the trials of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). Although the devaluation of the Tutsi was no longer the aim, the same methods were applied to establish or construct truth, to place blame, or to claim victimhood, using religious references.

Extremist Hutu propagandists had attempted to represent the Hutus as victims of both the Tutsi monarchy during the colonial and precolonial eras and the RPF invasion, as well as of a worldwide Tutsi conspiracy during the civil war and the genocide. The defendants on trial in the genocide tribunal instead argued that they were the victims of the RPF as well as the Hutu extremists, along with the people accusing them of crimes, and indeed of the ICTR. To use an expression often used in the tribunal, they claimed to have been ‘caught between the Devil and the deep blue sea.’

In this chapter, I analyse how the concepts of God and the Devil were used and understood during the trials; the concepts of truth and forgiveness; and the importance of religious symbols, legends, analogies,

---

and of faith. The purposes of the use of religious concepts and arguments were similar to those of the extremist propaganda of the civil war and the genocide: to devalue or delegitimise others, and to claim or compete for victimhood.

As in the previous chapters, I rely on the contextual method and, to explain the results, the theories of self-victimisation and competitive victimhood, as well as delegitimisation and social identity theories. Where I have previously used ‘devaluation’ as a term to designate any action taken to reduce a person’s human value, in this chapter I mainly use ‘delegitimisation’. This concept and theory better serves to explain the application of negative labels and representations onto others in the trials. I also engage with previous research on religion in Rwanda, both prior to and after the genocide, to provide explanations to statements and arguments made during the trials.

The source material consists of transcripts and court documents from the ICTR. I have studied all available ICTR transcripts, in total 3,093. The ICTR has redacted all transcripts – any information that could lead to the identification of certain witnesses, mainly those who have not been tried in court themselves, has been omitted to protect anonymity. However, since the present study is a qualitative analysis of statements made, neither the fact that some documents have not been made available nor the anonymisation of available documents affects the usefulness of the material for the purpose of this study.

6.2 The influence of God

When God is invoked in the statements made in the ICTR trials it is in his alleged capacity as the ‘prime mover’, as the one who interferes with and controls individuals, especially during the genocide, but also for more mundane things, such as making people appear in court to provide important information: ‘You know God’s time is the best. And I think that if the good Lord sent me today to tell you what I am telling you, I believe it is because the good Lord knows that it will be of some importance.’

This statement was made by Cyprien Hakizimana, the president of the gacaca Appeals Chamber in Gikomero. He testified in defence of Léonidas Nshogoza, who had been an investigator for the Defence in the case against a Rwandan politician, and was now on trial for interfering with the judicial process. Aside from Hakizimana’s emphasis of the importance of his testimony, what is being done is give God credit for Hakizimana

---

appearing in court and giving what is claimed to be information deemed important by God.

Statements such as these abound in the ICTR transcripts. Some witnesses claimed to have been saved by God alone, and there were both defendants and witnesses who claimed to have had God work through them in their good deeds. Some even compared themselves to Jesus. In all these cases, the references and religious concepts were also used for self-victimising purposes, as I explore below.

**Saved by God alone**

Northern Rwanda was well known for harbouring the most nationalistic Hutus, while the southern Hutus were considered more moderate. One reason for this difference is that both the Tutsi guerrilla attacks in the 1960s and the RPF invasion in 1990 took place in the north, with Tutsis attacking from Uganda. The invasion made life difficult for Tutsis in the north. They were assaulted and killed in what has been described as retaliatory attacks for the RPF advance. The RPF had expected Tutsis to welcome them as saviours, but instead they were met with resentment, as the Tutsis blamed their hardships on the invasion.661

At the end of April 1994, however, the situation had changed as the genocide was still in its most intense phase. Due to concentrated fighting in the north, Tutsis were fleeing south, hoping to cross the border to Burundi. In order to avoid the RPF, the génocidaires followed the fleeing Tutsis into the southern provinces. Many Tutsis managed to get to Cyanika in the Gikongoro province. The Interahamwe followed and soon reached the Cyanika church complex, threatening to kill the Tutsis and the priests who were providing them with shelter.662

In the tribunal, one witness claimed to have attempted to protect the priests, placing himself in danger of being killed. He managed to hide in the crowd of attackers outside the complex, telling the tribunal: ‘It is by God’s grace that I was saved. No one saved me.’ The witness thus credited God alone for his survival.663 Declarations of gratitude to God are not surprising considering that the expression ‘thank God’ is common even in secular contexts. In this context, God alone is explicitly given credit, while any human intervention is not only excluded but also firmly

662 ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindilyimana et al.), Transcript, 2 June 2005.
663 ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindilyimana et al.), Transcript, 2 June 2005.
664 Gratitude to God is by far the most frequent use of the concept of God in the ICTR transcripts, ranging from expressions such as thank God, to the use seen here, where God is given credit for the survival of people.
denied. Here, as in other examples presented below, it is clear that survivors were saved by others – often Hutus – or that a perpetrator made a choice to refrain from killing someone who went on to survive the genocide. Admittedly, a religious person would likely believe that God worked through human beings, particularly if they were helped or spared. Nevertheless, credit is not given to these people, but solely to God. In a court of law, it matters little whether or not God worked through a person; it is the person in question and his or her actions that matter, regardless of whether the actions were the results of divine intervention.

It was not only victims who perceived their survival in religious terms. Perpetrators also viewed their survival from retribution through a religious lens. One among the latter testified of her survival through the aid of God. She was a high-ranking officer in the *gendarmes*, a paramilitary police force that, alongside the Interahamwe militia, participated most actively in the massacres.\(^{665}\) When the RPF attacked Camp Kacyiru in the vicinity of Kigali, she said that she had stripped her uniform of all signs of rank, hoping that she would not be killed by the RPF soldiers. Her plan worked. Instead of being killed, she claimed to have been welcomed and integrated into the RPF army, without so much as an interrogation. In spite of this, she said that ‘God alone can save somebody. […] If I survived, I owe it to God and that is why I am still alive.’\(^{666}\)

Claiming that God alone can save someone is a common and reasonable idea from a Christian point of view. However, as this was a court of law, focusing on the factual and practical reasons for her survival, her statement hardly contributed to the trial process. What is not mentioned in the transcripts is that the official policy of the RPF was that its soldiers were not to kill in retribution, a policy that unfortunately was not always adhered to.\(^{667}\) The reason this witness survived was most likely the RPF strategy of recruiting people, mainly Tutsi survivors, but also Hutus who were willing to fight to put an end to the genocide and the civil war – but the credit is given to God, not the RPF.\(^{668}\) In fact, what is found in this statement is the claim by the witness that she would have been killed by the RPF had it not been for God’s intervention. Thus, implicitly, the RPF soldiers are represented as killers, and this former Hutu *géndarme* as their potential victim.

---

\(^{665}\) The FAR tried to avoid direct involvement, and but stood often by and aided the *gendarmes* and the Interahamwe in the massacres when necessary.

\(^{666}\) ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 17 January 2006.

\(^{667}\) Des Forges 1999, p. 714. According to Alison Des Forges (1999, pp. 13–14), the RPF executed individuals suspected of having been involved in the genocide, and organised mass executions that were so systematic that the RPF leadership must have been aware of the killings and permitted them.

\(^{668}\) Prunier 2010, p. 270.
As a strategy for undermining the credibility of the witness during the cross-examination, the Prosecutor accused her of being an RPF agent. Her defence against these accusations was to portray the RPF as killers and to claim that she was saved by God from said killers. Had she been an RPF agent and not admitted to that fact prior to the trial, she would likely have been considered an unreliable witness. Thus, by claiming to have been saved by God from the RPF killers, she emphasises her distance from the RPF, while simultaneously claiming to be under God’s protection.

One Tutsi woman, having learnt of the death of the President on 7 April 1994, went into hiding with her husband and five children. An Interahamwe found them and registered the male family members on one list and the female on another, claiming this was done in order for them to receive assistance. However, everyone on the list of the men and boys was executed, and the women and girls were given the task of burying between 7,000 and 8,000 bodies in a mass grave by the communal office. After having buried the men, she and the other women were taken to an abandoned clinic where they were kept and raped repeatedly by Hutu soldiers. According to her testimony, she escaped the men’s fate ‘not through the power of men; it is thanks to God that I survived.’

These statements, in which God alone is given credit for survival, are common. While thanking God for one’s survival does not come across as surprising, in the trials many of these statements serve purposes other than the expression of gratitude. The first is to articulate the notion that these witnesses had God on their side; the second that those who did not kill them, or who saved them, did not deserve any credit for it. The claim to have God on one’s side is a way of stating one’s innocence, not only in a judicial sense, but also in a theological sense, meaning free from sin. Much like the defendants in the ICTR trials, the witnesses represented themselves as innocent victims. The claim that they were saved by God increases the sense of innocence, as it would be unlikely that God would save people guilty of atrocities.

Not giving credit to the people responsible for the saving is thus a way of distancing oneself from sin. As Ben Weinberg’s study indicates, survivors of the genocide found renewed faith through their survival. Combined with Henri Tajfel’s claim that individuals always strive to find a satisfactory self-image, the identity to strive for is likely one of Christian

---

669 ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindilyimana et al.), Transcript, 20 June 2005.
671 For reference, in a quick search for the word ‘God’ in the ICTR transcripts used in the present work, out of the first 20 times the word appeared, 7 were in relation to God being given sole credit for someone’s survival. In all, the word God appears 1,298 times in 3,073 transcripts.
672 Weinberg 2015, p. 27.
virtues and innocence. This may explain the witnesses’ and defendants’ emphasis on God as their rescuer. It does not, however, explain the omission of human actors. Whether it was a Hutu perpetrator who showed mercy or the RPF who refrained from killing or arresting, both groups were guilty or at least accused of crimes.

To emphasise innocence and victimhood, it would thus be better to claim to have been alone with God. This is evident when studying the testimonies of the survivors presented here. Although it is obvious that they were not alone, there is never any mention of the other victims or survivors. In a situation such as the one in Rwanda in the hundred days of genocide, it is likely that there was a feeling of being exposed and abandoned, even when among others. Given the fact that some 90 per cent of Rwandans were Christians it would have made sense for them in such a precarious situation to put their fate in the hands of God and when saved give God alone credit for their rescue. However, stressing one’s loneliness, refusing to acknowledge any human agency, and giving God sole credit for being saved means something else in a court of law than during a genocide. This emphasis increases the sense of victimhood, and by maintaining that those who saved them were perpetrators or potential killers, the position as victims is further brought to the fore.

**Doing God’s work**

The ICTR trials were similar to most other trials. Attorneys for the Defence and Prosecution used different strategies to discredit witnesses by trying to find inconsistencies and contradictions in their testimonies. The witnesses and defendants, for their part, defended themselves against attempts to dismiss their testimonies, through other strategies. While some claimed to have saved people on their own, without any mention of divine aid or intervention, others claimed their good deeds were not fully their own, but God acting through them. I argue that this was a way of relieving oneself of responsibility for one’s actions. If God worked through these people, any inconsistency or contradiction would be God’s responsibility. One strategy among the Defence attorneys representing suspected perpetrators in the ICTR was to question the credibility of the witnesses by arguing that the new RPF-based regime in Rwanda had coerced the witnesses into testifying falsely against suspected Hutu perpetrators. While attempting to depict the RPF in a negative manner, some witnesses who had been captured by the RPF during the war gave a different, more positive, or at least neutral, story. One such witness, a Hutu hospital employee, also explained why. When an attorney for the Defence in the

---

673 Tajfel 2010, p. 119.
Military II trial suggested that a witness for the Prosecution had been arrested by the RPF during the genocide, the witness responded:

> You are not understanding me. I was merely recruited to go and help all the persons. [...] I wasn’t forced to come and help. This probably was God’s plan. If you want it so, God probably wanted to protect me and didn’t want me to be killed. Otherwise, he wanted me to bring assistance to those who needed help. I am not the one who guided myself.674

While he admitted to being afraid of the RPF, the witness never gave any information indicating that he was in any mortal danger. Those suspected of being Interahamwe were arrested by the RPF, while all others were recruited, he claimed.675 Nevertheless, this statement indicates that he could have been killed, had God not worked through him, using him to help wounded people. In this case, declaring to be under God’s protection to help others is a way of claiming innocence. As mentioned, having God as a protector, as an entity that guides one’s actions, one is relieved of responsibility. The last sentence is particularly significant; the witness, like most witnesses in the ICTR trials, was put under severe pressure during the cross-examination, and their words were often twisted to make their statements seem illogical. While there are few inconsistencies in the statements of this particular witness, the claim that God had guided him gives an answer to all questions posed regarding his actions during the genocide. That the witness stayed in Gitarama while others evacuated the region, which led to the witness’s encounter with the RPF, seemingly did not make sense to the examining attorney, considering that he asked a series of questions on the matter. However, logically, if the witness was not in control of his actions, he could not be responsible for any inconsistent behaviour on his part.

The claim to have been used as an instrument of God was a common one not only used by this witness. Hassan Ngeze, the editor-in-chief of Kangura, was brought to trial in what is commonly referred to as the Media case. This was a joint trial which included Jean-Bosco Barayagwiza and Ferdinand Nahimana, both founders and board members of the RTLM. This was the first time media personalities were on trial in a case of crimes against international law since Julius Streicher in the Nuremberg trials. Hassan Ngeze was the most outspoken of the three, claiming innocence and portraying himself as a hero, who had saved more than 1,000 Tutsis and brought them to the UNAMIR. The tribunal concluded that Ngeze had saved Tutsi family members and a few Tutsi Muslim friends, although

---

674 ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 11 May 2006.
675 ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 11 May 2006
some had to pay for their rescue, but there is no proof of him having saved 1,000 or more people. Yet, Ngeze maintained this claim, and insisted that he had saved them with the help of God. In fact, it was the main argument of his defence.

Hassan Ngeze argued that he had enemies on both sides of the genocide, the RPF and the Hutu extremists. He also claimed to have been arrested at one point in early in April 1994, and when asked at the tribunal why he had been released he responded: ‘Maybe God directed them. Maybe he wanted me – maybe God wanted me to help Tutsis, that is why they did not kill me. That is just beyond my control, but I thank God.’ This he maintained in his testimonies, often speaking of himself in third person, when stating that the Tutsis he saved were ‘under God’s protection because God used Hassan Ngeze to protect them.’ He added that he was ‘the only human being in Kigali whom God used to save innocent people.’

Although Ngeze claims to have done good deeds by saving Tutsis, what he does in these statements is relieve himself of the responsibility for his actions. Some Hutus did commit murders or other criminal acts during the genocide in order to save Tutsis, often friends or family members. Hassan Ngeze did save Tutsi friends and family members. However, his articles containing explicit anti-Tutsi propaganda and implicit suggestions to exterminate the Tutsi started appearing in 1990, four years before the genocide, probably before the plans to commit genocide were even conceived. As for the criminal acts committed during the genocide, according to the tribunal he publicly incited violence, stored and distributed weapons, as well as aided and abetted the killings of Tutsis, and he did so under no apparent threat or duress. Thus, he could not claim to have been acting out of fear for his own life. Instead, he resorted to portraying himself as an instrument of God. If God was given credit for Ngeze’s good deeds, then his criminal acts would also be the result of


677 There is no record of any such arrest, and Ngeze’s incoherent account of the alleged event led the Tribunal to assume that this was made up in order to establish an alibi for Ngeze for this particular period. ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), *Judgement and sentence*, 3 December 2003, pp. 282–3.


682 Based on the rhetoric in the Rwandan media, the political decisions, and documents targeting the Tutsis as the principle enemies in the civil war, I would say that Gérard Prunier’s assumption (2010, p. 169) – that the plans were conceived in 1992 – is correct. See also Des Forges 1999, pp. 59–64.

God’s decisions. Thus, he would be on trial for crimes he had not committed, which would make him a victim.

Sullivan et al. argues that victim status gives moral licence to commit condemnable acts. During the genocide, this moral licence was what the propagandists attempted to give the Hutus. After the genocide, both past and contemporary victimhood was claimed in order to excuse any wrongdoings during the genocide. Sullivan et al. and other scholars tend to discuss groups rather than individuals when analysing victimhood. In this particular case though, Hutus on trial seldom attempted to claim victimhood for the Hutu, but instead tried to claim membership in the victim group. As Henri Tajfel notes, individuals tend to seek membership in groups that contribute a positive social identity. It seems as though Ngeze, in spite of being a Hutu, tried to seek membership of the victim group by association when claiming to have saved a number of Tutsi. However, it seemed difficult to convince the tribunal of this, so he turned to another group.

Ngeze was well aware of the fact that the Rwandan Muslim community generally refused to participate in the genocide, as they did not categorise themselves as Hutu or Tutsi, but as Muslims. While this is a slightly glorified image, as many Muslims did participate in the genocide – Ngeze, for example, was Muslim – the mosques harboured Tutsis and moderate Hutus, Christians and Muslims alike. Ngeze used this to his advantage, claiming that Muslims did not kill anyone:

So what, what the Muslim did was just to save people, to save people, to bring the Tutsis, even Christian, and to save them, to put them in the [mosque]. That is how many Christians got to be saved at that time, because they have been saved by Muslims.

Throughout his cross-examination, Ngeze argued that no Muslim had killed anyone, and that any Muslim who had, simply was not a Muslim. Ngeze emphasised that he was a Muslim, using the sanctuary of the Mosques as evidence of his innocence.

One witness was a close friend of Ngeze, and said she had been saved by him. She corroborated his claim, stating that she had heard Muslims say that they ‘should pray for Hassan Ngeze so that God may help him carry on doing his good work, saving people.’ She did not herself claim

686 Tajfel 2010, p. 121.
687 Kubai 2007b, p. 229.
that God helped Ngeze, or that she had prayed for God to do so, but simply that she had heard Muslims say that they should pray. It is implied in her testimony that Ngeze saved people, and that evidence of this was found in the Muslims praying for God to help him. However, later in her testimony, she names other people with Arabic names, among them five men named Hassan and one called Omar. She claimed that they were all killers with whom Ngeze had been confused. It is of course possible that a non-Muslim could be named Hassan. However, it is unlikely that five people named Hassan, and one man referred to as Omar, were all non-Muslims. Thus, while testifying in Ngeze’s defence, she unintentionally disproved Ngeze’s claim that Muslims did not kill.690

By this use of the concept of God as working through humans, the defendants were relieved of responsibility for their actions. Any accusations made against them would therefore be unfair, as they were under the influence of God. Furthermore, any allegations against them became accusations against God. This was quite possibly a strategy, conscious or not, on the part of the defendants and witnesses in their defence, in that no Christian would accuse God of the acts the defendants were accused of.

**Being the Messiah**

The strategy of comparing oneself to Jesus the Messiah was similar to the one above. While some used such analogies to imply innocence or describe suffering, others used it more explicitly, in ways that bordered on blasphemy. Examples of the latter are found in testimonies given by survivors. In the joint trial referred to as the Military II trial,691 one witness for the Prosecution described her experience when her home was looted by the Presidential Guard, stating that:

> They took us outside; they got us seated in front of the sitting room, down on the gravel, and they went on beating the children. They would beat anyone they wanted to beat. We were like Jesus on the cross.692

---


691 On trial were General Augustin Bizimungu, General Augustin Ndindilimana, and the commander and the second-in-command of the Reconnaissance Battalion, François-Xavier Nzuwonemeye and Innocent Sagahutu. General Bizimungu led the FAR during the genocide, and is considered the person responsible for the implementation of the genocide. General Ndindilimana was Chief of the Rwandan Gendarmerie. Unlike Bizimungu, Ndindilimana was a moderate Hutu who was acquitted of all charges in 2014 as he had little or no control of the gendarmerie after 7 April. ICTR-00-56-A (Ndindilimana et al.) *Appeals Chamber Judgements*, 11 February 2014.

692 ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindilimana et al.), Transcript, 14 November 2006.
In the same trial, another witness for the prosecution told of her escape, and being followed by the Interahamwe: ‘I told you it was hell. Our whole journey was hell, living hell, similar to the cavalry [sic] that Jesus went through.’

Like most religious references, these comparisons with Jesus, be they the suffering or the person, served a purpose. In the Bible, Jesus was the ‘good shepherd [who] lays down his life for the sheep,’ and describes himself as ‘the way, and the truth’. He also said, ‘Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven.’ Thus conveying the image of the suffering of Christ, an iconic, self-evident image in a Christian context. Not only was the suffering extreme, but also undeserved. When the survivors compared their suffering to that of Jesus, they are thus not merely describing their plight, but also their own role. There is symbolic value in comparing oneself to Jesus Christ, as will be further demonstrated in this subsection.

Father Athanase Seromba was one of the people on trial who resorted to this strategy; however, not during his initial trial, in which he was sentenced to 15 years’ imprisonment, but before the Appeals Chamber. In his appeal he argued that he was falsely accused, like Jesus in the last days of his life. The Appeals Chamber did not accept his argument, as they extended his sentence to life imprisonment. Having refused to speak during the initial trial, he chose to be more talkative in his appeal:

When I chose to become a priest, it is because I wanted to devote my entire life to the Christian population and to everyone in order to save the human being, not only physically, but also spiritually. But here I am being prosecuted like Jesus. Now, when Jesus was on the cross, what did he say? He said, ‘Forgive them because they know not what they are doing or what they have done.’ And that is the reason wherefore I am also pardoning those who are – forgiving those who are accusing me.

Seromba thus referred to the Bible, claiming to quote Jesus, although the quote is slightly adapted. Jesus asked God to forgive those who brought him to the cross, as ‘they know not what they do.’ Seromba adds that ‘or what they have done’ to the quotation. This is most likely because Seromba already had been sentenced to 15 years’ imprisonment. What he

693 ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindilyimana et al.), Transcript, 22 June 2005.
694 John 10:11–18.
does in his statement is to imply that the accusations are incorrect. However, the manner in which he does that gives him a religious significance, through the comparisons with Jesus Christ. By forgiving the accusers the way Jesus forgave those who crucified him, Seromba places himself as morally and spiritually superior to his accusers. He had not been excommunicated and was therefore still a priest and a man of God.  

While claiming his innocence before the Appeals Court, Athanase Seromba accused the prosecution witnesses of having lied, ending his statement by reminding the court of the Gospel of St Matthew:

While Jesus was being prosecuted by the – by the – by Caiphus’ two witnesses – two false witnesses said that he declared that ‘I can destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.’ And Jesus was crucified. And similarly, ironically, there’s a witness who came here and said that I asked the – that I asked the priest three times and he answered three times that the priests should – that the church should be destroyed and that it will be rebuilt. So, this is a false testimony. This is the same thing that happened to Jesus. He was asked three times. He was said to have said thrice that the church should be destroyed, and this is what I’m being accused of.  

Here Seromba is using the Gospel of St Matthew as proof of his innocence, although in fact the details of the reference are incorrect. Jesus was accused of having said that he could destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, but he was never accused of having been asked anything three times, and since churches did not exist at the time, he neither did nor could have replied three times that a church would be destroyed.  

What Seromba focuses on here are the false witnesses. Indeed, in the Gospel of St Matthew, the witnesses are said to be false, although it is never explained why. In the Gospel of St John, on the other hand, Jesus does utter these words, although referring to his own body as the temple in question. There are no questions asked three times in this Gospel either, and no reply given thrice. Comparing one’s own situation to that of Jesus Christ offers no proof of innocence acceptable in a court of law, which Seromba ought to have known. His defence was that he had attempted to help the Tutsis, and he emphasised that the reason for that

---

699 ICTR-01-66-I (Seromba), Transcript, 28 June 2006. I have yet to find any evidence of Seromba’s excommunication.  
700 ICTR-01-66-T (Seromba), Transcript, 26 November 2007.  
702 John 2:18–22.
was his Christian faith and his position as a priest. It is therefore likely that his comparisons with Jesus served to emphasise his piety.\textsuperscript{703}

Father Seromba was not the only clergyman to be tried in the tribunal. Elizaphan Ntakirutimana, a pastor of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Mugonero in western Rwanda, was the first clergyman to be convicted of involvement in the genocide. He stayed close to his son Gérard, who was a doctor at the Church complex, during the genocide and they were brought together before the tribunal in a joint trial. Gérard was sentenced to 25 years’ imprisonment for his involvement, and his father was given 10 years. Although Pastor Ntakirutimana was acquitted of several of the charges against him, he was found guilty of aiding and abetting genocide for conveying killers to the complex. That he had ordered them to remove the roof of the church in which many refugees were hiding, to deprive them of shelter from the elements was not deemed to have caused any serious physical or mental harm, or facilitated any attack on them, and was thus not included in the sentence.\textsuperscript{704}

While there were a number of testimonies of Seromba’s Hutu nationalist position, several witnesses testified to Ntakirutimana’s moderate views and lack of prejudice.\textsuperscript{705} One witness, however, claimed that the Pastor had participated actively in the killings. In his response to this testimony, Ntakirutimana stated:

\begin{quote}
Those are lies; that is not truth, and I’m saying this before the presiding Judge and Your Honours, and I’m saying that I never did any of those things. We teach believers, but not all believers follow their teachings. Jesus was God’s son. Among his own disciples was Judas and Judas betrayed him.\textsuperscript{706}
\end{quote}

Although the witness is anonymous, this statement implies that it is one of the survivors of the massacre at the Mugonero complex, where the Pastor worked. As for the intent of the statement, it is clear that by placing the witness in the position of Judas, the biblical traitor, Ntakirutimana places himself in the position of Jesus, and emphasises that Jesus was God’s son. The emphasis might be an attempt to say that this problem was one that even the Son of God had experienced.

It is unlikely that Ntakirutimana would think of himself as the Messiah, but he does portray himself in a manner that emphasises his innocence.

\textsuperscript{703} See ICTR-2001-66-A (Seromba), Transcript, 26 November 2007, ‘When I chose to become a priest, it is because I wanted to devote my entire life to the Christian population and to everyone in order to save the human being, not only physically, but also spiritually.’

\textsuperscript{704} ICTR-96-10 & ICTR-96-17-T (Ntakirutimana et al.), \textit{Judgement and Sentence}, 21 February 2003, p. 199, 237.

\textsuperscript{705} ICTR-96-10-T (Ntakirutimana et al.), Transcript, 22 August 2002.

\textsuperscript{706} ICTR-96-10-T; ICTR-96-17-T (Ntakirutimana et al.), Transcript, 8 May 2002.
and the alleged lies of the witness by using a biblical reference. Thus, Ntakirutimana is responding to the testimony by attacking the witness’ credibility. He does so by claiming that the accusations are false and questions the piousness of the witness by arguing that not all believers follow the Christian teachings and by challenging the witness’ morality by comparing the witness to Judas.

While Father Athanase Seromba and Pastor Elizaphan Ntakirutimana placed themselves in the position of Jesus, being betrayed by false witnesses or Judases, others were placed in that position by witnesses. One such example is that of Jean de Dieu Kamuhanda. Kamuhanda was a prominent politician, who became a Minister of Higher Education, Science and Culture in the interim government of Rwanda during the genocide. He publicly incited violence against the Tutsi, and personally handed out weapons after his anti-Tutsi speeches.707 When being accused by prosecution witnesses of having participated in massacres at a parish in Gikomero, a witness for the Defence exclaimed: ‘I would call them liars, equivalent to those who betrayed Jesus.’708

Clearly the name Judas carries meaning. Judas’ betrayal of Jesus was part of God’s plan. It was in fact an integral part in the series of events that ultimately led to the crucifixion and Jesus’ death for the sins of mankind. In spite of this, Judas’ betrayal of Christ is seldom described as a key element in God’s plan. Instead, the betrayal and the Deicide take centre stage. In only one of the four gospels, Judas is said to have betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver.709 This is the most common reason given for the betrayal, which is likely the result of the early Christians’ attempt to distance their religion from Judaism.710 Thus, mentioning Judas not only emphasises the betrayal, but also strengthens the comparisons with Jesus. That Judas was an integral part of God’s plan is not mentioned as it would imply that the defendants, like Jesus, should be executed to save mankind.

This type of rhetoric can also be read as a critique of the ICTR and the Rwandan judicial system. Father Athanase Seromba refused to speak during his initial trial, because he did not acknowledge the legitimacy of the ICTR judges. He also criticised the initial conviction, as he claimed that his priesthood had been considered an aggravating circumstance, something he found discriminatory.711 Therefore, by referring to the unfair trials of Jesus Christ, it is implied that the ICTR trials were equally unfair. Regardless of whether this was intended, there is a certain symbolic

---

value in using this type of metaphor, as it elevates the discourse to divine levels. Thus, Seromba questions the legitimacy of the ICTR, by placing himself in a position in which he cannot be judged by humans, but where he is the judge of men.

The *Kangura* editor-in-chief, Hassan Ngeze, may have referred to himself as a saviour during the trials, but he never used the word Messiah to describe himself. The closest to him claiming any connection to Jesus Christ is when he describes the risks he took in saving the lives of Tutsis by comparing his predicament in court to that of Jesus:

Do you know what happened to Jesus Christ? He was saving people from the dead [sic], to bring them to life. When he was arrested, do you know what happened to him? He sweat [sic] blood.712

Ngeze often gave long and often incoherent answers in the tribunal. Although it is clear that he attempted to compare himself to Jesus in this analogy, this statement makes very little sense. As will be shown in an example below, Ngeze explicitly stated that he did not raise people from the dead, and he did not claim to be Jesus Christ. Yet, the quote above implies that he was in a similar situation as Jesus Christ had been in.

Being a Muslim, Ngeze was well aware of the Christian context in which he lived and worked, as the many references to Christianity in *Kangura* are testimony to (see Chapters 4 & 5). While Jesus is an important figure in Islam, as a prophet chosen by God and given the ability to perform miracles, he is not the son of God or the Messiah.713 Jesus is said to have the ability to raise the dead in Islam as well as Christianity, but it is unlikely that Ngeze would have brought up Jesus Christ had it not been for the Christian context of the tribunal.714

Thus Ngeze never claimed to be a Messiah, in spite of the analogy; he claimed to be a saviour, but never used the word Messiah.715 However, during his trial, the prosecution chose to use it twice. Although the Hebrew word *Messiah* (Mashiah) means ‘anointed’, it has come to acquire the same meaning as the word ‘saviour’. While noting that Ngeze may have helped a small number of people, the prosecution still argued that he claimed to be the saviour of Tutsis rather than a perpetrator who saved a

713 Nasr 2003, p. 63.
714 Qur’an 5:110
715 In one testimony, Hassan Ngeze claims that the word *inyenzi* did not refer to all Tutsis, and that his articles and statements during the genocide were aimed only at the RPF, stating that non-RPF Tutsis were ‘innocent people. They are just in their houses waiting, their saviour, waiting for Hassan Ngeze to come and deliver them’. ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 3 April 2003.
few friends and family members. Disputing Ngeze’s claim, Egbe said: ‘He was not a messiah [sic]; he killed’.\textsuperscript{716} Again, later in his summary, Prosecutor William Egbe states that the Defence had called a witness a liar, as the Defence, according to Egbe was arguing that ‘Ngeze was actually the Messiah, the saviour of the Tutsis’.\textsuperscript{717}

The Prosecution never disputed the claim made by the Defence lawyers that Ngeze had saved people. However, the Defence also never used the word Messiah. Thus, to place this word in the mouths of the Defence is an attempt to inject a divine element into the actual claims of the defence. To be fair, Ngeze argued repeatedly that God had worked through him and loved and protected him.\textsuperscript{718} However, to claim that the Defence wanted to portray Ngeze as the Messiah – not only a Messiah, but \textit{the} Messiah, in the second quote\textsuperscript{719} – makes this claim quite different. It then becomes less a matter of a person who has saved a number of Tutsis, and more a matter of Ngeze claiming to be Jesus Christ. Ngeze did not appreciate such representations and exclaimed, ‘How can you save the person who had been killed? I saved the persons who were in danger. Do you think I am Jesus?’\textsuperscript{720}

Thus, Ngeze claimed to have been an instrument of God, but a human instrument. The Prosecutor, on the other hand, used the word ‘Messiah’ rather than the neutral or at least more ambiguous word ‘Saviour’, to depict him as someone who believed himself to be the Son of God. Given Ngeze’s incoherent testimonies, his habit of referring to himself in third person, and his insistence that he was a saviour of Tutsis, it served the Prosecution to imply delusions of divine grandeur, in order to devalue him in front of the tribunal judges. Arguing that Ngeze claimed to be a saviour like the Messiah, while he was a Muslim, devalued him further.

The kind of devaluation seen here is seldom found in definitions of dehumanisation, devaluation and delegitimisation. Yet it is present at least in Daniel Bar-Tal’s theory of delegitimisation. In what he refers to as ‘outcasting’, people are categorised as violators of social norms. That is a category in which Ngeze, or at the very least the representations of him, would certainly fit.\textsuperscript{721} Through the word ‘Messiah’, the Prosecution manages to make Ngeze a violator of social norms offensive to Christians.

\textsuperscript{716} ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 19 August 2003.

\textsuperscript{717} ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 19 August 2003.

\textsuperscript{718} ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 21 March 2003. ‘You know, by the grace of God who loves Ngeze and who protects him at all times’ etc. Ngeze often, as in this case, spoke of himself in third person.

\textsuperscript{719} ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 19 August 2003.

\textsuperscript{720} ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 4 April 2003.

and non-Christians alike. He is represented both as a heretic and as man with delusions of divine grandeur.

In Christian tradition, Jesus Christ, the Messiah, is the Son of God, the Lamb of God, who faced an unjust trial, and who suffered and died for the sins of humanity. Thus, Jesus is represented as an innocent victim or even a symbol of innocence and victimhood, and therefore he was used as such in the ICTR. While defendants and survivors surely knew that their comparisons to Jesus would not serve as evidence in the court of law, they likely knew the symbolic value of such comparisons, as it would serve as an indirect description of themselves and their own predicament. Often the attorneys saw through this, and at times turned it against them, as in the case of Ngeze, who was incorrectly said to have referred to himself as the Messiah.

Aside from the use of Jesus as a symbol, these examples show that religion mattered to the defendants and witnesses. They may have been devout Christians, or they may merely have used religion to their benefit. It may be that they were, in the words of Saskia Van Hoyweghen, passive ‘Sunday goers’ rather than firm believers.\(^{722}\) For the purpose of this analysis, their degree of devotion are less relevant, what matters is that they clearly were aware of the basic meaning of Christian symbols and characters and used them and a religiously influenced rhetoric, even in a context of secular law where religion was not supposed to have any impact on the outcome.

6.3 The Influence of the Devil

Several perpetrators claimed to have been possessed by the Devil during the genocide, arguing that they did not understand how else they could have been able to participate in the killings.\(^{723}\) Similar to the use of Jesus and God, there is a symbolic value in referring to the Devil. Whereas God represents the ultimate good, the Devil is the ultimate evil. According to Ben Weinberg, many Christians in pre-genocide Rwanda knew of God and the Devil as the doer of good and the doer of evil, while further knowledge of the two was limited.\(^{724}\) Therefore, it was natural to use the Devil as a point of reference when talking about evil. According to theologian Matthew Michael, in African Christianity, the Devil is no less

---


\(^{723}\) See, for example, ICTR-00-56-I (Ndindilyimana et al.), Transcript, 20 October 2005.

\(^{724}\) Weinberg 2015, p. 20.
central than God, being present in all imperfections in the world.\textsuperscript{725} Thus, in the ICTR, the Devil as an entity and as a symbol could be, and was, used strategically.

As I demonstrate below, the concept of Satan or the Devil was used in several separate ways in the ICTR trials, and for different purposes. References to the Devil were used to explain the situation in Rwanda, to explain one’s own actions during the genocide, to claim to be the victim of devaluation through demonisation, and to demonise others.

\textit{The Devil in control}

In the ICTR transcripts, there are many descriptions of the situation in Rwanda between April and July in 1994. However, most are subjective descriptions of individual experiences. Broader descriptions tend to be generalising and told in metaphors. Given that the situation was chaotic, it seems as though the witnesses and defendants found it simpler to just claim that the Devil had taken over the country. As will be demonstrated below, the Devil was represented in three ways in the ICTR trials. The first was that the Devil had taken over the country as an external force that at the time was stronger than God; the second was that the Devil had taken over the Rwandan authorities, forcing Rwandans to commit genocide; and the third was that the Devil came in the shape of the RPF.

Thinking of the Devil as the country’s new master, one witness in the trial of Jean-Baptiste Gatete – an MRND politician who helped plan the genocide and actively participated in the killings – described Rwanda at time of genocide:

\begin{quote}
Considering the prevailing situation at the time, the \textit{bourgmestre} did not have any authority. The \textit{préfet} and the \textit{sous-préfet} did not have authority over the members of the public. It’s as if the devil had taken over the heavens and the earth in that specific region.\textsuperscript{726}
\end{quote}

In a similar manner, Juvénal Kajelijeli – the \textit{bourgmestre} of Mukingo who led a group of Interahamwe during the genocide, and who was subsequently convicted of extermination, genocide, and incitement to commit genocide – said the following about those first days:

\begin{quote}
I thought the devil had invaded the whole country because the whole country was on fire and people were dying in large numbers. And the reverend priest told me what happened and how people
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{725} Michael 2013, pp. 97–8.
\textsuperscript{726} ICTR-2000-61-T (Gatete), Transcript, 9 March 2010.
reacted. We – there is nothing we could do. We only prayed for those who had died, especially as I was on the losing side.727

While it is true that people were dying in large numbers, I find no evidence supporting the rest of his statement. Although implicit, Juvenal Kajelijeli is suggesting that he was on the side of the Tutsi, as this was the only side that was losing at the time he is describing. His continued statements give evidence of this position, as he claims to have been on good terms with the Tutsis, and having Tutsi in-laws, ‘contrary to what people say’.728 As shown by Sullivan et al., ‘belonging to a victimized group may induce a sense of high moral status.’729 While the Hutu identity was impossible to get rid of in the tribunal, many still tried to seek membership in the victimised group, to use Tajfel’s words, by claiming to have helped the Tutsi.730 Kajelijeli was no exception. In fact, he is one of the most explicit in his claims to victimhood, as he does not argue that he saved Tutsis, but that he is one of them.

Unlike the witness in the Gatete trial, who was attempting to explain the lack of control in Rwanda, Kajelijeli pronounces his innocence, arguing that there was nothing he could do but pray, in a country invaded by the Devil. Like many others in the ICTR trials, Kajelijeli uses religiosity as an argument of innocence. By claiming to have prayed for those who had died, he is depicting himself both as a man of faith and as a helpless victim.

Again, in the trial of Jean-Baptiste Gatete one witness stated that the local authorities, including Gatete,

had indeed been taken over or conquered by Satan or the devil. Those authorities were being led by the devil. They had been taken over by the devil. And devil – the devil does not work along with people who behave well, because the acts that were being committed were not positive acts. They were acts that could only be attributed to the devil.731

The same kind of argument appears in the trial of the businessman and politician Protas ‘Monsieur Zed’ Zigiranyirazo in which one witness for the prosecution, himself a convicted perpetrator, blamed his crimes on the authorities, claiming that ‘they actually worked with Satan so that I may be

727 ICTR-98-44A-T (Kajelijeli), Transcript, 16 April 2003.
728 ICTR-98-44A-T (Kajelijeli), Transcript, 16 April 2003.
730 Tajfel 2010, p. 121.
731 ICTR-2000-61-T (Gatete), Transcript, 10 March 2010.
under his guidance. Yet another witness in the same trial stressed that ‘the devil had gotten hold of Rwanda. A person could kill his own wife, his own children’.

While attempting to explain the situation in Rwanda, these statements also imply the lack of control or agency. The authorities were under the influence of the Devil, and there was little one could do but follow along. Unlike those who claimed innocence by arguing to have been controlled by God, and thus had no control of their actions, the defendants here were able to represent themselves not only as innocent but also as victims, as they claimed to have had no control in a context controlled by the Devil.

Thus far, the examples discussed have described the Devil as in control of the country and the authorities. They came mainly from witnesses and defendants attempting to describe the situation in Rwanda at the time of the genocide, or to explain their actions. However, there were those who claimed that the Devil came in the form of the RPF. Thus, when they maintained their attempts to claim victimhood, the Devil took a different shape.

It is well known that the RPF soldiers committed crimes such as retaliatory massacres during and after the genocide. However, these crimes did not come under the jurisdiction of the ICTR, as they were accounted war crimes, and the ICTR only handled crimes of genocide. While this has been widely criticised, no RPF member has been tried in the tribunal. However, many were subjected to accusations and demonisation.

Pauline Nyiramasuhuko, the first woman convicted of genocide and of genocidal rape in the ICTR, testified on behalf of the Defence in the trial of the MRND politicians Édouard Karemera and Matthieu Ngirumpatse. Both had been involved in establishing the Civil Defence Programme, which officially provided civilians with combat training for the defence of themselves and the country. However, as it was never specified that they were to defend themselves against the RPF, when genocide commenced the training was used to kill any person of Tutsi descent. Pauline Nyiramasuhuko told a different story, arguing that due to the Programme, Tutsi refugees were not attacked, and during the time when the Civil Defence Programme was in effect, ‘there really was no problem between

---

732 ICTR-01-73-T (Zigiranyirazo), Transcript, 19 October 2005. Protais Zigiranyirazo was acquitted of all charges in the ICTR Appeals Chamber, overturning an initial sentence of 20 years’ imprisonment.
733 ICTR-01-73-T (Zigiranyirazo), Transcript, 8 February 2006.
735 ICTR-98-44-Y (Karemera et al.), Judgement and Sentence, 2 February 2012.
Hutus and Tutsis. Although implicitly, Nyiramasuhuko also places the blame on the RPF, stating that

the devil visited our country, and government did its level best to encourage members of the population, particularly the intellectuals, to tell the members of the population to abstain from attacking those who had fled from their various areas.

Nyiramasuhuko disputes the evidence of the interim government’s involvement in the genocide, and the evidence of the Civil Defence Programme being used to murder Tutsis. Instead, she describes the programme and the government as innocent, and claims that it was trying to persuade people not to attack refugees. She even argues that the official purpose of the Programme, pacification in Rwanda, was respected. Thus, the Devil in this context is an implicit reference to the RPF, and the Rwandan Hutu regime were therefore the victims of the Devil, in the shape of the RPF.

Her statement is somewhat surprising. In 2010, when Nyiramasuhuko gave her testimony, it was well known that genocide had taken place, and that those responsible were the Rwandan authorities. While the RPF did commit crimes, a rare few defendants and witnesses implied that they were responsible for the genocide. Yet, Nyiramasuhuko clearly maintained that the Rwandan government was innocent, thus representing not only herself, but the Hutu regime as victims.

Doing the Devil’s work

While some argued that the Devil had taken over the country in order to explain the situation in Rwanda, others used the concept of the Devil to explain their own actions. This latter use was most common among witnesses who had committed crimes and had been tried and sentenced in Rwandan national courts. Although these witnesses were not on trial in the ICTR, the lawyers and prosecutors often questioned their credibility. Had they been on trial, the defence of demonic possession would likely not have been effective. However, as witnesses, they argued that the Devil now had lost his grip and that they had changed, and therefore were reliable witnesses. One prosecution witness in the Military II trial stated:

I told you that I was controlled by Satan. Satan led me down the abyss. But today you should consider that I have changed. I am no

736 ICTR-98-44-T (Karemera et al.), Transcript, 4 May 2010.
737 ICTR-98-44-T (Karemera et al.), Transcript, 4 May 2010.
longer the person who followed Satan’s instructions. Today I do good things. I’m no longer the person I was in 1994. I have changed completely today. That is why on the day I did not warn him, if I have to tell you the truth about what happened at that time. I was working for Satan.738

Another witness explained how the Devil took control of people: ‘That is how Satan works. He does not show you that things are evil and you fall in his trap, and it is only after the fact that you realise what you have done.’739

While one might be tempted to dismiss the use of the Devil as little more than a trope, several witnesses asserted that they, as Christians, truly believed in the Devil’s existence.740 Such was the case of one prosecution witness in the Military II trial, who explained why he had killed Tutsis and eaten their cattle on the instructions of a Hutu brigade captain:

I followed Satan’s instructions. If there hadn’t been a representative of Satan at the gendarmerie brigade in [name edited out], I won’t have followed those instructions. I believe that at that time there were disciples of Satan. I could not have done anything against that brigade because they represented Satan.741

The concept of Satan is ambiguous. As mentioned in the previous chapter, in the Bible the Devil is never manifested in any physical form, except the shape of a serpent in the Book of Genesis, and then not referred to as Satan or the Devil. The Bible contains no description of the Devil other than as an entity tempting humans to sin. Nevertheless, the faith in God also entailed a faith in the Devil, not just as temptation, but as an entity able to convince a person to commit sinful acts. According to Matthew Michael, for most Africans, faith in God is not optional, but a living reality. So is the Devil, who is also perceived as the strict opposite of God and as the cause of sin and evil.742 Thus, while it is fully possible to question the honesty of these witnesses and the sincerity of their convictions, their statements clearly express what they were trying to convey in court.

Much like those claiming to have been under God’s influence, these witnesses also placed responsibility for their actions on another entity. While not denying their crimes, the witnesses do deny full responsibility

738 ICTR-00-56-I (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 20 October 2005.
739 ICTR-00-56-I (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 20 October 2005.
740 See, for example, the testimony of a defence witness in the Rwamakuba trial: ‘I believed in the existence of the devil at the time.’ ICTR-98-44C-T (Rwamakuba), 13 December 2005.
741 ICTR-00-56-I (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 20 October 2005.
742 Michael 2013, pp. 97–98.
for their actions. Many of them claim responsibility for allowing themselves to be possessed, but the actions are not fully theirs.

With the extensive devaluation processes during the civil war, people in the aftermath were able to make claims such as the following, by a defence witness:

Rwanda was a victim of propaganda, a victim of manipulation of misinformation of intoxication. And the result is that people are inhabited by the devil, that people are still building up mistruths.743

These people who were arguing that the Devil had taken over Rwanda or that they had been possessed by Satan relieved themselves of some of the responsibility for their actions, while at the same time making them victims of the Devil and the circumstances that led to the Devil being able to possess them. It is a similar phenomenon as the one described in the section on people who claimed to have been under the control of God.

Here, however, there is the added element of victimhood. Being controlled by God entailed a lack of agency, and therefore one could claim innocence of negative actions, as these too were acts of God. Claiming to have been controlled by the Devil also entails claims of innocence. However, one is not chosen by God, and therefore the evil deeds committed do not serve any higher purpose. The people making this claim in the ICTR were thus not chosen by God, but victims of the Devil.

**Devaluation through demonization**

It took a long time for the UN to admit that the events in Rwanda constituted genocide in the legal sense. Due to the frequent objections of the US and the UK, the UN Security Council was unable to use the word genocide, and was hence incapacitated. When they finally recognised the genocide in June 1994, none of the member states were willing to participate in an intervention.

When the mass killings ended in July, there was little or no doubt that a genocide had been committed, although it would take some time still to have it legally established. There was overwhelming evidence incriminating most of the organisers, planners, and main orchestrators. As for the most influential instigators, who were mainly people in the Rwandan media, their involvement had been well documented in the radio broadcasts and editions of Kangura. In spite of this, most of them claimed to be innocent, or at the very least, that the crimes were not as severe as they were made out to be.

---

743 ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 4 December 2007.
Some witnesses and defendants did attempt to depict others as the Devil in a devaluing manner, while others, mainly the defendants, tried to present themselves as victims by arguing that they were represented as devils. Hassan Ngeze, who claimed to have been used by God to save Tutsis, also argued that he was being demonised by the Prosecutor. Two years into his trial he said:

They portray – the way I have been portrayed by the Prosecution, as a devil, as someone who created the divide between Hutu and Tutsi, as someone who created the problem between Hutu and Tutsi in Rwanda, as someone who incited the Hutu and Tutsi.744

While Ngeze may not have created the divide between the Hutus and Tutsis, the evidence clearly showed that he attempted to exacerbate segregation by his pieces for Kangura during the civil war. Thus, Ngeze was correct in part, as the prosecution used his inciting articles to his disadvantage, arguing that they contained attempts to divide the groups.745 However, the prosecution never referred to him as a devil, and they never claimed that he had created the divide between Hutu and Tutsi. By claiming that he has been portrayed as a devil, Ngeze represents himself as a victim of an unjust accusation. Rather than demonising the Prosecution, he claims to have been demonised in order to claim victimhood.

However, it was not only the Prosecutors who Ngeze claimed had represented him in this manner. He also said: ‘I filed a motion to European Court of Human Right accusing Jean-Pierre Chrétien who continued to present me as, as a devil.’746 To the best of my knowledge, historian Jean-Pierre Chrétien has never described Ngeze as a devil.747 Instead, I would suggest that this was yet another attempt by Ngeze to portray himself as a victim of devaluation through demonisation.

As mentioned, the prosecution never used the word devil to describe Ngeze. Nor did the prosecution use it in reference to the interim government Minister of Science and Higher Education, Jean de Dieu Kamuhanda. Nevertheless, when accused of transporting perpetrators during the genocide, Kamuhanda attacked the logic of the allegations:

Now, the picking up of those assailants in full daylight, without it being noticed, so that firm belief that the Judges got to; they got it from where? If I were the devil that I am being described to be, I

---

746 ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 1 April 2003.
would have merely carried out such acts within my own neighbourhood before going on to attack the Tutsi refugees.  

What Kamuhanda does do is to claim that he could not be as evil as he is made out to be, because if he were, he would have acted in a consistent manner. In other words, he could logically not have acted the way he did. Thus, the word devil is in this context used by Kamuhanda both to claim that he has been demonised, and to delegitimise the ICTR judges who, the way he saw it, had come to illogical conclusions. At the trial of Ignace Bagilishema, meanwhile, his Defence attorney, François Roux, ended his closing arguments not by emphasising the evidence of his innocence, but by only relying on testimonies to the good character of the defendant:

Now, given these two images – given also the good character, which in common law have [sic] consequences on the guilt or otherwise of an accused – given this good character, your question is to find out whether the Office of the Prosecutor has provided you with the proof, has provided you with adequate evidence that this man about whom we are speaking allegedly suddenly changed from being a man of good character and allegedly transformed into a devil, a devil who is capable of the worst of crimes, the crime of genocide.

It is possible that the attorney was confident in that the evidence already presented, as Ignace Bagilishema was acquitted of all charges. However, there is one similarity to the statement of Jean de Dieu Kamuhanda that is worth emphasising. The concept of the Devil is used in a manner that is meant to depict the accusations as irrational, or even ridiculous. The latter comes across more clearly in this last statement, as François Roux not only claims that his client has been depicted as a devil, but that the prosecution has claimed that he allegedly transformed into one.

While implicit, these statements were a way of indicating either that the accusations were unfair, or that the trials were. In the trial of Théoneste Bagosora, the latter is quite explicit. He was one of the main organisers, planners, and orchestrators of the genocide, and this was well known before the trial, and even more so during and after. Bagosora’s defence attorney, Raphaël Constant, was well aware of this:

I am representing a man who, since April 1994 through the media, is considered in turn as ‘devil on earth’ or the ‘brain behind the genocide’ and it is only today before you, finally, that we are

748 ICTR-99-54-A (Kamuhanda), Transcript, 19 May 2005.
749 ICTR–1A-T (Bagilishema), Transcript, 5 November 2000.
supposed to have a fair exchange to know whether what has been written about him – about them, and specifically about Colonel Bagosora, is based on evidence or just a matter of propaganda.\textsuperscript{750}

The attorney chose the word in order to present his client as a victim, depicting him as demonised by the media even before his trial. A month earlier, however, Constant chose to claim that Bagosora was a victim of the RPF:

\begin{quote}
Let me set aside the notion which was referred to as the influence of Bagosora. It is true that since July 1994, through the RPF propaganda, Bagosora became the \textit{deus ex machina} in Rwanda. And let me stick to the reality of what we have as evidence, and not to any fantasies that one may have as having my client being presented as a semi-god, or as a devil.\textsuperscript{751}
\end{quote}

Bagosora was a member of the \textit{akazu}, the group of Hutu extremists surrounding the wife of President Habyarimana. The \textit{akazu} has been widely accused of being responsible for organising the genocide, and while most of its members were brought out of Rwanda by the French in the early days of the genocide, Bagosora stayed behind. Although he retired from the army in September 1993, he remained the Chief of Staff at the Ministry of Defence throughout the genocide. As such, he was involved in the negotiations with the RPF.\textsuperscript{752} Thus, the Defence clearly chose to blame RPF propaganda for Bagosora’s demonisation and devaluation.

The theatrical term \textit{deus ex machina} (lit. ‘God from the machinery’) is found in the same paragraph as the claim that Bagosora was presented as a semi-god. The fantasies that Constant mentions are thus the notion of Bagosora having a larger part in the genocide than he actually had. Using the concept of \textit{deus ex machina}, in which an unexpected power conveniently appears to solve an intractable problem, it is implied that Bagosora was represented in RPF propaganda as someone who conveniently could be placed as a spider in the web, as a semi-god, or as a devil.

\textsuperscript{750} ICTR-98-41-T (Bagosora et al.), Transcript, 24 June 2003.
\textsuperscript{751} ICTR-98-41-T (Bagosora et al.), Transcript, 30 May 2007.
\textsuperscript{752} Des Forges 1999, pp. 185–6.
Historian and co-founder of RTLM, Ferdinand Nahimana, was a defence witness in the trial of the Hutu extremist politician Justin Mugenzi (leader of the Hutu Power faction of the PL). In the course of the trial, speeches Mugenzi had given became a topic. Justin Mugenzi had been pardoned by President Habyarimana in 1981 after serving five years of a life sentence for the murder of his wife. He became a politician when he founded the PL in opposition to the presidential party. However, being notoriously corrupt, Mugenzi accepted large donations from President Habyarimana and established the infamous Hutu Power faction of the PL, thus becoming one of Habyarimana’s links to the Hutu extremists and subsequently a member of the interim government.753 One of Mugenzi’s inflammatory speeches was given at an MRND rally in Kigali.754 Nahimana recollected the speech and spoke of it before the tribunal:

I said to myself later that this is a man who has finally realised that he had a bond with the devil. I am using the expression deliberately because Dallaire said that he shook hands with the devil. But Dallaire shook hands with the devil, Kagame. He shook hands with Kagame.755

The Devil referred to in this context is the RPF leader Paul Kagame. The bond mentioned between Mugenzi and the Devil refers to Mugenzi’s membership in the PL. The realisation that this bond with the Devil existed clearly refers to Mugenzi establishing the extremist Hutu Power faction of the otherwise moderate PL.

---

753 Prunier 2010, p. 130.
754 Mugenzi and other members of the Interim Government travelled around Rwanda during the genocide, giving speeches of encouragement to the Rwandan Hutus. The date of the speech in question is unknown.
The Devil was also the word used by UNAMIR General Roméo Dallaire as the title of his memoirs. Dallaire describes meeting the Interahamwe leaders during the genocide and shaking their hands, which he described as feeling like shaking hands with the Devil. Nahimana, on the other hand, claims that the Devil is Paul Kagame.

While Nahimana uses General Dallaire as a reason for using the word devil, it is not without significance. First of all, Nahimana is questioning the neutrality of the UNAMIR, something that Hutu extremists frequently did during the war and the genocide – in line with the unofficial RTLM policy. Second, he implies that it was not the Interahamwe leaders, but Paul Kagame, who was the Devil, placing the blame on the RPF rather than the Interahamwe. Third, having stated that Paul Kagame is the Devil, Nahimana claims that establishing a Hutu extremist faction of the PL was to break the pact with the Devil. As such, deliberately or not, Nahimana suggests that Hutu power and Hutu extremism was not an evil thing.

By referring to Dallaire’s use of the word, he uses it as a symbol of evil to represent people who are capable of committing genocide. As a historian and co-founder of RTLM, Nahimana directed and planned many of its broadcasts and participated in several of them. He must have been fully aware of the many claims made by RTLM announcers and journalists that the RPF were planning to exterminate the Hutu. Nahimana appears to have stuck with this line even before the tribunal, indicating that the Hutu extremists were the victims of the Devil, again in the shape of the RPF, in collaboration with a biased UN force.

Roméo Dallaire’s book, *Shake Hands with the Devil*, is mentioned on several other occasions, and much as in the Karemera trial, from which the last example was taken, it was misinterpreted. In the joint trial, often referred to as the Government II trial, one witness for the Prosecution was asked if he knew Colonel Théoneste Bagosora. He answered in the positive and took the opportunity to accuse Bagosora not only of having been a member of the akazu, but also of having founded the Kangura, the Hutu Power movement, and that he was among those who assassinated President Juvénal Habyarimana. In support of his accusations, the

---

756 Dallaire 2005, p. 347.
757 See, for example, RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 177, 21 March 1994; RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0031, 19 June 1994; RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0039, 1 July 1994. See also Georges Ruggiu, *This Criminal Ideology and the Methods Used by RTLM to Broadcast Them*, ICTR-99-52-T, Prosecution Exhibit P92 B.
759 ICTR-99-50 (Bizimungu et al.), the joint trial against government officials Jérôme Bicamumpaka, Casimir Bizimungu, Justin Mugenzi, and Prosper Mugiraneza.
760 ICTR-99-50-T (Bizimungu et al.), Transcript, 9 June 2004. While he was a member of the akazu, there is no evidence of him having been involved in the production of Kangura, or the establishing of the Hutu Power movement, and since we do not know who killed Habyarimana, we cannot know if Bagosora was involved in the assassination.
witness said: ‘Even General Dallaire says this in his book because he said he handed over – he shook hands with the devil.’ That is not what Dallaire says in his book; however, the witness slants it to present Bagosora as a devil. By referring to Dallaire’s book, albeit inaccurately, he is attempting to demonise Bagosora, validating it by using a UN General as support.

In his theory of delegitimisation, Daniel Bar-Tal argues that in conflict situations, humans who are perceived as violating human norms and values subsequently have no right to humane treatment. What Bar-Tal refers to as dehumanisation comprises comparisons with demons, monsters, and devils, aside from animals. This is what is demonstrated in this subsection. Not only is there intent to devalue those who are referred to as devils, but it also serves the purpose of diverting attention. It is a way of distancing oneself from evil, and referring to General Dallaire is a way of placing oneself on the side of good. Considering that the context is a tribunal established and run by the UN, the use of a UN General who was responsible for saving several thousand Tutsis and moderate Hutus may have been a strategic choice, it being better to be associated with the UN than the extremists.

One could argue that Ferdinand Nahimana is an exception, as he claimed that RPF leader Paul Kagame was the Devil. It should be remembered that the Kagame regime and the ICTR were not on the best of terms as Kagame argued that the ICTR was too bureaucratic and slow, while the ICTR did not appreciate the Kagame regime’s attempts to influence the tribunal. Criticising the RPF may therefore not have been as controversial as one might think. Furthermore, Nahimana had been sentenced to 30 years’ imprisonment, after getting his life sentence reduced in the Appeals Chamber. Thus, he had nothing to lose. It may also be possible that he was trying to downplay the negative aspects of Hutu extremism. Henri Tajfel notes that if attempts to leave a group that affects one’s identity negatively fail, then one has the option of trying to reinterpret the group’s negative features to justify or make these features acceptable. Nahimana would never be considered a victim, but he could at the very least try to apply negative features to others in order to appear less of a criminal himself.

In the trial of André Rwamakuba, the Minister for National Education in the interim government, when one witness was asked how he would describe the perpetrators, or génocidaires, he responded:

765 Tajfel 2010, p. 121.
Just one word ‘Satan’, or Shitani as he’s called in Kinyarwanda. I believed in the existence of the devil at that time. That is a génocidaire – someone for whom another person’s life has no more value than a kilo of beans – an extremist something. That’s it.766

Referring to the perpetrators as Satan was likely done to emphasise the threat he and all Tutsis and moderate Hutus faced. It may also have served as a way of understanding the actions of the perpetrators, as the behaviour of so many Hutus must have been unfathomable to many of the Tutsis. It is thus a similar rhetoric as used by those who argued that the Devil had taken over the country.

Among the accused, there were some who used the concept of the Devil in a similar manner to this defendant. One of them was Kangura’s editor-in-chief, Hassan Ngeze. As I have already shown, he claimed to be innocent, and that God had worked through him to save Tutsis. He depicted himself as being caught between the RPF and the Hutu extremists.

In his trial, in what I would argue is yet another attempt to assert his innocence, Ngeze devalued several Hutus. One of them was Colonel Anatole Nsengiyumva, a high-ranking military officer who collaborated with Théoneste Bagosora in planning the genocide, supervised the training of the Interahamwe, and actively participated in the massacres.767 When asked about an alleged meeting with Nsengiyumva, Ngeze replied: ‘How could – do you know he was a god? No. Let me say that he was a devil; you know even the devil is strong. How can I sit with him?’768 About a captain in the Rwandan army, Pascal Simbikambwa, Ngeze said: ‘This man is a devil. He is a devil, but I don’t know if he belongs to akazu or not, but he is a devil.’769 While a simple answer in the negative would have sufficed to the question posed of whether or not the army Captain belonged to the akazu, Ngeze chose to refer to him as a devil three times.

By depicting other Hutus, and particularly those accused of planning and organising the genocide, Hassan Ngeze places himself on the other end of the spectrum. This becomes clear when considering that he repeatedly argued that he was a devoted Muslim and a saviour of Tutsis who refused to sit with an alleged devil. By depicting others as guilty, he emphasised his innocence, and by representing them as the Devil, he emphasised his role as a saviour chosen by God.

Throughout the war, the genocide, and the judicial aftermath, people tried to elevate arguments and discussions to a divine level. Although

769 ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 1 April 2003.
arguing that someone is the Devil is devaluing, it is at the same time implying that oneself is not. On a few occasions, Ngeze claimed to have been represented as a devil, and thus delegitimised. It was never explicitly stated by anyone else but him, but he maintained that he had been represented as such. Adding this to his later arguments that others were devils results not only in the devaluation of the other, but also emphasises victimhood. It was a way of saying that the tribunal had the wrong person on trial. Again, it is a way of distancing oneself from the ultimate evil that is the Devil. Like the others presented in this subsection, Ngeze claimed innocence and victimhood, by arguing that others, not he, were the real devils.

6.4 Truth and Forgiveness

In early July 1994, with the RPF winning the war and officially ending the genocide, Hutus fled the country, afraid of the retaliation of the invading Tutsi rebels. Most escaped to Zaïre, to the refugee camps in the French safe zone. With the RPF setting up a new government, they urged the Hutus to return to Rwanda. Many did, and many of them had committed crimes of genocide. In fact, so many suspected perpetrators returned that the judicial system, which was being rebuilt after the war and genocide, would not have been able to handle all the cases within a century. Thus, there was a need to accelerate the trials.

One way of doing this was by reinstating the gacaca courts. These were traditionally used to solve conflicts and settle disputes in the communities. Those involved in the dispute, or the alleged perpetrators and victims of a crime, gathered in front of the village elders and their peers to state their cases, after which the elders decided how the people involved should reconcile. After the genocide, the elders were replaced by judges, and the gacaca was given a mandate to handle crimes of genocide, rather than theft or other minor crimes and disputes.

Another way of accelerating the judicial process was by offering a reduced sentence to those who admitted their crimes and repented. Truth, justice, and reconciliation became their motto in the period of transitional justice. In this process, in an effort to re-establish trust in Christianity, several religious congregations offered their help by organising workshops in churches and in prisons. Due to this, the concepts of truth, justice and reconciliation also became a religious matter, while the concepts of

---

confession and forgiveness, often associated with religion, became secular matters. This would have consequences in the ICTR trials.

**God's forgiveness**

Although most of those prosecuted pleaded not guilty and denied having participated in the genocide, some people admitted to their crimes and were willing to repent. Among the witnesses in the ICTR were several people who had been tried and sentenced in the Rwandan courts, who claimed to have realised the severity of their crimes during the genocide, and who now sought God’s forgiveness. Some had been pardoned, others had their sentences reduced as a result of them confessing to their crimes and had been forgiven by the Rwandan authorities. However, most of these witnesses agreed that this forgiveness was less important than the forgiveness of God.

Nowhere in the genocide legislation in Rwanda does the word ‘forgiveness’ appear. The laws speak only of confession and pleading guilty. Yet, according to witness testimonies, there was a common notion that one had to be forgiven by three parties if one was to be pardoned or get a reduced sentence: by God, the victims, and the state. This trinity is often mentioned by witnesses in the ICTR. When a witness, who had been a Christian his entire life, was asked how he could have found God after the genocide, he answered: ‘It’s God who has to forgive you, first of all, before those you wronged can forgive you, and it’s from that moment on that you can feel relieved.’ Another witness had been given a sentence of time served, and was thus released immediately after his trial. Upon being asked about the reasons for his release he said:

> Nothing can be done for as long as one has not asked for forgiveness. And once you ask for God’s forgiveness, God will forgive you, the family of the victim will forgive you. And that is how I, myself, got my forgiveness.

---

771 See Kubai 2016.
772 *Administrative Report of the National Service of the Gacaca Courts 2012, 12-08-2013*. The Organic Laws of 2001, 2004, and 2007 differ in regards to crime categories, mitigating circumstances, and sentences. However, confessing and pleading guilty give reduced sentences. How reduced depends on whether a perpetrator confesses before or after being prosecuted, or before being put on a list of suspects.
773 See, for example, ICTR-01-68-T (Ndahimana), Transcript, 11 November 2010.
774 ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 9 June 2004.
775 ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 9 June 2004.
The answer is not related to the question about the reasons for his release. Instead, the witness stresses that it is entirely a matter of forgiveness. If God forgives, then the family of the victim will forgive, and subsequently the state. Or, in the words of another witness: ‘it was not a matter of confessing to human beings, but rather to God, but above that, to ask for forgiveness from the victims and to accept one’s guilt before the authorities.’

While it is no longer a matter of claiming innocence of one’s crimes, having been forgiven by God means that the sins have been absolved and in a sense, innocence has been restored. This is explicitly stated by one witness who claimed that if God does not forgive you ‘then the person asking for forgiveness has nothing more to do except to continue living, pray, and ask for God’s forgiveness, because God is able to recognise innocence.’

The notion that one could get a reduced sentence in the Rwandan national courts and the gacaca if one showed sincere remorse and asked for forgiveness may have led to some insincere apologies. Nevertheless, this was a necessity for the Rwandan government in post-genocide Rwanda, due to the overcrowding in prisons where inmates were dying of sickness and starvation. The gacaca system was one solution, in which the traditional local community courts were reinstated. While perpetrators were sentenced at a much higher rate, due to the gacaca system, the crime categories changed, and sentences were reduced drastically, especially for those who confessed early and asked for forgiveness.

While we may not know with full certainty if all who confessed were sincere in their apologies, some do seem truly sorry for their actions. One example is a witness in the trial against Minister of Finance in the interim government, Emmanuel Ndindabahinzi, who said ‘I have nothing to say about my sentence, and this is because it was right for me to be given that sentence given the crimes that I committed, and only God will be able to forgive me.’ Others were not so pleased with their sentences. One witness in the tribunal was a refugee who had fled Rwanda to avoid the life sentence he had received, but that he did not think he deserved:

Each time you confess to your crime and ask for forgiveness, you are forgiven even before God. I have chosen to flee because I’ve

---

1 ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 23 February 2005.
2 ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 9 June 2004.
3 Lorch 1995.
5 ICTR-01-71-T (Ndindabahinzi), Transcript, 30 October 2003.
always asked for forgiveness and the forgiveness has not been granted. That’s why I’ve decided to flee.\textsuperscript{781}

For this witness, forgiveness was directly related to the sentence given for certain crimes. The witness had known of others who had committed similar crimes and who did not get more than 30 years’ imprisonment, and therefore this witness obviously felt that he deserved the same lenience.

The ideas that only God can forgive the sins committed during the genocide and that God’s forgiveness was a prerequisite for the forgiveness by the family of the victims and of the state resonates with a statement attributed to the \textit{préfet} in Butare, who allegedly said the following to perpetrators: ‘Kill the Tutsis and then go to the confessional and confess and God will forgive you.’\textsuperscript{782} While one of the biblical Ten Commandments clearly state that one should not kill, the Bible also says that ‘If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’\textsuperscript{783} Thus, the \textit{préfet}’s alleged claim has some support in the Bible. Given also that the Rwandan Government granted reduced sentences to those who confessed and pleaded guilty, the notion of confession leading to the forgiveness of God, the victims, and the state was likely perceived as sanctioned by Church and state.

Testimonies tell how church representatives came to convince prisoners to confess to their crimes, in order to be pardoned by God, while they signed their confessions to the Prosecution department.\textsuperscript{784} Both church and state had an interest in the confessions of the perpetrators. The Catholic Church had been widely criticised both in and outside of Rwanda for its involvement in Rwandan politics under Habyarimana, the involvement of several church representatives in the genocide, the lack of response to the genocide, and the failure to take responsibility after the killings had ended.\textsuperscript{785} The Catholic Church had since attempted to restore the trust lost in the early years of the 1990s. The testimonies of clerics who attempted to convince suspected perpetrators to tell the truth and confess to crimes concur with the Catholic Church’s strategy of assuming a crucial role in the reconciliation process after the genocide.\textsuperscript{786}

Anne Kubai argues that the concepts of confession and forgiveness were adopted by the Rwandan government after Prison Fellowship

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{781} ICTR-2000-61-T (Gatete), Transcript, 9 March 2010.
\item \textsuperscript{782} ICTR-98-42-T (Niyamasuhuko et al.), Transcript, 28 September 2004.
\item \textsuperscript{783} 1 John 1:1.
\item \textsuperscript{784} See, for example, ICTR-01-66-T (Seromba), Transcript, 7 October 2004; ICTR-00-56-I (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 20 October 2005; ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 29 March 2006.
\item \textsuperscript{785} Gatwa 2006, pp. 252–5.
\item \textsuperscript{786} Schliesser 2018, p. 7.
\end{itemize}
International had introduced them to the Rwandan prisons.\textsuperscript{787} Prison Fellowship International established ministries in the Rwandan prisons to encourage inmates to seek forgiveness through confession.\textsuperscript{788} In the context of reconciliation, rebuilding the country, and achieving the visions set out by the government, the concepts of confession and forgiveness were harnessed by the church and the state as tools to “heal and rise like the proverbial phoenix from the ashes of genocide.”\textsuperscript{789}

With this in mind, the conclusions to be drawn here are first of all that the matter of God’s forgiveness had become strongly associated with a legal pardon or reduced sentence. Second, we can conclude that God’s forgiveness, resulting in the forgiveness of the state and the victims, led to a sense of redemption and rebirth into innocence. Being repentant, having received the forgiveness of God, state and victim, meant that one was cleansed from unrighteousness. In the context of the tribunal, those forgiven claimed to once again be trustworthy, as the next subsection will show.

\textit{God’s honest truth}

Having been forgiven by God, state, and victims, several perpetrators acting as witnesses claimed this as evidence for them to be truthful witnesses, and thus honest and trustworthy in their testimonies. Having had their innocence restored, they argued that they were now telling the truth, as truth was a Christian virtue, and that telling the truth was part of their repentance.\textsuperscript{790} The attorneys for the Prosecution as well as for the Defence were well aware of the notion of forgiveness in return for a reduced sentence, and used it to question the sincerity and credibility of the witnesses.

Such was the case in the Military II trial, when Christopher Black, the defence attorney for the former General and Chief of the Rwandan gendarmerie Augustin Ndindiliyimana, was cross-examining a witness for the Prosecution and suggested:

\begin{quote}
You didn’t get a renewed sense of faith and desiring of forgiveness from God until 2002, 2003, when they told you this new process, if you began confessing you could get released. So, I suggest to you, sir, that the reason you decided to confess was not because
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{787} Kubai 2016, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{788} Kubai 2016, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{789} Kubai 2016, p. 8.
\textsuperscript{790} See, for example, ICTR-01-66-T (Seromba), 5 April 2006, para. 736; ICTR-01-66-T (Seromba), 27-03-2006, para. 252.
\end{footnotes}
you found God but because they were informing you that if you confessed you could get released.\textsuperscript{791}

Questioning the sincerity of the faith of this witness had to do with the fact that perpetrators were given a pardon from the Rwandan government, provided that they testify against other alleged perpetrators. Regardless if these testimonies were honest or not, the credibility was compromised.\textsuperscript{792} Another witness in the same trial was questioned in a similar way. The witness claimed to have turned himself in to the Rwandan authorities in 1997, stating that as his conscience forced him to tell the truth, to ask the forgiveness of God and man, and possibly face the death penalty that was still applied in Rwanda at the time:

\begin{quote}
My objective was to tell the truth and ask God to pardon me;
however, I knew that I run [sic] the risk of being sentenced to death,
but even so, I knew that I was safe in my spiritual life.\textsuperscript{793}
\end{quote}

Black suggested, without providing any evidence, that the witness had been arrested, rather than turned himself in to save his spiritual life, stating that ‘you didn’t care much about your spiritual life in 1994, so why suddenly your spiritual life is important in 1997?’\textsuperscript{794} To prove that these confessions were coerced through promises of a legal pardon and the forgiveness of God, Black cross-examined a witness who was on the prison \textit{gacaca} committee. This committee consisted of inmates who had already confessed, and the prison \textit{gacaca} was initiated to sensitize the inmates to confess and speak the truth of crimes committed. When asked how this was done, the witness said:

\begin{quote}
We used, for instance, the word of God; for the word of God makes it possible for people, once they know it, to confess their crimes, and once they confessed, to ask to be pardoned […] we use the Good News; the word of God to convince the detainees.\textsuperscript{795}
\end{quote}

Black noted that one of the Ten Commandments states that one should not bear false witness, and asks how the Bible was used to persuade people to talk ‘when the Bible says it’s a sin to say things which are not true?’\textsuperscript{796} While the strategy on the part of the Defence clearly was to undermine

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{791 ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 9 June 2004.}
\footnotetext{792 ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 9 June 2004.}
\footnotetext{793 ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 19 October 2005.}
\footnotetext{794 ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 19 October 2005.}
\footnotetext{795 ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 20 October 2005.}
\footnotetext{796 ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 20 October 2005.}
\end{footnotes}
the prison *gacaca*, accusing them of producing false testimonies, the witness claimed that no one was forced to lie, only encouraged to tell the truth, and those who were unwilling to speak could simply await trial.\(^{797}\)

It was thus a way for inmates in the overcrowded prisons to reach trial sooner. The use of Christianity and the faith of the inmates, according to this witness, was not coercive, but offered a fast track to justice. It is possible that many of the inmates who had faith before the genocide may have lost some or all of that trust in God during the events of 1994. By using the word of God, as demonstrated in the statement above, the prison *gacaca* could provide not only a way to secular justice, but to forgiveness from God, and in order to reach both, truth was imperative. In fact, Ben Weinberg’s study shows that some perpetrators have found God again after the genocide due to the forgiveness given by God through the Rwandan authorities.\(^{798}\)

The truthfulness of witnesses and defendants is a constant issue of debate in most trials. In the closing arguments in the trial against Jean de Dieu Kamuhanda, the Defence attorney, Patricia Mongo, reviewed the testimonies of the Prosecution witnesses. She noted that the facts did not add up in the testimony of one witness, and when confronted with said facts, she claimed that the witness replied, ‘Well, as far as I’m concerned, I am telling the truth; I am a Christian.’\(^{799}\) However, Mongo quotes the witness incorrectly. What the witness actually said was: ‘What I said is the truth. I am telling the truth here. I am a Christian. I am a believer. I was baptised.’\(^{800}\) Misquoted or not, the facts contradicted his testimony regardless of his Christian beliefs.

In a similar manner, in the trial of the Minister of National Education in the interim government, André Rwamakuba, one prosecutor accused a witness of being biased and attempting to clear the name of the former Minister. The response of the witness was that she was a Tutsi and by logic would not have testified in defence of Rwamakuba. To verify that alleged fact, she argues: ‘I am telling the truth because I am a Christian and I am a believer and I know God would punish me for [being biased].’\(^{801}\) This witness was deemed credible by the tribunal, not due to her Christian faith, but because of the consistency in her testimonies and those given by others.

As demonstrated, this use of Christian faith as evidence of credibility and trustworthiness was frequent. At times, however, it was a strategy on the part of the attorneys. In the trial of Théoneste Bagosora, who is often

\(^{797}\) ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindilyimana et al.), Transcript, 20 October 2005.

\(^{798}\) Weinberg 2015, p. 27.

\(^{799}\) ICTR-99-54A-T (Kamuhanda), Transcript, 28 August 2003.

\(^{800}\) ICTR-99-54-T (Kamuhanda), Transcript, 6 May 2002.

\(^{801}\) ICTR-98-44C-T (Rwamakuba), Transcript, 1 December 2005.
referred to as the spider in the genocidal web, Bagosora’s wife, Isabelle Uzanyinzoga, was called to testify in his defence. The Prosecution began their cross-examination by asking about her religious beliefs. The Defence objected due to their inability to see the relevance of such questions. The Prosecution argued that they had to ask the question as part of their strategy and hence could not explain the relevance. The objection was overruled and the Prosecution continued. Uzanyinzoga answered that she was a devout Catholic, and as for the next question stated that they had been married in a church and she had made her wedding vows before God. The strategy mentioned by the Prosecution was revealed to be a cunning way of her disproving the credibility of Isabelle Uzanyinzoga. As she had made her vows before God, being a devoted Christian, she would be unable to answer any questions regarding the guilt of her husband in a truthful manner. Her wedding vows would simply prevent any incriminating answers. The Prosecutor could have argued that the fact that Uzanyinzoga was married to Théoneste Bagosora made her biased and therefore unreliable as a witness. Interestingly, he instead chose to make it a matter of faith.

Even when the credibility of a witness was not questioned, some still emphasised their honesty by referring to their Christian beliefs. One witness was asked standard questions about whether or not he had any kind of relation to the defendant, or any personal interests in testifying on the defendant’s behalf, to which the witness answered: ‘I came here to speak the truth because I am a man and I believe in God.’

Without physical, substantial evidence, or the corroboration of other witnesses as evidence of truth, there was very little these witnesses could do to claim their honesty. Thus, they turned to God as a character witness. Again, one of the Ten Commandments in the Bible says, ‘You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.’ Claiming to be a man of faith is thereby equal to saying that one will not bear false witness. It offers no substantial or physical evidence, but it was likely the only evidence they could produce. However, it would not serve as evidence in the tribunal. In fact, as in the case of Théoneste Bagosora’s wife, and others, their faith was often used against them, regardless if they were laymen or clergy, most certainly so in the latter case.

In the closing arguments in the joint trial often referred to as the Butare case, the truth of witnesses was again questioned. In this instance, the witness in question was a priest, and the Defence argued that he was telling the truth, mainly due to the priest’s position: ‘Father Titiano is a man of God, a strong believer and his faith is unshakeable. He is a man who

803 ICTR-97-31-T (Renzaho), Transcript, 6 September 2007.
804 Exodus 20:16.
cannot lie or hide the truth simply to assist someone he knew well. While also pointing out the lack of inconsistencies in his testimony, emphasis was put on this man’s faith. The Prosecution did not agree that faith equals honesty:

Man of God or not, they are all equal before you and the assessment of their evidence should be done in a similar manner, not favouring anybody because of their background or profession.

What these statements are evidence of is that religiosity mattered greatly in the ICTR trials. Whether it was used by witnesses or defendants to prove their credibility, or by attorneys to prove the opposite, the use in itself had clear purposes. The strong link between truth and religiosity meant that questioning a person’s honesty, that person’s religiosity was also questioned. Subsequently, the self-proclaimed, renewed innocence of these witnesses was also questioned, resulting in them being devalued and reduced to the perpetrators they were during the genocide.

One of the most explicit examples of this is when an attorney stated: ‘So, Mr Witness, you are a person who kills unarmed civilians, escapes justice, lives as a fugitive, but promises to tell the truth. Right?’ The witness being cross-examined has been mentioned in a previous subsection – he had escaped from justice Rwanda due to having been given a life sentence he claimed he did not deserve. He argued that he had been forgiven by God, and thus he was no longer the man he was in 1994, and asserted that he would never commit such crimes again. However, the forgiveness of God did not convince one of the trial judges, who noted: ‘You have sought for forgiveness which is accompanied by disobedience.’ The witness admitted to having killed, and that he deserved punishment. He had asked for forgiveness, but fled because of disappointment in the sentence given. Having refused to submit to justice in this context made him seem less credible, and the greater part of the cross-examination ended up being focused on the matter of the witness telling the truth, rather than the alleged crimes of the defendant.

The matter of faith in Rwanda is indeed complicated. As this thesis has demonstrated, religious references were used for several different purposes. Although religion was used by Hutu extremist propagandists before and during the genocide in the devaluation of the Tutsis, in the judicial aftermath religion has become synonymous with piety. If it is true

---

807 ICTR-2000-61-T (Gatete), Transcript, 9 March 2010.
808 ICTR-2000-61-T (Gatete), Transcript, 9 March 2010.
that the perpetrators who testified in the ICTR had returned to Christianity after or due to God’s forgiveness, the question is what happened to their faith during the genocide.

Perpetrators interviewed by Jean Hatzfeld give some insight into this, as they have claimed that their faith in God was of a lower priority than the Rwandan leadership during the genocide. Most claimed to have kept their faith, but set it aside as they did not think it was appropriate to pray, go to church, or refrain from killing on Sundays as God should not be involved in such matters.\(^809\) If these claims are true then it tells us something both of the effectiveness of the strategies in the use of religious rhetoric in Hutu extremist propaganda, and of how the matter of forgiveness, confession, and truth came to be important in the judicial aftermath.

Under the Habyarimana regime the Catholic Church was highly politicised, and politics was highly Christianised.\(^810\) To have faith in God entailed, in part, to have faith in the regime. As I have already demonstrated, the Hutu extremist media continued along these lines, making Hutu nationalism a part of Christianity. For some, this rhetoric clearly made sense. In the judicial aftermath, however, Christianity again changed. As Anne Kubai has noted, it was seemingly still political, as matters of confession, truth, and forgiveness were closely related to the matter of secular law.\(^811\)

**God as a Character Witness**

Closely related to the matters of truth and forgiveness is the question of innocence. In the trials, the innocence of the defendants and witnesses was questioned and defended through religious references in a way very similar to the ways in which truth and forgiveness was ascertained. Thus Emmanuel Rukundo, one of the priests on trial in the ICTR, was found guilty of genocide and several counts of murder as a crime against humanity; however, witnesses testified in his defence, one of them saying:

> Well, as far as I’m concerned, Emmanuel Rukundo is a priest, and a priest should be considered as a man of God who should teach love among men. Anti-Tutsi statements, I fail to see under what circumstances he can say such things.\(^812\)


\(^{810}\) Prunier 2010, p. 125.

\(^{811}\) Kubai 2016.

\(^{812}\) ICTR-01-70-T (Rukundo), Transcript, 24 September 2007.
Much like in other trials of clerics, the position as priest is here referred to as proof that the person holding the position also is upholding Christian virtues, or to put it differently, a man of God is as such a moral person. What is of interest in the statement above is thus not only that the witness says that a priest ‘should’ teach love among men, but also, given that, the witness cannot see that it would be possible for a priest to make anti-Tutsi statements. The word ‘should’ makes this testimony quite meaningless as evidence, as the failure to see the circumstances under which Emmanuel Rukundo could make anti-Tutsi statements rests solely on the subjective notion of what a priest should or should not do.

Considering that more than 90 per cent of the Rwandans were Christians in the early 1990s, and that 1,681,648 people were found guilty of crimes of genocide in the gacaca alone, it is safe to assume that a majority of the perpetrators were Christians. The number of priests found guilty of crimes of genocide also provide evidence that religiosity did not prevent people from committing murders during the genocide. And yet, the religiosity of the defendants was often referred to as proof of good character in the tribunal. Mathieu Ngirumpatse, the President of the Presidential party, MRND, was one of the defendants who did precisely this. One witness in the defence of Ngirumpatse stated:

I know that Mathieu was a very Christian person. It was not difficult to tell. You just need to open the hymn books of Rwanda and you see his compositions. A person who sets – who accords so much time to God is probably not by – is not incidental. I happened to know the virtue of Christianity, and I have seen of him all the virtues that one would want to see about a Christian. [...] I told you that I had to play organs to hymns that he composed. There are hymns that he composed, the music and the lyrics as well. And when you go through them, you feel that he is a person who fears God. I have – I even have songs that he sang himself, and you know that he is a person who fears God and who seeks peace everywhere. So I can only assess him on the basis of the elements of what I know of him, and I must say that I find him humble, peaceful and with everything that goes with being a Christian.814

The description of Mathieu Ngirumpatse maintains a focus on his Christian virtues. Rather than explicitly talking about the good qualities, the witness states that Ngirumpatse was a Christian, and thus incapable of contributing to the genocide.

---

813 This is the official number from the National Service of the Gacaca Gourts.
814 ICTR-98-44-T (Karemera et al.), Transcript, 26 October 2010.
Even more explicit than this was Jean Mpambara, a bourgmestre in Rukara commune at the time of the genocide. He was acquitted of all charges, which included planning and facilitating attacks against Tutsis, distributing weapons to Hutu perpetrators, and gathering Tutsis to then order the Interahamwe to kill them.\footnote{ICTR-2001-65-I (Mpambara), Amended Indictment, 7 March 2005.} During the trial, the Prosecution seemingly had difficulties finding evidence against Mpambara. At times their cross-examination worked in favour of the Defence, when they claimed that he had to be cautious in how he ran the commune. The Prosecution argued that he was caught between the watchful eyes of the RPF and the Hutu extremists, and feared being seen as an accomplice of either. Mpambara’s response was:

I am a Christian. Anything concerning killings, I would fight against it. I had to respect the human rights. Anything that involves killing I feared it, and I still fear it right now, Mr Prosecutor. It is within the laws of God.\footnote{ICTR-01-65-T (Mpambara), Transcript, 8 February 2006.}

This statement is ambiguous. The fear of anything that involves killing was not uniquely a Christian phenomenon. In fact many testified to having been forced to kill to save the lives of loved ones.\footnote{To give one of many examples, one perpetrator told the Tribunal that a Tutsi had been found hiding in his house. At first he refused to kill the Tutsi, but then, he said, ‘they forced my wife and my children to lie on the ground. When they brandished a weapon – a machete to kill them, I said, ’No wait, I’m going to kill this person.’ So I took the machete, asked God for forgiveness and I killed that person.’ ICTR-2005-88-T (Kalimanzira), 3 December 2008.} In this instance, however, the attempt is to claim that he had not feared being perceived as an accomplice of the RPF or the Hutu extremists, but claimed instead that he believed that ‘we are all Rwandese and we are supposed to work for our country.’\footnote{ICTR-01-65-T (Mpambara), Transcript, 8 February 2006.} By his own account, his Christian conscience had led him to follow God’s laws.

Pauline Nyiramasuhuko – Minister for Family Welfare and the Advancement of Women, the first woman convicted of crimes of genocide, and the first woman convicted of rape as a crime of genocide – defended herself against the accusations of having handed out condoms and urged the Interahamwe to rape and kill Tutsi women in revenge for them stealing Hutu men:

I’m a Christian. I cannot commit that kind of sin. I wouldn’t do that against a Rwandan woman. That is impossible. […] Let me tell you that is something unbelievable. Among some of the sins

\footnote{ICTR-01-65-T (Mpambara), Transcript, 8 February 2006.}
that I might have committed, I wouldn’t be able to commit that
one. I am a Christian. I forgive that person who made such a
statement, but that person has stained my image.819

Pauline Nyiramasuhuko claimed to have been unable to commit rape
against a Rwandan woman. However, as previous chapters have shown,
the Tutsi were not regarded as Rwandans, that was one of the main points
of Hutu propaganda. Furthermore, as noted by several scholars, the roles
of women changed, and any sense of sisterhood or common identity as
women was superseded by ethnic identity.820 Women committed atrocities
against other women on numerous occasions during the Rwandan
genocide, and thus, as the tribunal concludes, she was fully capable of
committing the suggested crime.

There are two ways to interpret Nyiramasuhuko’s use of the word
Rwandan. The first, and least likely, is that she uses it as perpetrators did
during the genocide, including Hutus, in which case she would not be lying
in court. As mentioned above, that would make sense given the definition
of ‘Rwanda’ in Hutu propaganda. However, that would have meant self-
incrimination. The second and more likely interpretation is that
Nyiramasuhuko was attempting to prove that she was without prejudice,
and wanted to portray herself as a person who saw both Tutsis and Hutus
as Rwandans. There is evidence of the second interpretation being correct,
as she later stated that one cannot make a distinction between Hutu and
Tutsi, as that would be discrimination.821 Thus, she claimed not to be
prejudiced, and to be unable to commit rape or to encourage others to do
so, due to her Christian beliefs. To emphasise her piety she forgives the
accuser and victimises herself, while at the same time placing herself
morally above the witness testifying against her.

The final example in this subsection and subchapter concerns Eliézer
Niyitegeka – a former journalist, founding member of the opposition party
the Mouvement Démocratique Républican (MDR), and Minister of
Information in the interim government. Niyitegeka was brought to trial
and sentenced to life imprisonment for having led and participated in
massacres, among other crimes. In spite of overwhelming evidence against
him, some witnesses testified in his defence. One claimed:

\[
\text{Killing, theft, are all things that Eliézer could not support. Unless}
\text{you did not know Eliézer, his father was a pastor. He was a}
\text{Christian, and he attended church services. Had he committed}
\text{these crimes, he would have gone against the objectives of MDR.}
\]

820 See Brown 2018; Sharlach 1999; and Taylor 1999.
and he would have sinned against his religious convictions. He could not do things against his religious convictions.\textsuperscript{822}

Again, the Christian faith is referred to as the reason crimes could not have been committed. And again, the number of Christians in Rwanda exceeded 90 per cent of the population. If 1,681,648 people were found guilty of crimes of genocide in the \textit{gacaca} alone during its active period between 2001 and 2012 – and the \textit{gacaca} was not legally allowed to handle Category I crimes until 2008,\textsuperscript{823} thus excluding all crimes of planning, organising, instigating the genocide, or carrying out large-scale massacres – it would logically mean that a majority of those who committed crimes of genocide were Christians. In spite of this, these statements were made in attempts to convey their Christian faith as evidence of innocence.

In fact, throughout the trials, one of the constant themes is the matter of innocence. In a Christian context, the use of God and faith as evidence of innocence, credibility, and moral uprightness makes sense. However, in a court of law, such as the tribunal, it did not serve as evidence. Yet to the people using religion it still bore some importance. To many it seems to have been the only defence against accusations of dishonesty or lack of credibility, and although invalid as evidence of the opposite, it provided a moral high ground. Having their credibility and honesty questioned was demeaning, but when this also included their faith, in one sense, they switched places with their accusers. If they were devoted Christians falsely accused, then the villains in this context would be the attorneys, judges, witnesses who testified against them. Again, the claims of victimhood served important purposes. Bar-Tal et al. defines victims as individuals who believe themselves to have been harmed, without being responsible for the act or in a position to prevent it, and to be morally superior and suffering from injustice and therefore entitled to sympathy.\textsuperscript{824} Even those who committed crimes during the genocide could claim victimhood in the tribunal, solely due to the accusations against their character and their religiosity.

In the final part of this chapter, the matter of faith and religiosity will be further analysed by looking at the trial of Father Athanase Seromba, with whom this thesis began.

\textsuperscript{822} ICTR-96-14-T (Niyitegeka), Transcript, 10 July 2007.
6.5 Father Seromba and the importance of faith

Religion mattered in Rwanda. Some church representatives participated in the genocide, such as Sister Gertrude and Sister Maria Kisitowho who played active roles in the massacre of 7,000 Tutsis hiding in their convent. Their actions signalled the approval of the Church to exterminate the Tutsis. Thus, faith may have been disregarded by some, and this disregarded faith may have influenced the actions of those to whom faith still mattered. One perpetrator later testified to this, saying that since Christ did not speak through the mouths of the priests, they did nothing wrong.

Several other stories have emerged to give evidence of the importance of faith. After the genocide, one perpetrator told of a day when he and his comrades found a number of Tutsis hiding in a field. What he claimed haunted him the most afterward was that the Tutsis never faced him or his fellow perpetrators to beg for their lives, but sat calmly in a circle praying to God to receive their souls.

Then there is the story of Sister Félicité Niyitegeka. She was a Catholic nun working at an orphanage in Giseyi, who hid a number of refugees in her home, while arranging safe passage for them to Zaïre during the genocide. Even when she received warning that the Interahamwe militia had learnt of her helping Tutsis she refused to stop. When the Interahamwe eventually arrived at the orphanage, she stood in front of the thirty Tutsi refugees she was harbouring. The Interahamwe told her that she could live if only she surrendered the refugees, but she refused, saying that they would stay together in life and in death. The Interahamwe then began killing the Tutsis one by one, continuously begging her to hand them over to spare her own life, and yet she refused. When Sister Niyitegeka was the only one left, she asked the Interahamwe to kill her too. Before the militia leader shot her, he asked her to pray for his soul.

In the ICTR trials, there is ample evidence of the importance of faith. After the genocide, Father Athanase Seromba, who had his own church demolished, in which 2,000 Tutsis had sought refuge, fled to Italy with the help of Catholic monks. There he worked as a priest near Florence under the assumed name Anastasio Sumba Bura. When he was found, he was put under pressure to surrender, which he finally did in 2002. He was brought to the ICTR, where he pleaded not guilty to all charges. This last

826 Hatzfeld 2005, p. 145.
827 Hatzfeld 2009, p. 143.
The thrice asked question

The trial of Athanase Seromba was, as his defence attorney noted, one of ‘faith in men, faith in God.’

Of the accusations against Seromba, the most serious was that he had ordered the destruction of the church. The tribunal found him not guilty of this charge, but noted that he had approved of the demolition and had encouraged the bulldozer driver to do it. The bulldozer driver, Anastase Nkinamubanzi, was a Christian Hutu working on the construction of a road nearby the Nyange church. Having been told to bring the bulldozer to the church, he was highly reluctant to carry out the orders he had received by the authorities on site, until Father Seromba arrived. In early testimonies given by the bulldozer driver, he stated that he feared the priest enough to comply when Father Seromba allegedly said, ‘There are many Christians abroad. That church – this church will be rebuilt in three days.’ Before the tribunal, Nkinamubanzi claimed to have been tortured and forced to sign false statements implicating Father Seromba, and instead of testifying for the Prosecution he instead chose to speak in the defence of Seromba, stating: ‘Life is short on earth. And I didn’t want to be on bad terms with my God.’

Regardless of Nkinamubanzi’s decision to defend the priest that he in early interviews claimed had ordered and paid him to demolish the church, the altered versions of his testimonies were not deemed credible by the tribunal. There were numerous testimonies, including that of Nkinamubanzi given in early investigations, claiming that Nkinamubanzi had asked Father Seromba three times if he really wanted the church destroyed, and thrice the priest answered yes.
While the number of times the question was posed and answered may not seem to have been relevant to the accusation, I would argue that in this particular trial, against a priest who approved of the demolition of his own church, the number is highly relevant. There are numbers in the Bible that are ascribed divine importance. The number three is one of them. Aside from the Holy Trinity – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost – God is described as the one who is, who was, and who will be; Jesus was given three gifts from the three Kings; He prayed three times at Gethsemane, was disowned by Peter three times; and crucified on the third hour of the day, resulting in three hours of darkness; Jesus was dead for three days and nights; and the resurrection was witnessed by three people, to name but a few examples. Thus, I argue that the focus on the three times posed and answered question, was not a coincidence. While the testimonies varied on the details, the thrice asked question occurs in all of them. One witness made the following claim:

The bulldozer driver – spoke to him, Seromba, saying ‘Really Father, do you accept that I should destroy this church?’ I saw Father Athanase Seromba nod. The driver spoke to him again, to Father Seromba. And then for a third time, ‘Father do you accept that I should destroy this church?’ And Father Seromba answered in these words, ‘Unless you yourselves are Inyenzi, destroy it. All we want is to get rid of Inyenzi. As for the rest of it, we are the Hutu and many. If we get rid of the Inyenzi, we will build another church.’

Another witness repeated that the question was asked three times, but claimed that after the third, Seromba had answered:

Destroy the church. We the Hutus are many in number, and furthermore in the house of God, demons have got in there. And we are going to build another church.

While there are similarities, what is done in these statements differs significantly. In the first, Seromba is allegedly using the word *inyenzi* in reference to the Tutsi refugees. There is also an implicit threat, in that a refusal to destroy the church would result in the bulldozer driver being considered a Tutsi, and thus suffer the same fate as the refugees in the church. In a letter written to the Rwandan Supreme Court, Anastase Nkinamubanzi claimed that he had been brought to the church with a friend, named Everiste Ntahokiriye, who was killed instantly when they

---

initially refused to destroy the church.\textsuperscript{838} If that is true, then it could explain why the witness giving the first testimony has Seromba respond to Nkinamubanzi in plural.\textsuperscript{839} With this threat, and the use of the word \textit{inyenzi}, Father Seromba is represented by the witness as dehumanising and threatening, and as one who disregards his role as a clergyman.

In the second testimony, on the other hand, Seromba does not use \textit{inyenzi}, but instead claims that refugees are demons, and emphasises that these ‘demons’ are in the house of God. In any context, demons would likely have been provocative to a Christian, but demons in the house of God alter the context drastically. While both \textit{inyenzi} and demon are devaluing words, I would argue that the latter is more so than the former, particularly in this context. The different testimonies portray him in very different manners. If he used the word \textit{inyenzi} he is portrayed much like any other instigators during the genocide, and less like a priest. If he used ‘demons’, in reference to the Tutsis in the church, he is using his position as a priest to convince the Christian bulldozer driver that it is morally acceptable to destroy the church.

Whether Seromba was abusing or ignoring his position as a priest, both of these testimonies exacerbate the severity of his crimes. The question asked and answered three times injects a biblical element into the devaluation of Athanase Seromba.

\textit{The refusal to say mass}

One of the issues given a great deal of attention in the Seromba trial was his refusal to say mass for the refugees in the Nyange church.\textsuperscript{840} This was only briefly mentioned in the indictment, in relation to his refusal to let the refugees leave the church to gather food. Emphasised in the indictment is that Seromba in his refusal ‘stressed that he didn’t want to do that for the \textit{Inyenzi}.’\textsuperscript{841} Thus, the refusal gained importance only in relation to the use of the word \textit{inyenzi}. In the trial, however, the importance of Mass for the Christian refugees became a central topic due to the many testimonies on the matter. The Trial Chamber even found this refusal to have caused mental harm to the refugees.\textsuperscript{842}

The refugees arrived at the church on foot, or were brought there by local authorities by car, having been assured that the church would provide

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{838} ICTR-2001-66-I (Seromba), \textit{Judgement and sentence}, 13 December 2006, p. 71.
\item \textsuperscript{839} ‘Unless you yourselves are […]’ ICTR-01-66-T (Seromba), Transcript, 27 June 2006.
\item \textsuperscript{840} ICTR-2001-66-I (Seromba), \textit{Judgement and sentence}, 13 December 2006, pp. 32–34.
\item \textsuperscript{841} ICTR-2001-66-I (Seromba), \textit{Indictment}, 8 June 2001. Italics added.
\item \textsuperscript{842} ICTR-2001-66-I (Seromba), \textit{Judgement and sentence}, 13 December 2006, p. 87. This sentence was reversed in the Appeals Chamber in 2008. See ICTR-2001-66-A (Seromba), \textit{Judgement}, 12 March 2008, p. 81.
\end{itemize}
sanctuary. Once they had arrived, the church was surrounded by Interahamwe, armed both with firearms and machetes. Father Seromba prohibited the refugees from getting food from the parish banana plantation, and ordered the Interahamwe to kill any Tutsi refugees who attempted to leave the church.

The importance of the Christian faith to the Tutsis in the church is evidenced by the fact that although several refugees heard Father Seromba give the order to the Interahamwe, the following day, the refugees still asked him to say Mass. They thus still regarded him as a man of the cloth and expected him to act like one. His refusal was presented to the tribunal as a crime of genocide, to which Seromba’s defence did not agree. They argued that the church had been attacked and occupied by the refugees, and that some of them even had brought chickens into the church. For that reason, Seromba’s attorney Patrice Monthé argued that ‘the church could not anymore be used as a place to say Mass.’

Interestingly, faith becomes a tool of argument both for the Defence and the Prosecution on this point. The Defence argued that Mass is sacred and that it requires certain standards that did not exist in the church because of the sheer number of refugees taking shelter within. It is true that the ceremony of Mass in Catholicism is sacred, since it is seen as containing ‘the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself.’ Thus, the Defence argued that it would be a violation of the Catholic faith to celebrate Mass for the refugees. The Prosecution, on the other hand, argued that the number of refugees and animals was not the reason for Seromba’s refusal. They instead relied on witness testimonies, stating that Father Seromba had said that he

\[\text{didn’t have time to waste in celebrating mass for the Tutsi, because our brother, the Tutsi, had attacked the country and had killed President Habyarimana, and that the god of the Tutsi was – no longer existed.}\]

While the indictment emphasised Seromba’s alleged use of the word *inyenzi* as dehumanising, throughout the course of the trial it becomes clear that the act of refusing to say Mass is where the gravest devaluation of the Tutsi refugees could be found. If the priest, in whom the Tutsi congregation placed their trust and lives, referred to the Tutsis as *inyenzi*,

---

847 Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1324.
848 ICTR-01-66-T (Seromba), Transcript, 15 October 2004.
he proved that he was prejudice against the Tutsis. When refusing to say mass, he denied them Christian rights, as well as their human rights, conveying the message that the Tutsis had their own god and therefore did not belong to the Catholic community. His claim that the Tutsi god ‘no longer existed’ should be interpreted against the background of the Hutu extremists’ separation of the Hutus and Tutsis by creating a separate Hutu god, who had no interest in protecting the Tutsis. In the ICTR, Father Seromba’s alleged devaluation of the Tutsis worked in two ways; it gave an insight into the devaluation of the Tutsis, but at the same time it was devaluing the priesthood of Father Seromba.

There are similarities to the trial of Pastor Elizaphan Ntakirutimana. On 15 April 1994, seven Tutsis, six of them Pastors, wrote a letter to Seventh-Day Adventist Pastor Ntakirutimana on behalf of the several hundred Tutsis taking refuge in the Mugonero complex in western Rwanda. The letter, in the English translation, reads as follows:

Dear our leader, Pastor Ntakirutimana Elizaphan, How are you. We wish you to be strong in all these problems we are facing. We wish to inform you that we have heard that tomorrow we shall die with our families. We therefore request you to intervene on our behalf and talk with the [bourgmestre]. We believe and with the help of God who entrusted you the leadership of this flock which is going to be destroyed. Your intervention will be highly appreciated, the same way as Jews were saved by Esther. We should appreciate if you would contact the [bourgmestre] as soon as possible. We give honour to you.849

What the refugees did was to beg for help in a way they clearly believed would be taken to heart by their pastor. First of all, they establish and acknowledge that Ntakirutimana is their leader, and that this leadership was entrusted to him by God, thus noting his divine responsibility. Second, they wish him to be strong in the problems they were facing, thereby implying that the refugees and the pastor belong together and face a common problem. Being a Hutu and helping the perpetrators, Pastor Ntakirutimana did not face the same problems that the refugees faced, and yet, the sentence places him in the same situation as his parishioners. The third thing the refugees did was to include the analogy of Esther and the Jews. In this story, Esther – a Jewish woman who keeps her heritage a secret – becomes the wife of King Ahasuerus. When Esther’s cousin Mordecai refuses to bow to the court official Haman, Haman convinces the King to have Mordecai and indeed every Jew in the kingdom killed.

849 ICTR-96-10 & ICTR-96-17-T (Ntakirutimana et al.), *Judgement and sentence*, 21 February 2003, p. 58.
When Mordecai unveils a plot to assassinate the King, Haman attempts to kill Esther, but fails and is hanged. Esther, whom the King has promised everything she desires, convinces him to spare the Jews.\textsuperscript{850}

By including this subtle reference, the refugees recognised that they were to be the victims of mass murder. They also placed themselves in the position of the Jews. Although the Jews in the story of Esther were saved from extermination, the European Jews in 1940s were not. Given the fact that the Nazis and the holocaust references were used in the propaganda during the genocide, it is likely that the Holocaust was known in Rwanda at the time. Thus, the Tutsis in the Mugonero complex compared themselves to the victims of the Holocaust, clearly knowing that they were the intended victims of genocide, but they did so referring to a story that gave hope for a different outcome. Pastor Ntakirutimana is given the choice of either becoming a hero, like Esther, or allowing the massacre to happen. By giving him this choice through a religious analogy, rather than referring directly to the Holocaust, it is clear that they were appealing to his Christian moral sense.

One point that was discussed in the trials against the priests was that question of their authority and whether they were in a position to make any difference. The case of Ntakirutimana gives some insight. Perhaps he did not have the authority to save the people in the complex, provided he had that ambition, but the Tutsis inside the church clearly believed that he did.

Pastor Ntakirutimana did go to the bourgmestre. However, it is unclear if he went to deliver the message or to facilitate the attack on the complex, as several witnesses later observed him transporting armed Hutus who then attacked the Mugonero complex. While the purpose of his visit to the mayor is unknown, it is clear that he did respond to the letter from the refugees. Although the testimonies regarding the reply differ, it was established that he replied that there was nothing he could do for them. This reply was in writing, and Pastor Ntakirutimana did not deliver it personally. The tribunal argued that the Pastor had ‘distanced himself from his Tutsi pastors and his flock in the hour of need.’\textsuperscript{851} The tribunal found his actions to be a betrayal of the trust placed in him as a pastor.

The analogy made by the refugees in the Mugonero complex between their own situation and that of the Jews as told in the book of Esther was meant to elevate a profane situation to a divine level. Even if the letter to Ntakirutimana did not alter the outcome for the refugees, who were killed on 16 April 1994, having kept their assailants at bay for a few days, it mattered in court, as it provided an insight into the context and actions –

\textsuperscript{850} Book of Esther.
\textsuperscript{851} ICTR-96-10 & ICTR-96-17-T (Ntakirutimana et al.), \textit{Judgement and sentence}, 21 February 2003, p. 249.
or lack thereof – of the pastor. It also gives evidence of the strategic use of faith. The Tutsi pastors who wrote the letter knew how to appeal to the conscience their colleague. They had faith in him, and the betrayal of that faith resulted in a ten-year-long prison sentence. Pastor Ntakirutimana was the first clergyman to be sentenced in the ICTR and much like the later trial of Father Seromba, the betrayal of the faith placed in them as clergymen made a difference in the outcome of their trials.

**The removal of the Eucharist**

Having refused to celebrate Mass with the refugees who had sought shelter in his church, Father Seromba entered the church to remove all sacred and valuable objects, including those needed to celebrate Mass. One defence witness argued that the refugees did not object to this, as they were Catholics and understood the importance of keeping the objects safe.852 Another witness, a survivor, claimed that this was the point at which the refugees understood that they would be killed.853 Yet another survivor was pressed by Defence attorney Patrice Monthé on the point of the removal of the sacred objects. Monthé claimed that the removal of the objects had to be done, in accordance with Catholicism, in order for the church to receive the refugees. He argued that the church had to be desecrated by the removal of the Eucharist – the consecrated elements of the Holy Communion – in order for the church to become a place of refuge. The witness agreed, in part, that in Catholicism this is the custom, but responded:

> The removal of sacred objects by Father Seromba on the pretext that the refugees were going to seek refuge there, it is – it is not a law written anywhere. We Christians have the right to be Christians. The church belongs to us. The church does not belong only to Seromba or anyone else. This means that he should not have removed the chalices and the Eucharists. He knows how people are saved with the sacraments. When the Eucharists are removed, people’s rights to be Christians are desecrated. So removing the sacrament meant he took us for people who were no longer Christians, for heathens.854

The witness gives an analysis of the removal of the sacred objects that is highly plausible. Whether or not Father Seromba, as discussed in the

---

previous subsection, claimed that the God of the Tutsis no longer existed, the removal of the Eucharist and other objects gives strong indication that he did not perceive the Tutsis as Christians. The acts of a priest publicly desecrating his church and refusing to say Mass with the Tutsis were indeed devaluing. It would also have given a signal to the Interahamwe outside the church that God approved of the massacre. Through the desecration of the church, the building was no longer sacred, and thus, the massacre would not take place in a house of God. Instead of in the church Father Seromba placed the Eucharist in the oratory, where he continued to celebrate mass. Just not for the Tutsis.

What comes across here is that these Tutsis never lost faith. Not in Godm nor their priest. Regardless of Seromba’s actions, his parishioners still believed he would act as their priest. Whether it was a matter of them actually believing that he, as a servant of God, would do the right thing and save them, or if they simply turned to the only person available, out of desperation, we will likely never know. What we do know is that while he continued to say Mass and administered the Eucharist to the perpetrators, his Tutsi parishioners died in his church.

6.6 Conclusions

In this chapter, I have demonstrated that the use of religious references continued after the genocide. Prior to and during the genocide religious concepts and references had been a matter of devaluation of Tutsis, by representing them in a number of negative ways, and by claiming that the Hutus were the victims of the Tutsi. After the genocide, it became a matter of claiming and competing for victimhood, often by delegitimising others.

The first way in which defendants and witnesses claimed victimhood was by arguing a lack of agency. Some claimed that God had been in control of the context or even their actions. God as a ‘prime mover’ was thus the one who was responsible for any crimes the individual in question had committed, as well as any good deeds they had done.

Through this use of God, defendants and witnesses could distance themselves from others, as they were chosen by God. Hassan Ngeze, the editor-in-chief of Kangura, who had spent three years prior to the genocide, spreading hateful anti-Tutsi propaganda, claimed to have been chosen and used by God to save Tutsis.

Others compared themselves to Jesus, the Messiah. Just as in the cases where the defendants and witnesses used God to avoid accusations, claiming that if God controlled them, they could not be responsible for their actions, the witnesses and defendants who compared themselves and their situation to that of Jesus Christ claimed innocence. However,
through the comparison with the Messiah, they underlined that they were victims of unfair accusations. When defendants and witnesses compared themselves to Christ, both their innocence and the unfairness of the accusations were enhanced since Jesus, the main symbol of innocence and self-sacrifice, suffered unfair trials.

In these trials, the Devil was used in a similar manner, as an entity able to control human actions. As with the use of God, the responsibility for one’s actions is placed on a transcendent entity, and thus any accusations of crimes or any kind of illogical behaviour is not the result of the individual, but of the actions of God or the Devil. While claims to have been controlled by God were made mainly to claim innocence, those claiming to have been controlled by the Devil did so primarily to claim victimhood. Those who used the Devil were mainly perpetrators who had been sentenced, and who now had to defend their credibility as witnesses in the ICTR.

Lastly on this matter, the Devil was used to demonise others, or in claims to having been demonised. In the first of these cases, it was a matter of distancing oneself from others, by claiming that they were demons or the devil, and in the second, it was a matter of claiming victimhood. The latter reflects the Hutu extremist propaganda, where the Tutsi were said to have been dehumanising the Hutus. Here, defendants are claiming to be dehumanised by others. Both are attempts to claim victimhood.

Whether the Devil really should be interpreted as peer pressure, effective propaganda, or fear for one’s own life or the lives of relatives, it gives an account of the situation in Rwanda during the genocide. It is important to understand, as Ben Weinberg’s study indicates, that Christianity in Rwanda was limited to God and the Devil, as representatives of good and evil. Matthew Michael further emphasises that God is a lived reality in Africa, but that the existence of God only explains what is good in the world, and thus the Devil is equally real as an explanation for evil.

What has been further demonstrated is that the forgiveness of God, victims, and state entailed two things: first, that innocence and credibility is restored, which meant that former perpetrators believed themselves to be absolved of all sins; and second, sentences were reduced. Although there is nothing in Rwandan genocide law about God’s forgiveness, confessing crimes did allow for a reduced sentence. If one pleaded guilty before being prosecuted, or before even being on any list of suspects would entail a drastic reduction. By using religion, the word of God, to convince perpetrators to tell the truth and confess to their crimes, God’s

855 Weinberg 2015, p. 20.
856 Michael 2013, pp. 97–98.
forgiveness and a reduced sentence became intertwined. The problem was that witnesses arguing to have been forgiven by God often faced accusations of having sought the forgiveness of God for a reduced sentence rather than out of true regret, which, according to lawyers making such accusations, would compromise their credibility.

In the last part of this chapter I returned to the case of Father Athanase Seromba to show how religious symbols and rituals played an important role in the genocide. It also played an important role in the trials, not only in that of Father Seromba, but in many others. They were using religious concepts and arguments to claim to be victims, or enhance their victimhood, often by delegitimising or dehumanising others.

There are blatant examples of competitive victimhood, as discussed by Sullivan et al. and Noor et al., who argue that perpetrators often claim that ‘one’s in-group also has victim status relative to the harmed out-group.’858 In the ICTR trials, participants did not keep to their groups in such a sense, but individuals claimed victimhood for themselves, most notably perpetrators who claimed victim status relative to that of the Tutsis. Noor et al. rightly notes that competitive victimhood not only exists between antagonists but that it also can exist between victim groups that have been harmed by the same perpetrator.859 In the cases presented here, it is not a matter of victim groups, but of Hutu defendants delegitimising others in order to compete for victimhood and distance themselves from other perpetrators.

Religious belief systems mattered during the war, the genocide, and in the ICTR trials. Even if some may not have lost their faith, or claimed to have faith only to have a sentence reduced, it mattered as the concepts associated with their faith were used as a means to end up on the right side of history.

---

859 Noor et al. 2012, p. 351.
The aim of this thesis has been to study religious concepts and arguments in Hutu extremist propaganda prior to and during the 1994 genocide, as well as in the trials of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) after the genocide, in order to analyse how religion was utilised to victimise, claim victimhood, or mobilise people against others within the same system of religious beliefs. The following three questions have served as a basis for this study: What kinds of religious concepts and arguments were used in the context of the Rwandan genocide, and how? Why were they used and what did these concepts and arguments mean? Finally, did the meanings of the religious arguments change over time and between different contexts, and if so why?

I have conducted a contextual analysis, by analysing the linguistic and social context in which religious concepts and arguments were operationalised. Through this analysis, I have discerned patterns and strategies used by Hutu extremists in the context of the civil war and the genocide, and by people involved in the ICTR trials. These have mainly involved devaluation of ‘the other’ and self-victimisation to justify engagement in perceived defensive aggression, or to incriminate others while emphasising one’s own innocence.

The three empirical chapters revolved around three themes. The first is the attempts by Hutu extremists to separate Hutus from Tutsis by using religious mythologies. The main argument used by Hutu extremists was that the Tutsi, according to religious mythology, were of a non-Rwandan origin, and thus had no rights in Rwanda. The second empirical chapter focused on similar attempts, but through faith, as the Hutu extremists argued that they had a God of their own, while they dismissed the Tutsis as having other religious identities or being atheists. Lastly, the third empirical chapter turned to the judicial aftermath to analyse the different ways religiously influenced arguments and concepts were used to claim victimhood and innocence, or to devalue others, by witnesses, defendants, and legal representatives.
The threat to Rwanda

There are several explanations for the genocide in Rwanda. What most agree on is segregation, exacerbated by the Belgian colonists in the early twentieth century, and the transformation of the wealth-based *ubuhake* system into a racially based social hierarchy that left a large part of the population oppressed and impoverished. While many scholars have focused on the decades of political development and ethnic conflict that eventually culminated in genocide, few have noted the role of religion in this context. Among those few, the role of the churches has been emphasised, rather than religious belief systems.

I would argue that if we are to understand the complex dynamics of genocides, and particularly the processes leading to them, we need an understanding of religion and how it is used in genocide. The argument that the Catholic Church was complicit in the genocide does not explain why so many Catholics resorted to the attempted extermination of fellow Catholics. However, if we understand that God was not the Catholic God at the time of the events, but a Rwandan God who allow or even encourage the extermination of Tutsis, we will get closer to an explanation.

While it is true that the RPF were referred to as *inyenzi* (‘cockroaches’) and that this label over time was expanded to include all Tutsis, I cannot agree with those scholars who hold this to be the main form of devaluation of Tutsis. In order for a devaluation process to be effective, it is not enough to simply refer to a targeted group as animals. The alleged qualities and traits of the animal must also be applied to the group. The Tutsis were referred to as cockroaches, but they were rarely described as possessing the characteristics of cockroaches. Furthermore, these characteristics were used by the guerrilla made up of exiled Tutsis in the 1960s. They called themselves Inyenzi, as they, just as the cockroaches, moved at night in large numbers, and if one was killed several others would take its place. Thus, it would not have served the purpose of the Hutu extremists to transfer these traits to the RPF and the Tutsis in the 1990s. The use of the word *inyenzi* during the civil war was likely as much a reference to the rebellious exiles as it was a reference to the insect. The closest comparison to animals, including the qualities of the animal, is that of the Tutsis as snakes. However, these comparisons were made far less frequently than the comparisons with cockroaches.

860 The *ubuhake* system was not abolished until 1954, when Mwami Mutara III Rudabigwa made the decision under external pressure. Although the *ubuhake* system remained in place for most of the colonial era, I would argue that too many of the fundamental factors were removed or altered to claim that the system was still in place by 1954. In fact, the abolition of the *ubuhake* made very little difference, due to the many previous alterations in the system. See Prunier 2010, p. 46.
Animal comparisons depict human beings as something radically different to the human condition. In Rwanda, the Hutu extremists attacked the religiosity of the Tutsis, and in doing so, the Tutsis remained human, but were depicted as deviating from social as well as Christian norms. They were described as treacherous, arrogant, and lacking moral values to the extent that they were willing to commit genocide against the Hutus. An animal would hardly pose such a threat.

Dehumanisation through animalistic representations implies that a person is less than human. This was not the case in Rwandan Hutu extremist propaganda. Instead of pushing them down from a human level, they elevated the Tutsis by representing them as superior to the Hutu, and claiming that the Hutu were the ones being dehumanised, thus claiming victimhood. Although the extremist propagandists maintained these notions of themselves and the Tutsis, they continuously reminded their audience of the successful 1959 revolution that had ended the Tutsi monarchy and while emphasising that the Hutus won, they argued that the revolution was not yet over. The Tutsis, they claimed, still maintained the notion of themselves as ‘God’s children’ or the ‘race of God’, as they had been described both in pre-Christian and Christian mythologies. In spite of being the majority group in Rwanda the propagandists portrayed themselves as the David to the Tutsi Goliath.

Thus, I suggest that some of the most effective forms of devaluation in Rwanda in the early 1990s are found in religion. Questioning the religiosity of the Tutsis by referring to them as atheists or heathens in a Christian context is as devaluing as that of animal comparisons, if not more. As Daniel Bar-Tal has noted, delegitimisation and devaluation strategies are used to portray a ‘threat to the basic values, norms, or even the existence of the society itself and its structure.’861 He emphasises that these strategies are strongly bound to culture, and that the categories used to devalue or delegitimise hence will change depending on cultural context. Regardless if one considers Rwandan Christianity to be politicised, it was an important part of Rwandan culture, and therefore, irreligiousness was not socially acceptable. The threat was not that of animals invading, but of an immoral, arrogant group, superior in some ways, but caught in the past, and firmly determined to bring Rwanda back to the days of the Tutsi monarchy. The only difference, according to the propagandists, was that in the re-established monarchy, there would be no room for the Hutu.

The shadows of the past

During the genocide, the Rwandan rivers were full of corpses. The killers disposed of bodies of murdered Tutsis by throwing them into the rivers. The reason for this practice was the notion that the Tutsi had immigrated to Rwanda from northern Africa four centuries before. The river was an unmistakable message from the perpetrators, all those Hutu nationalist politicians and media, that the Tutsis should be dispatched home to Abyssinia, or what is now Ethiopia. The Hamitic Hypothesis was still very much a factor in Rwanda.

In the Catholic schools, with their monopoly on primary education, the Hamitic Hypothesis was taught to the Rwandans as history, explaining the true origins of the Tutsi. According to this narrative, the Tutsi Hamites had invaded and conquered Rwanda, killed the Hutu Bantu kings, and brought a civilised society to the heart of Africa. They were allegedly a superior race, not only because they had conquered the Bantu races, but also because they were the descendants of Ham, the son of Noah, the biblical Patriarch, and thus had the right to rule the country. Through this mythological explanation of the existing social hierarchies, the Hutus and the Tutsis were transformed from social classes into different races with different origins. The Tutsi class, that had traditionally been seen as the responsible people, the descendants of a mythical ancestor, Gatutsi, given the task to rule by God, Imana, they kept their God-given power to rule, but now as a race.

The changes introduced by the European colonists exacerbated the oppression and segregation in Rwanda, when the social mobility and the patronage of Tutsi chiefs were abolished in the course of the racialisation of the Rwandan social classes. However, the shift to Christianity was one change that contributed to the 1959 Hutu revolution. To ease the introduction of Christianity and the conversion of the Rwandans, Imana and the Christian God were said to be one and the same, but although the two gods had much in common, they were not. The connection between the god Imana, the mwami or king, and Rwanda lost its strength in Christianity. To revolt against the mwami was no longer to revolt against God in the direct sense. When the Hutu revolted against the Tutsi, it was against the oppressions of the system – and the pre-Christian Imana that had placed the Tutsi at the top of that oppressive system. When the Catholic Church shifted position and turned against the Tutsi, while helping Hutus organise themselves politically, it signalled to the Hutus that the Christian God was nothing like Imana, but one that would side with the weak, rather than create and maintain a system in which the majority of the population was kept weak.

Support for this interpretation can be found in the Hutu extremist propaganda, in which Hutus are continuously depicted as victims. In their
discussions about the role of the churches in Rwanda, it is mentioned that the church should side with the weak and the oppressed.\textsuperscript{862} This seems contradictory, considering that the Hutus had been in power since 1959 and that Tutsis had been oppressed since that very year. However, it makes perfect sense as a propaganda strategy.

If the threat was the return of the Tutsi monarchy, it would serve the purpose of the Hutu extremists to remind the Hutus of the oppression under the \textit{mwami} who had been given the power by Imana – the old god – to rule over the Hutus. In a sense, the Tutsis represented the old. In one of many attempts to invoke fear among the Rwandan Hutus, the propagandists gave vivid descriptions of the Tutsis as striving for a return to the old political system and the old social hierarchy, which also implied a return to the old Imana and pre-Christianity. By contrast, the propagandists depicted the Hutus as progressive, good Christians, working towards democracy.

Roger Dale Petersen argues that uses of nationalist mythology and past harms can trigger fear, which causes people to react, either by fight or flight, to the cause of the fear.\textsuperscript{863} This was clearly what the Hutu extremist propagandists were aiming to achieve. The Tutsis were represented as old enemies, and in spite of them having been discriminated against over decades, they were represented as being at the top of the ethnic hierarchy. According to Petersen, this is at the core of most ethnic conflicts.\textsuperscript{864} No less so in Rwanda. The solution to the threat of the old enemy was revolution.

According to the Hutu extremist propagandists, the 1959 Hutu revolution was not over. This was made clear by the \textit{Kangura} and RTLM journalists. The RPF invasion served as evidence of this. The Hutus had not yet conquered the monarchists. Although the RPF had nothing to do with the death of the first Hutu president of Burundi, Melchior Ndadaye, in 1993, the Rwandan Hutu propagandists made sure to connect the RPF with the Tutsi nationalists and extremists in their neighbouring country. The talk of ancestral ritual mutilation of President Ndadaye’s corpse gave the impression of the return of the old ways. And yet, at the same time, the Tutsi represented something new. The representations of the Tutsi as atheists made them a threat to the traditional Hutu way of life, with its Christian moral values.

Whichever threat is stressed – something new imposing on traditional ways of life, or something old coming back to destroy what had been built up over time – the Hutus were represented as victims. They were portrayed as victims of an alleged threat, not only of a small group of

\textsuperscript{862} RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0144, 8 December 1993.
\textsuperscript{863} Petersen 2002, pp. 25–35.
\textsuperscript{864} Petersen 2002, pp. 18, 25, 35.
rebels, but of an international conspiracy to establish a Tutsi empire in East-Central Africa, and if this were to be, the Hutus would be exterminated. In this context, the Hutu propagandists argued that the Tutsis were comparable to the Nazis.

What this demonstrates is the successful separation of Hutus from Tutsis, and of Tutsis from God. The Tutsis were still human, but they were not the children of God. They were irreligious or pagans and their behaviour was not acceptable in Rwanda. Given that Rwanda had its own god – the Rwandan God, or the Hutu God – a socially unacceptable behaviour in Rwanda would be unacceptable in the eyes of God. Regardless of whether the threat came in the shape of the return of the monarchy supported by Imana or the introduction of atheism, it was not only a threat to Rwanda or the Hutus, but to God. As such, God would want the Hutus to do whatever they had to do in defence of their country, their people, and God, because, as Kantano Habimana exclaimed, ‘I do not know how God will help us exterminate them. This is why we should stand up ourselves and exterminate those bad people’.865

Many have asked how it was possible for Christians to commit genocide against fellow Christians, against friends, family, and children. I would propose that the answer is not merely found in the ethnic segregation, but also in the threat depicted in Hutu extremist media. It was not only a threat to the lives of the Hutus, but to the Hutu way of life. The Tutsis were represented as a threat to the pillars of the Christian Rwandan society, and above all as a threat to their Christian faith. Therefore, it was imperative to separate the Tutsis not only from the Hutus, but from God. The Hutu extremist propagandists were well aware of how to best utilise the faith of the Rwandan Hutus to unite under a common religious identity, a Christian identity, in which the Tutsi were not included. In claiming that the Hutus were Christians and the Tutsis were not, the Hutu extremist propagandists assumed that if Christianity was threatened, Christians would defend it.

The matter of faith

One of the tasks for the Hutu extremist propagandists was to convince the Hutu population that genocide was acceptable in the eyes of God. I argue that the use of religiously influenced rhetoric in the extremist propaganda made the genocide possible in a way than it would not have been if the Christian Hutus had questioned the morality of genocide in

865 RTLM Transcript, Tape no. 0211, 13–14 May 1994. It is important to note that Kantano Habimana clarifies that he is not referring to all Tutsis in this statement, but merely to the RPF, or the Inkotanyi. Equally important, by this time Tutsis were seen as RPF members or accomplices, and thus he was in fact referring to most if not all Tutsis.
terms of faith. What I have demonstrated is that the Hutu extremists recognised the need to use religious rhetoric in their propaganda in order to appeal to the Christian faith of the Rwandan Hutus.

The matter of faith in Rwanda is indeed complex. The mass conversions of Rwandans in the 1930s was mainly the result of the Catholic Church’s grooming of the son of Mwami Musinga, Mutara Rudahigwa, which paid off in 1931, when his father was dethroned by the church and the Belgian colonists, and replaced with Rudahigwa, the first mwami to be baptised. The church had met with resistance in Rwanda, and some of the White Fathers – the European Catholic missionaries – had been attacked and even killed, as the Rwandans refused to let them assume any position of authority. Furthermore, the ubuhake system was too well established for the White Fathers to find a receptive group to approach with the Christian message. The Belgian colonial administration also had trouble with the non-cooperative Mwami Musinga, so the administration and the church both benefitted from the dethroning. The Tutsis in the upper echelons of society followed the new mwami, while the Hutus, who had found themselves with precious few civil rights in the new racially based social hierarchy, converted to Christianity in response to the Church’s promises of community, work, and patronage. Although Imana was said to be the Christian God, Christianity proved to be quite different. It was far more organised in its ceremonies, and the services were held in Latin, at least until the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), when the Rwandans were allowed to sing hymns and songs of praise in Kinyarwanda, dance in church, and enjoy the word of God in a language they understood.

I have found that the faith in Imana remained after the shift to Christianity. Although the connection between God and the mwami may have faltered, God was still there. As Christopher C. Taylor has demonstrated, and as becomes clear in the Hutu extremist propaganda, the connection between God and the President was perceived as strong. It is mentioned that it was God who gave Habyarimana his power, which may seem reasonable from a theological perspective. If God is at all involved in worldly affairs, then why would He not be involved in appointing worldly leaders? However, in this particular context, and given Rwanda’s religious background, it is more reasonable to assume that the notion of Rwandan leaders as conduits between God and the country was still present, symbolically if nothing else.

---

866 Carney 2016, p. 36.
867 Carney 2016, p. 27–8; Linden & Linden 1977, pp. 52–3.
Although, as rightly pointed out by some scholars, the Catholic Church was politicised and taught obedience to their congregation 869, there is no indication that the Rwandans believed less in God than other Christians. Nor does the fact that Christian Rwandans killed other Christians during the genocide mean that their faith was less than that of others. It simply meant that Christians found themselves in an extraordinary situation in which they acted according to their own consciences, ideologies, or agendas, just as any other individual would. While scholars who have focused on the role of the churches in Rwanda, arguing that their silence enabled the Christian Hutus to kill without being consumed by guilt, I would argue that propaganda helped in shaping the consciences of the Christian Hutus. The perceived silence of the churches conveyed the notion of God being on the side of the Hutu extremists and thus approved of the extermination of the Tutsi, but it must also be remembered that the Church had no way of competing with RTLM. Thus, it was perhaps not so much silence as it was the pastoral letters or the amateurish broadcasts on Radio Rwanda that fell short in comparison to Kangura and the energetic broadcasts of Hutu extremist radio.

The second problem was that whenever the Church spoke, it failed to speak in a unified voice. 870 The reason, I argue, was the individual agendas, ideologies, or consciences that had divided or even shattered the Rwandan churches. Therefore, it is not enough to solely study the churches in order to understand the actions of Christian Hutus during the genocide, as the churches were made up of individuals who chose the stand on one side or the other, or both, or neither, of the conflict. What is needed is a study of religious belief systems in this particular context. We need to understand what ‘God’ means when Kantano Habimana mentions Him in his broadcasts. We need to understand what ‘the Devil’ is in the ICTR courtrooms, and we need to understand the intricate religious mythologies of Rwanda. Only then will we recognise the role of religion in the Rwandan genocide, and providing that recognition is the purpose of this dissertation.

The use of religion is not merely confined to the genocide in Rwanda. Although religion is seldom a central issue in genocides or mass violence, it is seldom, if ever, completely absent. Religion may not have been an imperative in the outcome of the Holocaust, or the genocide against the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, people with religious convictions are probably going to act to some extent in accordance with their religious beliefs. Thus, even if religion is seemingly absent in a conflict, that absence may be enough to convince a religious person that

869 See Longman 2010.
870 J. J. Carney (2016, p. 195) rightly points out that the role of the Catholic Church is too multifaceted to make it possible to exonerate it, or indeed to blame it for the genocide.
mass violence is acceptable. Such was the case in Rwanda, according to some perpetrators, who found that the silence of priests served as proof that God did not mind the killings. However, in Rwanda the Hutu propagandists usurped the Christian messages and adapted them to serve their purpose.

The aim of this thesis has been to provide an analysis of religious concepts in order to explain the complex dynamics of the processes leading to the attempted extermination of a human collective. It has demonstrated that the meanings of concepts such as ‘God’ are as multifaceted as the role of the Church. Most people have pre-conceived notions of what God means, or Messiah, or Satan, or any other concept with religious connotations. In the contexts of genocide, however, God may be vengeful, forgiving, loving, or even genocidal. Different meanings are inserted into these religious concepts, and these are then inserted into statements and arguments, which in turn are elevated from the profane to the divine. It is subtle, but when used in propaganda, these religious concepts validate the message through faith – the one thing that most Rwandan Hutus shared.

The aftermath

The genocide ended in July 1994 when the RPF took Kigali and forced the interim government and the FAR to flee. Having failed to act during the genocide and sorely in need to save face, the UN agreed to establish a genocide tribunal, which became the ICTR in Arusha, Tanzania. Dealing only with high-profile Category I cases – the planners, organisers, orchestrators, and individuals responsible for large-scale massacres – and only crimes of genocide, only 93 people were indicted. In some of the trials, clergy were the defendants or served as witnesses; in all of them, the use of religiously influenced concepts and arguments was abundant, but this use was not exclusive to them. In fact, as mentioned in the introductory chapter, only one trial was excluded from this study due to a lack of concepts with religious connotations.

In the other trials, defendants, witnesses, attorneys, and even judges resorted to religious language for a number of reasons. Defendants argued their innocence by claiming to have done good deeds with the help of God, or that God acted through them, while others claimed to have been under the influence of the Devil. Both arguments entail a lack of personal responsibility, as the individuals claimed to be controlled by transcendent

---

872 In comparison, the Rwandan *gacaca* system – the traditional courts, adapted to handle crimes of genocide – held nearly 2,000,000 trials.
entities. Thus, they were competing for victimhood with the victims of the genocide as they argued that they could not control their actions. Some compared their situation to that of Jesus Christ, focusing on the suffering of the Messiah and the false accusations made against him, to a point that bordered on blasphemy.

Another theme was that of forgiveness. Several of the witnesses had their credibility questioned by attorneys, and defended themselves by referring to their religiosity. Some of these witnesses were people convicted of having committed crimes of genocide. In post-genocide Rwanda, perpetrators could receive shortened sentences, provided they confessed their crimes. Several perpetrators argued that if they confessed, showed remorse and asked the forgiveness of the state, the victims, and God, their sentence should be reduced. Having received God's forgiveness, perpetrators who testified before the tribunal defended themselves against accusations of being unreliable by implying that God's forgiveness had restored their innocence, and thereby their credibility.

There are certainly differences between the uses of religiously influenced language in the propaganda during the war and the genocide. Yet, its use is as strategic, and has the same purposefulness. The last empirical chapter, Chapter 6, thus provides an insight into the use of religiously influenced concepts and arguments before the ICTR, but also into the importance of faith and, not only in the context of the tribunal, but also during the war and genocide. The testimonies tell of the genocide, and religious concepts are used to inject a divine element into the story. In testimonies against or in the defence of individuals on trial, religion becomes evidence of innocence or guilt, or the basis for a claim to victimhood. Similarly, in the Hutu extremist propaganda during the war and the genocide, the propagandists claimed innocence and victimhood, while pointing to the guilt of the Tutsis. The common theme here is the attempts to claim the moral high ground, to be in a position where one is the victim of injustice or unjust harm, and not the perpetrator.

The future

Alison Des Forges wrote: ‘Accurate accounts of the genocide must establish in all their complexity the roles of the leaders, the followers, and the dissidents within Rwanda’, and that ‘this is essential both for assessing fairly the behaviour of individuals and for creating strategies for the future.’\textsuperscript{873} I fully concur. Twenty years have passed since Des Forges wrote these words, and yet they are still important.

\textsuperscript{873} Des Forges 1999, p. 771.
We have not yet fully established the roles of the leaders, followers, or dissidents. I believe that one of the main reasons is that we wish to find the one explanation that will let us understand, in all their complexities, why people acted the ways they did in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. Explanations for the genocide are numerous, which is one reason why we should emphasise the complexities of the genocide, as Des Forges says. While most of the explanations bring some understanding to the complexities, very few, if any, consider the role of faith and the systems of religious belief, and therefore neglects how these were used in propaganda to mobilise the Hutu population.

This blindness to religion has resulted in a failure to see one of the strongest connections between the Hutu extremist propagandists and the Christian Hutu population. It has also resulted in the notion of animalistic dehumanisation as the main form of devaluation. By analysing the religious language used, siting the concepts in their time, and tracing their subsequent meaning, I have added religion to the complex picture of the propaganda in Rwanda during the civil war and the genocide. In doing so, I have demonstrated how the propagandists used a religiously influenced rhetoric strategically to get their extremist message across to the population, and thereby given insights into how the Tutsis were dehumanised, devalued, and delegitimised.

Scholars such as Timothy Longman have studied the roles of the churches in Rwanda, with focus on the institutions and the behaviours of church representatives. These are crucial to any understanding of the role of the churches in Rwanda during the genocide, and how they, and the Catholic Church in particular, tried to maintain the balance between organised religion and politics.

Like so many others who could have stopped the genocide, the churches in Rwanda were not silent, as many have claimed. However, due to individuals within each church taking different sides in the conflict, they were too divided to speak with a unified voice, and those who spoke out did not speak loud enough when the violence escalated, and the threat of genocide loomed over the small African country. A few church representatives tried to make their voices heard, but they simply could not appeal to the population in the ways the Hutu extremist propagandists could. Those who opposed the violence against the Tutsis and moderate Hutus were eventually killed or forced to flee. This is why many scholars, survivors, journalists, and others have argued that the churches were silent when they could have prevented the genocide. This supposed silence should not be taken as an absence of religion. As has been demonstrated in this study, religion was very much present. But it was not primarily represented by the Rwandan churches.

The Hutu extremist propagandists used their own religiously influenced rhetoric, and managed to drown out any attempt made by the
churches to call for unity. RTLM replaced the churches as the conveyor of news, and the churches could not compete with the religious message of the Hutu hate radio. In fact, several church representatives who protested the Hutu extremism became the targets of RTLM journalists who argued that they failed in their roles as members of the clergy. Others, however, went along with the RTLM rhetoric, and chose to instigate or participate in the killings. Thus, RTLM and Kangura became the arbiters of what Rwandan Hutus should believe in – and that was a God who sanctioned the mass murder of the Tutsis. It was a God who was threatened by the Tutsis, just like the lives, and ways of life of the Hutu. Therefore, the Hutus were explicitly told to defend themselves, to defend Rwanda, and thereby defend their faith.

The centrality of religion in a conflict is not as relevant as the question of how it is used. Even in conflicts where religion is regarded as a marginal matter, with no influence over the outcome of the conflict, it is important to remember that religion may matter to the people involved. If it does, others may try to use their faith to their advantage. If we want to create strategies for the future, as Alison Des Forges suggested, the main lesson taken from the 1994 genocide in Rwanda ought to be that we should not only study the churches if we want to understand the role of religion.

The theoretical and methodological model used in this thesis can be applied to other conflicts and genocides. Words that are familiar to us, that we ourselves use, can have different meanings in different contexts. They may have a different past that imbues them with a meaning we will never know unless we study their history, and the linguistic and social contexts in which they were and are used. Future research may learn more about right-wing extremism in the western world by studying what the concept ‘God’ means there, as it is used in their propaganda against other religious groups, cultures, and sexual orientations. Likewise, research may investigate the rise and growth of ISIS (Islamic State) and other groups claiming to wage holy war, not by debating whether or not they represent the religion they claim to uphold, but by learning what that religion means to them by looking at the meaning they bring to the religious concepts they use. By learning how such groups use religion to attract members, to propagate, or to convince members to commit atrocities in the name of religion, we may just learn how to prevent them. Thus, I hope that studies of the religious context in conflict situations and what religious concepts mean to the people involved will lead us to recognise that we ignore religiously influenced concepts and arguments at our peril. Religion can and is being used to make peace and preserve peace, but it can also be used to divide, to mobilise, and to convince people to do the unthinkable. If we understand religion and how it can be used, we may be able to prevent the worst.
Inledning

Syftet med föreliggande avhandling är att genom en undersökning av hur religiösa begrepp och resonemang användes i hutuextremistisk propaganda före och under folkmordet i Rwanda 1994, liksom i rättegångarna i den Internationella Brottmåltribunalen för Rwanda (ICTR) efter folkmordet, analysera religionens roll i propagandan för mobilisering av människor mot andra inom samma trossystem och för att legitimera och motivera agerandet både medan det pågick och efteråt. Följande frågor har bildat utgångspunkt för studien: Vilka religiösa begrepp och resonemang användes i samband med folkmordet i Rwanda, och hur? Varför användes dessa begrepp och resonemang och vad betydde de? Förändrades de religiösa begreppens innebörd över tid och mellan olika kontexter, och i så fall hur och varför?

Frågorna har ställts till tre källmaterial: artiklar och karikatyrer från den hutuextremistiska tidningen Kangura, sändningar från den likaledes hutuextremistiska Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) och rättegångsmaterial från ICTR. Kanguras och RTLM:s propaganda har i tidigare forskning identifierats som centrala för den avhumanisering av tutsierna som var en förutsättning för folkmordet. Materialet från domstolen ger en inblick i hur religiösa föreställningar uttrycktes och användes efter folkmordet.

För att besvara avhandlingens frågor utifrån ovannämnda material har en analys inspirerad av Quentin Skinners contextual approach genomförts med hjälp av programmet MAXQDA. Relevanta religiösa begrepp och resonemang har med hjälp av programmets sökfunktioner identifierats i den corpus som skapats genom OCR-scanning av källmaterialet varefter de har analyserats utifrån de språkliga och sociala kontexter i vilka de användes. Resultaten har tolkats huvudsakligen utifrån en modell utvecklad av Roger Dale Petersen för att förklara etniskt våld, en modell som visar hur rädsla/rädslor, hat och känslor av bitterhet över att ha blivit orättvist behandlad skapar förutsättningar för etniskt våld och i förlängningen folkmord. Modellen har kompletterats med teoretiska
Resonemang om hur sociala identiteteter skapas och vidmakthålls genom skillnadsskapande av olika slag, främst förnekande av andra gruppers värde och rättigheter och framhållande av den egna gruppens offerstatus.


Tre teman är genomgående i denna studie; samtliga handlar på olika sätt om social identitet och skillnadsskapande och om religiösa föreställningsars och arguments roll i dessa. Vart och ett av dessa teman är huvudfokus i ett empiriskt kapitel: I det första av dessa, kapitel 4, påvisas hutuextremisternas försök att separera hutuer från tutsier genom hänvisningar till mytologiska föreställningar om ursprung, inhemska såväl som införda av kyrkan och kolonisatorerna. Hutuextremisterna huvudsakliga argument var att tutsierna, enligt sagda mytologi, den så kallade hamitiska hypotesen, inte var av rwandiskt ursprung och därför inte hade några rättigheter i Rwanda. Det andra empiriska kapitlet, kapitel 5, fokuserar på liknande försök att skilja ut tutsierna men denna gång genom hävdandet att hutuerna hade en egen gud, som dessutom var Rwandas gud medan tutsierna tillskrevs en separat religiös identitet; de menades vara icke-kristna, ateister, hedningar, och hävdades dessutom i vissa sammanhang ha en egen gud. Det tredje och sista empiriska kapitlet, kapitel 6, behandlar det juridiska efterspelet i en analys av de sätt på vilka religiösa begrepp användes under rättegångarna i brottmåltribunalen för att hävda offerstatus, eller nedvärdera andra.

**Hotet mot Rwanda**

Folkmordet i Rwanda har många förklaringar. De flesta framhåller segregationsen som förvärrades av de belgiska kolonisatorerna i början av 1900-talet och omvandlandet av *ububake*-systemet – ett hierarkiskt samhällssystem baserat på rikedom – till en rasbaserad social hierarki vilket medförde att den sociala mobilitet och den trygghet som funnits försvann och en majoritet av befolkningen hamnade i fattigdom och förtryck. Många forskare har fokuserat på den politiska utvecklingen och de etniska motsättningarna som kulminerade i folkmordet. Få har dock lagt någon större vikt vid religionen i denna kontext och merparten av dem som behandlar religion i någon form framhåller kyrkornas roll som institutioner snarare än religiösa trossystem.
I denna avhandling hävdar jag att om vi ska kunna förstå folkmordets komplexitet, och i synnerhet de processer som ledde fram till det, måste vi förstå religion i en sådan kontext och hur den används. Konstaterandet, som gjorts i tidigare forskning med fokus på de religiösa institutionerna, att den katolska kyrkan var delaktig i folkmordet förklarar inte varför så många katoliker deltog i försöket att utrotta andra katoliker. Om vi förstår att Gud inte var den katolske guden när folkmordet förbereddes och begicks, utan en rwandisk gud som tillåt eller till och med uppmanade till utrotandet av tutsier kommer vi närmare en förklaring.


Avhumaniserings genom jämförelser med djur antyder att den avhumaniserade är lägre stående än människa, inte är fullt mänsklig eller mänsklig över huvud taget. Så var inte fallet i den hutuextremistiska propagandan i Rwanda. Istället för att trycka ned tutsierna till en nivå under den mänskliga så höjde extremisterna upp dem genom att framställa dem som överlägsna hutuerna, som de härskaande, maktfullkomliga, egenmäktiga och arroganta. De hävdade vidare att det i själva verket var tutsierna som avhumaniserade hutuerna för att därigenom kunna göra anspråk på offerrollen. De hutuextremistiska propagandisterna vidhöll och betonade återkommande hutuernas offerroll och tutsiernas överordnade position och förtryck, samtidigt som de kontinuerligt påminde sin publik om den lyckade revolutionen 1959, då hutuerna störtade tutsimonarkin. Även om de lade tonvikt på att hutuerna då vunnit underströkte också att revolutionen inte var över. De hävdade att
tutsierna höll fast vid bilden av sig själva som ”Guds barn” eller ”Guds ras” vilket de beskrevits som i såväl kristen som förkristen mytologi. Trots att hutuerna utgjorde majoritetsbefolkningen i Rwanda och sedan 1959 haft den politiska makten och sedan dess kontinuerligt diskriminerat tutsierna framställde extremisterna hutuerna som David i kamp mot tutsiernas Goliat. De menade sig slå ur underläge och deras anfall var i själva verket själfvförsvaret.

I denna avhandling hävdas därför att en av de mest effektiva formerna av avhumanisering i Rwanda under det tidiga 1990-talet hämtade stöd och inspiration i religionen. Ifrågasättandet av tutsiernas religiositet genom påståenden att de var ateister eller hedningar är i en kristen kontext mer nedvärderande än jämförelser med djur. Som Daniel Bar-Tal har poängterat används strategier som syftar till att beröva en grupp legitimitet och människovärde och därigenom existensberättigande för att framhålla och peka ut ett ”hot mot grundläggande värden, normer, eller samhållets existens och dess strukturer.”

Han framhåller att dessa strategier är starkt knutna till kultur och att de kategorier som används för att nedvärdera, beröva en grupp legitimitet eller avhumanisera därför förändras beroende på kulturell kontext. Trots att Rwandisk kristendom, som framhållits i tidigare forskning, var politiserad så var kristendomen en viktig del av rwandisk kultur och av den anledningen var irreligiositet inte socialt acceptabelt. Hotet mot Rwanda var inte djur som invaderade landet, utan en omoralisk, arrogant grupp människor, överlägsna på vissa sätt, framåtssträvande men samtidigt låsta i det förflutna och fast beslutna att föra Rwanda tillbaka till tutsimonarkins dagar. Den enda skillnaden, enligt hutuextremisterna, var att i den återetablerade monarkin skulle det inte finnas något utrymme för hutuer.

**Skuggor från det förfutna**


I de katolska skolorna, med monopol på grundskoleutbildning, framställdes den hamitiska hypotesen som rwandisk historia och som förklaring till tutsiernas ursprung. Enligt detta narrativ hade de hamitiska tutsierna invaderat och övertagit Rwanda, dödat bantukungarna och

---

upprättat ett civiliserat samhälle. De hävdades vara en överlägsen ras, inte enbart på grund av att de hade erövrat banturiken, utan för att de var ättlingar till Ham, son till Noak den bibliske patriarken, och gavs därmed rätten att styra i Rwanda. Genom denna mytologiska förklaring av de existerande sociala hierarkierna omvandlades hutuer och tutsier från sociala klasser till raser av olika ursprung. Tutsiklassen som traditionellt ansetts vara den ansvarsfulla gruppen, ättlingar till den mytiske förfadern Gatutsi, och som av Gud (Imana) gavs uppdraget att styra landet, behöll denna av Gud givna makt att regera, men nu som en ras, eller etnicitet.

De förändringar som de europeiska kolonisatörerna introducerade förvärrade förrörelser och segregationen i Rwanda i och med att den sociala rörligheten och tutsihövdingarnas beskydd försvann när den sociala stratifieringen överlagrades och kompletterades med en rashierarki och gruppen/klasserna därmed permanentades. Övergången till krisstendem var en förändring som dock bidrog till hutuernas revolution 1959. För att underlätta introducerandet av krisstendemen och konverterandet av Rwandas befolkning hävdade missionära att Imana och den kristne guden var en och densamma. Även om de två gudarna liknade varandra på många sätt så var de likvä en samma. Kopplingen mellan guden Imana, kungen (mwami) och Rwanda förvandlades sin styrka i krisstendemen, så att revoltera mot mwamin var inte att revoltera mot Gud i den direkta bemärkelsen som tidigare. När den katolska kyrkan bytte sida och vände sig emot tutsier, samtidigt som de hjälpte hutuerna att organisera sig politiskt, så signalerade det till hutuerna att den kristne guden inte var som Imana, utan en som skulle ta de svagas parti, snarare än att upprätthålla ett system i vilket majoriteten av befolkningen hölls försvagade.

Stöd för denna tolkning återfinns i hutuextremistisk propaganda i vilken hutuerna återkommande framställs som offer. I deras diskussioner om kyrkans roll i Rwanda hävdas att kyrkan ska stå på de svaga och förrörelserna stadera. Det kan tyckas motsägelsefullt med tanke på att hutuerna hade hållit makten sedan 1959 och att tutsiererna hade varit förrörelserna sedan detta år, men om det ses som en propagandastrategi så är det sig fullt logiskt.

Om hotet var tutsimonarkins återkomst så skulle hutuextremisterna gynnas av att påminna hutuerna om förrörelsen under mwamin som hade fått sin makt av Imana, den gamle guden, att härska över dem. Tutsiererna kom alltså att representera det gamla. I ett av många försök att skapa rädda bland Rwandas hutuer gav propagandisterna målande beskrivningar av tutsieras försök att återgå till det gamla koloniala systemet och sociala hierarkin, vilket också antydde en återgång till den gamle Imana och förkrisstendem. Detta kontrasterades mot hutuerna som framställdes som progressiva goda kristna som arbetade för demokrati.

875 RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0144, 8 December 1993.
Roger Dale Petersen menar att användningen av nationalistisk mytologi och oförrätter i det förflutna kan orsaka rädsla, vilket får människor att reagera antingen genom att kämpa mot eller fly från det som orsakar rädslan.\textsuperscript{876} Detta var vad hutuextremisterna hoppades uppnå. Tutsierna framställdes som gamla fiender och trots att de hade diskriminerats i årtionden menades de vara i toppen av den etniska hierarkin. Enligt Petersen är detta kärnan i de flesta etniska konflikter.\textsuperscript{877} Så var fallet i Rwanda. Lösningen på hotet från den gamla fienden var revolution.

Enligt de hutuextremistiska propagandisterna var 1959 års revolution inte över. Detta klargjordes i Kangura och RTLM, och RPF:s invasion fungerade som bevis för att hutuerna inte hade besegrat tutimonarkisterna. Även om RPF inte hade någonting att göra med mordet på Melchior Ndadaye, Burundis förste hutupresident, i oktober 1993 så försökte hutuextremisterna koppla RPF till tuntsinationalisterna och extremisterna i grannlandet. De rwandiska hutuextremisternas retorik rörande tutsiernas rituella lemlästande av Ndadaye gav intrycket av en återgång till gamla sätt samtidigt som de representerade någonting nytt. Bilden av tutsier som ateister gjorde dem till ett hot mot hutuernas traditioner och kristna värderingar.

Oavsett vilket hot som framhölls, något nytt som hotade gamla traditioner eller något gammalt som kom förstöra vad som byggts upp, så framställdes hutuerna som offer. De menades vara offer för ett påstått hot, inte bara från en liten armé av rebeller, utan för en internationell konspiration med målet att skapa ett tutsiimperium, och för att nå det målet skulle hutuerna behöva utrotas. I denna kontext jämförde hutupropagandisterna tutsierna med nazister.


\textsuperscript{876} Petersen 2002, pp. 18, 25, 35.
\textsuperscript{877} Petersen 2002, pp. 18, 25, 35.
\textsuperscript{878} RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0211, 13-14 May 1994. “I do not know how God will help us exterminate them. This is why we should stand up ourselves and exterminate those bad people.” Förf. översättning.
Många har undrat hur det var möjligt för kristna att mörda andra kristna, vänner, och barn. I denna avhandling hävdas att svaret inte endast ligger i den etniska segregationen utan också i det hot som framställdes i hutuextremistisk media. Det var inte bara ett hot mot hutuernas liv utan mot hela deras sätt att leva. Tutsierna framställdes som ett hot mot hörnpelarna i Rwandas kristna samhälle och framförallt som ett hot mot deras kristna tro. Av den anledningen var det viktigt att skilja tutsierna från hutuerna, men framförallt från Gud. De hutuextremistiska propagandisterna var väl medvetna om hur de bäst kunde nyttja de rwandiska hutuernas tro för att mobilisera dem under en end kristen identitet, i vilken tutsierna inte var inkluderade. I och med påståendet att hutuerna var kristna medan tutsierna inte var det så är det tydligt att de hutuextremistiska propagandisterna förutsatte att om kristendomen var hotad skulle kristna hutuer försvara den.

**En fråga om tro**

En av uppgifterna för de ansvariga för den hutuextremistiska propagandan var att övertyga hutuerna om att Gud inte motsatte sig folkmordet på tutsierna. Jag kan inte utifrån mina resultat dra några slutsatser om de direkta effekterna av propagandan. Däremot har jag visat att hutuextremisterna insåg behovet av att använda religiös retorik och religiösa argument i sin propaganda för att därigenom vädra till och utnyttja hutuernas kristna tro. Det är alltså uppenbart att propagandisterna förväntade sig att bruket av en religiöst färgad retorik skulle bidra till att göra folkmordet acceptabelt och därmed möjligt. Hade hutuerna i gemen utifrån en kristen övertygelse ifrågasatt det moraliskt rättfärdiga i att utrota tutsierna hade folkmordet blivit svårare att genomföra. Det förefaller bland annat ha varit detta propagandisterna ville motverka.

Religionens roll i Rwanda är ytterst komplicerad. De masskonversioner till kristendomen som ägde rum under 1930-talet var huvudsakligen ett resultat av att katolska kyrkan ivrigt uppvaktat och odlat kontakterna med den dåvarande traditionella härkarens son, Mutara Rudahigwa. Ansträngningarna bar frukt 1931 när fadern, Mwami Musinga, avsattes av kyrkan och företrädarna för den belgiska kolonialmakten och efterträddes av Rudahigwa, som blev den förste Mwami att låta dopa sig. Dessförinnan hade kyrkan mött motstånd och några av ”de vita färderna”, som de europeiska katolska missionärerna kallades, hade angripits och i enstaka fall till och med dödsats till följd av att rwandierna inte ville ge dem någon maktposition. Dessutom var den sociala strukturen, i form av det så kallade "ubuhake"-systemet som reglerade relationerna mellan hutuerna, tutsierna och twa, så väletablerad och stabil att missionärerna inte kunde finna någon enskild grupp mottaglig för det kristna budskapet. Den


Trots att katolska kyrkan i Rwanda var kraftigt politiserad och lärde sina medlemmar att acceptera den politiska ordningen finns det inte något som antyder att rwandiernas tro på Gud var svagare än i andra katolska gemenskaper. Inte heller innebär det faktum att massdödandet av kristna i Rwanda utfördes av andra kristna nödvändigtvis att rwandiernas kristna övertygelser var svagare än andra kristnas. Det betyder bara att kristna i Rwanda befann sig i en extraordinär situation där de agerade utifrån sina övertygelser (religiösa och andra), samveten, ideologier och agendor, precis som alla andra skulle ha gjort i en motsvarande situation. I tidigare forskning med fokus på kyrkornas roll i samband med folkmordet har det hävdats att kyrkornas tystnad gjorde det möjligt för kristna hutuer att delta i mördandet utan att förtäras av skuldkänslor. Detta är en rimlig tolkning. Den kan dock föras ett steg längre. Utifrån mina resultat är det, vill jag
påstå, inte orimligt att anta att de kristna hutuernas tolkning av situationen också formades av den hutuextremistiska propagandan. Kyrkornas tystnad förmedlade uppfattningen att Gud, som hutuextremisterna hävdade i sin propaganda, var på hutuernas sida och således accepterade utrotningen av tutsierna. Samtidigt är det viktigt att framhålla att kyrkan inte kunde konkurrera med RTLM. Kyrkliga kungörelser och de tämligen amatörmässiga sändningarna från Radio Rwanda stod sig slätt i jämförelse med Kangura och sändningarna från den ytterst energiska hutuextremistiska radiostationen.

Ytterligare ett problem med kyrkans agerande var att den när den väl tog till orda aldrig talade med en röst. Skälet till detta var att kyrkorna i Rwanda var splittrade sinsemellan, hade skilda ideologiska och andra målsättningar och dessutom inom sig rymde individer med diametralt motsatta uppfattningar. Därför är det inte tillräckligt att, som i tidigare forskning, fokusera på kyrkorna i Rwanda som institutioner för att förstå och förklara de kristna hutuernas agerande i samband med folkmordet. Det som krävs är undersökningar av de religiösa trossystemen och utslagorna och hur de fungerade i specifika sammanhang. Vi måste förstå vad ”Gud” betyder när Kantano Habimana nämner honom i sina radiosändningar. Vems gud är det som åberopas? Vi måste förstå vad ”Djävulen” representerar när hans namn anförs i rättssalarna i samband med ICTR-rättegångarna och vi måste förstå såväl traditionella mytologiska föreställningarna i Rwanda som de tillskott till dessa som kolonisatörerna och missionärerna förde med sig och hur de tolkats och omtolkats. Först när vi gör det kan vi förstå religionens roll i folkmordet i Rwanda och det är, som framhållits, just detta som är målet med föreliggande avhandling.

Användningen av religion för politiska syften är inte något unikt eller särskilt utmärkande för folkmordet i Rwanda. Men även om frågan om religionens roll sällan är central när det handlar om massväld och folkmord är den sällan eller aldrig helt frånvarande. Religionen spelade visserligen inte den avgörande rollen i Förintelsen eller i folkmordet på armenierna i det osmanska riket men inte desto mindre genomfördes båda dessa folkmord av människor som i större eller mindre grad var präglade och påverkade av religiösa övertygelser. Detta innebär att (även) om en konflikt av ledande företrädare för kyrkan eller andra religiösa samfund inte ges religiösa dimensioner, inte tolkas i religiösa termer, kan själva frånvaron av explicit uttalade sådana övertyga en religiös person om att massväld är acceptabel. Så var alltså fallet i Rwanda, enligt somliga av förövarna, som tolkade prästernas tystnad som att Gud samtyckte till massdöendet. Tystnaden gjorde det dessutom möjligt för hutuextremisterna att usurpera det kristna budskapet, omtolka det och använda det för sina syften.
Syftet med denna avhandling har varit att analysera hur religiösa begrepp och argument användes före, under och efter folkmordet I Rwanda i syfte att förklara den komplicerade och komplexa dynamik som ledde fram till försöket att utrota en grupp människor. Undersökningen har visat att innebörden i begrepp som ”Gud” är lika mångfacetterade som kyrkans roller. De flesta människor har mer eller mindre bestämda uppfattningar om vad ”Gud” betyder, eller ”Messias” eller ”Satan”. De religiösa begreppen har alltså oftast en tydlig denotation. De har emellertid också en uppsjö av konnotationer som varierar beroende på vem som ger uttryck för föreställningarna och i vilka sammanhang. I folkmordssammanhang kan Gud vara såväl hämndlysten och straffande som förövande, kärlsfull såväl som förespråkare av folkmord. De religiösa begreppen laddas således med olika innebörder beroende på sammanhang vilket i sin tur fägrar de uttalanden och den argumentation i vilka de används. Därmed ges budskapet en religiös betydelse och talar därigenom till mottagarens tro, något som de flesta hutuer i Rwanda delade.

**Efterdyningarna**

Folkmordet upphörde i juli 1994 när RPF intog Kigali och tvingade interimregeringen och den rwandiska armén att fly. FN hade då, till följd av sin overksamhet så länge folkmordet pågått, ett starkt behov av att förbättra sitt anseende varför organisationen gick med på att inrätta en folkmordtribunal, ICTR i Arusha, Tanzania. Tribunalen behandlade bara de fall som hänfördes till Kategori I, det vill säga de grövsta brotten och brottslingarna, de som planerat, organiserat och genomfört storskaliga massakrer, och enbart brott med brottsrubriceringen ”folkmord”. Enbart 93 personer åtalades på dessa grunder. I somliga av dessa rättegångar återfanns medlemmar av prästerskapet bland de åtalade, i andra framträdde de som vittnen. I både dessa sammanhang användes ett språk präglat av religiösa begrepp och argument. Det var emellertid inte enbart i rättegångar mot kyrkliga företrädare eller där dessa vittnade som denna typ av begrepp och argument nyttjades. Tvärtom, förekom de i samtliga rättegångar utom en.

I rättegångarna utnyttjade alla inblandade, de åtalade, vittnena, advokaterna och till och med domarna, ett religiöst präglat språk och de gjorde det av flera olika skäl. Somliga åtalade bedyrade sin oskulden genom att hävda att de med Guds hjälp gjort goda gärningar eller att Gud agerat genom dem medan andra påstod att de själva eller hela Rwanda stått under djävulens inflytande. Oavsett om de hänvisade till Gud eller djävulen innebar denna typ av argument att de åtalade och vittnena hänvisade till krafter starkare än och utanför dem själva och deras kontroll och därmed hävdade att de inte kunde hållas personligen ansvariga för det de lades till
last. Detta innebar också att de gjorde anspråk på offerstatus; på samma sätt som offren för folkmordet var de offer för omständigheter de inte kunde kontrollera. En del gick till och med så långt att de jämförde sin situation med Jesus Kristus genom att hänvisa till att de i likhet med honom utsatts för falska anklagelser och oförskylt lidande.

Ett återkommande motiv i diskussionerna under rättegångarna var förlåtelse. Flera av vittnena fick uppleva hur deras trovärdighet ifrågasattes av åklagare, försvarsadvokater och domare och försvarade sig då genom att hänvisa till sin religiositet; i egenskap av troende människor, goda kristna, var de per definition trovärdiga och dessutom oskyldiga. En del av de personer vars trovärdighet ifrågasattes hade redan i andra rättegångar dömts för folkmordsbrott. I Rwanda efter folkmordet kunde förövare som erkände sig skyldiga få sina straff reducerade. Detta är förmodligen skälet till att flera dömda förövare i ICTR-rättegångarna hävdade att om de erkände, visade ånger och bad staten, offren och Gud om förlåtelse så skulle de få kortare straff. Denna argumentation använde de i sin tur för att bemöta anklagelser i rätten för opålitlighet: Eftersom de bett om förlåtelse och också förlåtits av Gud hade deras skuld lyfts av dem. De var därför oskyldiga och följaktligen trovärdiga.

Det finns förvisso skillnader i hur ett religiöst språkbruk användes före, under och efter folkmordet men väl så intressant är hur strategiskt religiösa argument och begrepp brukades i alla dessa sammanhang. Avhandlingens sista empiriska kapitel, kapitel 6, syftar inte endast att skapa en insikt i hur religiösa begrepp och argument användes i rättegångarna som hölls av folkmordstribunalen utan även till att belysa de religiösa föreställningarnas betydelse, inte bara i tribunalen utan även under kriget och folkmordet.


**Framtiden**

Alison Des Forges skrev: "Tillförlitliga redogörelser för folkmordet måste med beaktande av komplexiteten kunna fastställa hur rollerna som ledare, följare, och dissidenter såg ut i Rwanda", och framhåller att ”detta är väsentligt både för att rättvist bedöma deras beteenden och för att skapa
strategier för framtiden.”879 Jag instämmer helt och fullt. 20 år har förflutit sedan Des Forges skrev dessa rader, men de är fortfarande viktiga.


Denna blindhet för religionens roll och funktion har resulterat i att en av de starkaste kopplingarna mellan hutuextremistisk propagandister och den kristna hutubefolkningen, nämligen de religiösa föreställningarna, har förvisserats. Det har vidare resulterat i uppfattningen att animalistisk avhumanisering var den viktigaste formen av nedvärdering. Genom att analysera det religiöst färgade språket, placera och analysera begrepp hämtade från detta språk i de kontexter i vilka de användes, och genom att spåra deras innebörder genom olika kontexter har i föreliggande avhandling ett försök gjorts att lägga till religion och hur den kan användas till den komplicerade bilden av propaganda i Rwanda under kriget och folkmordet. Studien har visat att religiösa begrepp och argument användes av propagandisterna för att det föra ut extremistiska budskap till befolkningen. Detta har gett en insikt i hur de processer såg ut genom vilka tutsierna nedvärderades, avhumaniserades och berövades all legitimitet.

Forskare som Timothy Longman har studerat kyrkornas roll i Rwanda, med fokus på institutionerna och hur kyrkornas företrädare agerade. Denna forskning är av stor vikt för att förstå kyrkornas roll under folkmordet och hur de, och i synnerhet den katolska kyrkan, försökte upprätthålla en balans mellan organiserad religion och politik. Kyrkorna i Rwanda var, som framhållits, inte tysta under kriget eller folkmordet, som många har hävdat men till följd av att olika individer inom de olika kyrkorna tog ställning för olika parter under konflikten var kyrkorna så splittrade att de inte kunde tala med en enad röst, och de som talade kunde inte tala högt nog när våldet tilltog. Ett fåtal kyrkliga representanter försökte göra sina röster hörda men de kunde inte tilltala folket på det sätt som de hutuextremistiska propagandisterna gjorde i media. De som motsatte sig våldet mot tutsier och moderata hutuer kom sedan själva att

879 Des Forges 1999, p. 771. ‘Accurate accounts of the genocide must establish in all their complexity the roles of the leaders, the followers, and the dissidents within Rwanda [...] this is essential both for assessing fairly the behaviour of individuals and for creating strategies for the future.’

274
bli mördade eller tvingas fly. Detta är anledningen till att så många forskare, överlevande, journalister och andra hävdat att kyrkorna var tysta och inte försökte stoppa eller förhindra folkmordet. Att det saknades en samlad, tydlig kyrklig röst, som kunde nå ut till befolkningen innebär emellertid inte att religion eller religiösa budskap inte spelade någon roll. Som denna avhandling visar var religionen i allra högsta grad närvarande före, under och efter folkmordet men den representerades inte främst av kyrkorna.

De hutuextremistiska propagandisterna använde sin egen religiöst influerade retorik, och lyckades med den dränka alla kyrkornas försök att ena landet. RTLM tog kyrkornas plats som nyhetsförmedlare och kyrkorna kunde inte mäta sig med hattradions religiösa budskap. Flera av de kyrkliga företrädare som motsatte sig hutuextremismen blev själva måltavlor för RTLM:s journalister, som hävdade att de inte var sanna företrädare för kyrkan. Andra godtog RTLM:s retorik och valde att bidra till eller aktivt delta i dödandet. Således kom RTLM och Kangura att avgöra vad de rwandiska hutuerna skulle tro, och det var att det fanns en gud som godkände utrotandet av tutsierna. Det var en gud som, liksom hutuernas liv och levnadssätt, enligt propagandan, var hotad av tutsierna. Därför uppmunrades hutuerna explicit att försvara sig själva, Rwanda, och därmed sin religion.

Frågan huruvida religionen är central i en konflikt är givetvis väsentlig men lika viktig är frågan hur den används, vilken roll och funktion den har. Även i konflikter där religion anses spela en marginell roll och sakna direkt inflytande över konflikten som sådan, är det viktigt att hålla i minnet att religionen kan vara av betydelse för de inblandade. Om så är fallet kan deras tro komma att användas av andra. Om vi vill skapa strategier för framtiden, som Alison Des Forges före slår, borde en viktig lärdom från folkmordet i Rwanda vara att vi inte enkom bör studera kyrkor som institutioner och ledande kyrkliga företrädare om vi vill förstå religionens roll i folkmord.

Den teoretiska modell liksom den metod som använts i denna avhandling skulle kunna användas även i studier av andra konflikter och folkmord. De kan visa hur innebördren även i välbekanta ord förändras beroende på vem som använder dem och i vilka sammanhang de utnyttjas. Orden kan ha en historia som ger dem en mening som inte blir begriplig förrän såväl ordens historiska som lingvistiska betydelser klarlagts och de har analyserats i de sociala sammanhang i vilka de används. Framtida forskning skulle exempelvis kunna ge ny kunskap om högerextremismen i västvärlden idag genom att studera vad ordet ”Gud” betyder i propagandan mot homosexualitet, eller mot islam och vilka religiösa begrepp och argument i övrigt som används i korståget mot de andra. Likaså skulle den kunna bidra till att förklara IS uppkomst och framväxt samt ge kunskap om andra grupper som menar sig utkämpa heliga krig.
Dock inte genom att debattera huruvida de representerar sann religion ( vad det nu skulle kunna tänkas vara ), utan genom att klargöra vad religionen innebär för dem, genom att analysera de innehåller de laddar de religiösa begrepp de använder med.

Förhoppningen är att studier av religiösa kontexter i konflikter och vad religiösa begrepp betyder för de inblandade kan bidra till ökad medvetenhet om att religiöst influerade begrepp och argument inte bör förbises. Religion används, och kan användas, i försök att skapa och upprätthålla fred, men också för att separera, segregera, demonisera och dehumanisera de andra och därigenom mobilisera och förmå människor att begå fruktansvärda illdåd mot andra människor. Genom ökad kunskap om hur brott såsom folkmord kan begås i religionens namn blir det förhoppningsvis också möjligt att förhindra sådana.
Appendices

Appendix I: Concepts

1. Religious Concepts

Religious/Mythological Entities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>Kinyarwanda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allah</td>
<td>Allah</td>
<td>Allah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ</td>
<td>Christ</td>
<td>Kiristo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demon</td>
<td>Démon</td>
<td>Dayimoni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devil</td>
<td>Diable</td>
<td>Satani/Shitani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>Père</td>
<td>Padiri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gahutu</td>
<td>Gahutu</td>
<td>Gahutu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gatutsi</td>
<td>Gatutsi</td>
<td>Gatutsi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God</td>
<td>Dieu</td>
<td>Imana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus</td>
<td>Jésus</td>
<td>Yezu (Catholic)/ Yesu (Protestant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord</td>
<td>Seigneur</td>
<td>Nyagasani/Uwiteka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messiah</td>
<td>Messie</td>
<td>Mesya</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Institutions, Buildings, and Officials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>English</strong></th>
<th><strong>French</strong></th>
<th><strong>Kinyarwanda</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bishop</td>
<td>Évêque</td>
<td>Bishopu/Umusenyeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church (institution)</td>
<td>Église</td>
<td>Kiriziya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church (building)</td>
<td>Église</td>
<td>Urusengero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>Ubuyisilamu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judaism</td>
<td>Judaïsme</td>
<td>Ubuyahudi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mosque</td>
<td>Mosquée</td>
<td>Umusigiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastor</td>
<td>Pasteur</td>
<td>Umupasitorì/Umushumba/Umwungeri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pope</td>
<td>Pape</td>
<td>Papa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priest</td>
<td>Prêtre</td>
<td>Umusohozabitambo/Umutambyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>Umuporotestani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Day-Adventist</td>
<td>Église Adventiste du Septième Jour</td>
<td>Abadivantisiti b’Umunsi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple</td>
<td>Temple</td>
<td>Urusengero</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Rituals and Liturgy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>English</strong></th>
<th><strong>French</strong></th>
<th><strong>Kinyarwanda</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baptism</td>
<td>Baptême</td>
<td>Umubatizo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bible</td>
<td>Bible</td>
<td>Bibiliya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communion</td>
<td>Communion</td>
<td>Guhazwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eucharist</td>
<td>Éucharistic</td>
<td>Igitambo cy’Ukaristiya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass</td>
<td>Messe</td>
<td>Misa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pray</td>
<td>Prier</td>
<td>Gusenga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quran</td>
<td>Coran</td>
<td>Korowani</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Misc. Religious Concepts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>Kinyarwanda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>Umukristo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christianity</td>
<td>Christianisme</td>
<td>Ubukristo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commandments</td>
<td>Commandements</td>
<td>Amategeko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Foi</td>
<td>Kwizera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamitic</td>
<td>Hamitique</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy</td>
<td>Saint</td>
<td>Kweria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jihad</td>
<td>Jihad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Idini/Iyobokamana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>Indahemuka/Umwem-wzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacred</td>
<td>Sacré</td>
<td>Wera</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 2. Secular Concepts

### Politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>Kinyarwanda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>Démocratie</td>
<td>Demokarasi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>Hutu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>Majorité</td>
<td>Nyamwinshi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>Minorité</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwami</td>
<td>Mwami</td>
<td>Mwami</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noble</td>
<td>Noble</td>
<td>Imfura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace</td>
<td>Paix</td>
<td>Amahoro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal</td>
<td>Royal</td>
<td>Nyabami/Cyami</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribal</td>
<td>Tribal</td>
<td>Bwoko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutsi</td>
<td>Tutsi</td>
<td>Tutsi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Military/War

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>Kinyarwanda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>Armée</td>
<td>Ingabo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gendarmerie</td>
<td>Gendarmerie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inkotanyi</td>
<td>Inkotanyi</td>
<td>Inkotanyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidential Guard</td>
<td>Garde Présidentielle</td>
<td>Barindaga Perezida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugee</td>
<td>Réfugié</td>
<td>Impunzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soldier</td>
<td>Soldat</td>
<td>Ingabo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War</td>
<td>Guerre</td>
<td>Intambara</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Violence/Genocide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>Kinyarwanda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Death</td>
<td>Mort</td>
<td>Urupfu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Die</td>
<td>Mourir</td>
<td>Gupfa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Execute</td>
<td>Exécuter</td>
<td>Kunyonga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exterminate</td>
<td>Exterminer</td>
<td>Gutsemba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genocide</td>
<td>Génocide</td>
<td>Jenoside/Itsembabwoko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inyenzi</td>
<td>Inyenzi</td>
<td>Inyenzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kill</td>
<td>Tuer</td>
<td>Kwika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massacre</td>
<td>Massacre</td>
<td>Itsembatsemba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>Meurtre</td>
<td>Ubwikanyi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
<th>Kinyarwanda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accusation</td>
<td>Accusation</td>
<td>Ikirego</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgiveness</td>
<td>Pardon</td>
<td>Imbabazi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guilt</td>
<td>Culpabilité</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innocence</td>
<td>Innocence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Trois</td>
<td>Tatu/Eshatu/Gatatu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truth</td>
<td>Vérité</td>
<td>Ukuri</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix II: The Hutu Ten Commandments

French

1. Tout Muhutu doit savoir que Umututsikazi où qu’elle soit, travaille à la solde de son ethnie tutsi. Par conséquent, est traître tout Muhutu:
- qui épouse une mututsikazi;
- qui fait d’une Umututsiltazi sa concubine;
- qui fait d’une Umututsikazi sa secrétaire ou sa protégée.

2. Tout Muhutu doit savoir que nos filles Bahutulcazi sont plus dignes et plus consciencieuses dans leur rôle de femme; d’épouse et de mère de famille. Ne sont-elles pas jolies, bonnes secrétaires et plus honnêtes !

3. Bahutukazi, soyez vigilantes et ramenez vos maris, vos frères et vos fils à la raison.

4. Tout Muhutu doit savoir que tout Mututsi est malhonnête dans les affaires. Il ne vise que la suprématie de son ethnie. «RIZABARA UWARIRAYE» [“Celui qui racontera la nuit, c’est celui qui l’a vécue.”]
- qui fait alliance avec les Batutsi dans ses affaires;
- qui investit son argent ou l’argent de l’Etat dans une entreprise
- qui prête ou emprunte de l’argent à un Mututsi;
- qui accorde aux Batutsi des faveurs dans les affaires (l’octroi des licences d’importation, des prêts bancaires, des parcelles de construction, des marchés publics...).

5. Les postes stratégiques tant politiques, administratifs, économiques, militaires et de sécurité doivent être confiés aux Bahutu.


- Ils doivent constamment contrecarrer la propagande tutsi. - Les Bahutu doivent être fermes et vigilants contre leur ennemi commun tutsi.


English

1. Every Hutu must know that the Tutsi woman, wherever she may be, is working for the Tutsi ethnic cause. In consequence, any Hutu is a traitor who:
- Acquires a Tutsi wife;
- Acquires a Tutsi concubine;
- Acquires a Tutsi secretary or protégée.

2. Every Hutu must know that our Hutu daughters are more worthy and more conscientious as women, as wives and as mothers. Aren’t they lovely, excellent secretaries, and more honest!

3. Hutu women, be vigilant and make sure that your husbands, brothers and sons see reason.

4. All Hutus must know that all Tutsis are dishonest in business. Their only goal is ethnic superiority. «RIZABARA UWARIRAYE» [“Only he who spent a sleepless night can speak of the night”] We have learned this by experience from experience. In consequence, any Hutu is a traitor who:
- Forms a business alliance with a Tutsi
- Invests his own funds or public funds in a Tutsi enterprise
- Borrows money from or loans money to a Tutsi
- Grants favours to Tutsis (import licenses, bank loans, land for construction, public markets...)
5. Strategic positions such as politics, administration, economics, the military and security must be restricted to the Hutu.

6. A Hutu majority must prevail throughout the educational system (pupils, scholars, teachers).

7. The Rwandan Army must be exclusively Hutu. The war of October 1990 has taught us that. No soldier may marry a Tutsi woman.

8. Hutu must stop taking pity on the Tutsi.

9. Hutu wherever they be must stand united, in solidarity, and concerned with the fate of their Hutu brothers. Hutu within and without Rwanda must constantly search for friends and allies to the Hutu Cause, beginning with their Bantu brothers.
   Hutu must constantly counter Tutsi propaganda.
   Hutu must stand firm and vigilant against their common enemy: the Tutsi.

10. The Social Revolution of 1959, the Referendum of 1961 and the Hutu Ideology must be taught to Hutu of every age. Every Hutu must spread the word wherever he goes. Any Hutu who persecutes his brother Hutu for spreading and teaching this ideology is a traitor.
Appendix III: ICTR Cases and Number of Transcripts

Akayesu, ICTR-96-4  38
Bagaragaza, ICTR-05-86  4
Bagilishema, ICTR-95-1A  8
Bagosora et al., ICTR-98-41  314
Bikindi, ICTR-01-72  59
Bisengimana, ICTR-00-60  4
Bizimungu et al., ICTR-99-50  318
Gatete, ICTR-00-61  28
Hategekimana, ICTR-00-55B  22
Kajelijeli, ICTR-98-44A  27
Kalimanzira, ICTR-05-88  25
Kamuhanda, ICTR-99-54A  42
Kanyarukiga, ICTR-02-78  29
Karemera et al., ICTR-98-44  305
Karera, ICTR-01-74  37
Kayishema et al., ICTR-01-67  19
Mpambara, ICTR-01-65  31
Muhimana, ICTR-95-01B  41
Munyakazi, ICTR-97-36A  13
Musema, ICTR-96-13  12
Muvinyi et al., ICTR-00-55  1
Nahimana et al., ICTR-99-52  67
Nehamihigo, ICTR-01-63  54
Ndahimana, ICTR-01-68  27
Ndindabahizi, ICTR-01-71  35
Ndindiliyimana et al., 00-56  307
Ngirabatware, ICTR -99-54  52
Niyitegeka, ICTR-96-14  18
Nizeyimana, ICTR-00-55C  3
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Case Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nsengimana, ICTR-01-69</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nshogoza, ICTR-07-91</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ntagerura et al., ICTR-99-46</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ntakirutimana et al. ICTR-96-17</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ntawukulilyayo, ICTR-05-82</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyiramasuhuko et al., ICTR-98-42</td>
<td>485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nzabirinda, ICTR-01-77</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nzabonimana, ICTR-98-44D</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renzaho, ICTR-97-31</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rugambarara, ICTR-00-59</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruggiu, ICTR-97-32</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rukundo, ICTR-01-70</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rutaganda, ICTR-96-3</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rutaganira, ICTR-95-1C</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rwamakuba, ICTR-98-44C</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semanza, ICTR-97-20</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seromba, ICTR-01-66</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serugendo, ICTR-05-84</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serushago, ICTR-98-39</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setako, ICTR-04-81</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simba, ICTR-01-76</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uwinkindi, ICTR-01-75</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zigiranyirazo, ICTR-01-73</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total 3093**
Appendix IV: Chronology of Events 1884-2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>During the Berlin Conference in 1884-1885 Ruanda-Urundi (Rwanda and Burundi) is assigned to German east Africa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880-90</td>
<td>Roman Catholic missionaries arrive in Ruanda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>The first Germans arrive in Ruanda. Less than 100 representatives live in Rwanda until 1916.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>The first missionary station of the White Fathers is established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>Belgian troops forces the Germans out of Ruanda-Urundi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>Belgium is granted mandate to govern Ruanda-Urundi, by League of Nations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Mwami Musinga is dethroned and replaced by his more accommodating son.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>Mwami Rudahigwa and the queen mother are baptized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>United Nations makes Ruanda-Urundi a trust territory to be governed by Belgium. Mwami Rudahigwa consecrates Ruanda to Christ the King.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>United Nations genocide convention is adopted in December.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>The Bahutu Manifesto is published, with the support of the Catholic Church, in which the Hutus denounce the oppression of Hutus by Tutsis under colonial influence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Mwami Rudahigwa dies under mysterious circumstances. The first political parties are established, supported by the Catholic Church. Belgian Colonel Guy Logiest arrives in Rwanda to bring order to the country. When finding the situation untenable, Logiest suggests that Belgium side with the Hutus instead of the Tutsis. The Hutus revolt against the Tutsi regime, with the help of the Belgians. Thousands of Tutsis flee to Burundi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Exiled Tutsis in Burundi attack Rwanda. In response 20 000 Tutsis are killed in Rwanda by the Hutu regime, and more Tutsis flee to Burundi, Uganda, and Tanzania.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>The Burundian Tutsi regime massacre between 100 000 and 200 000 Hutus, and several hundred thousand Hutus flee to Rwanda.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In response, Tutsis are forced from administrative jobs in Rwanda.

1973

Major Juvénal Habyarimana deposes President Kayibanda in a coup d'état and assumes presidency.

Habyarimana introduces an ethnic quota, meaning that the percentage of Tutsi students in schools and public service employees should correspond to the percentage of Tutsis in the country.

1975

Habyarimana creates Mouvement Républicain National pour la Développement (MRND) and makes Rwanda a one-party state.

1983

Presidential elections are held with Habyarimana as the only candidate. He wins with 99.98 percent of the vote.

1986

The Rwandan government declares that Rwandan refugees forced into exile after the 1959 revolution are not allowed to return to the country.

1987

The Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) is formed by exiled Rwandans in Uganda. They are a militarised political movement with the aim of reclaiming rights to citizenship in Rwanda and to end the Hutu hegemony.

1988

Habyarimana again wins the presidential elections.
1990  
President Habyarimana is pressured to democratise and abandon the one-party system.

Habyarimana announces his intention to democratise.

Training of the civilian youth militia, *Interahamwe*, commences.

In October the RPF invades Rwanda under the leadership of Fred Rwigema. Rwigema is killed and RPF retreats.

*Kangura* magazine is first published.

1991  
Paul Kagame assumes leadership of RPF and invades Rwanda in January, with far greater success. The French support of the Habyarimana regime and the threat of French involvement in the civil war make complicate matters.

Several oppositional parties are formed in Rwanda, but Habyarimana persecutes his opponents and keeps the democratisation process in a fear-induced status quo.

The *Akaazu* – friends and relatives of the President’s wife Agathe Habyarimana – is opposed to the democratisation and encourages violence against the Tutsi. Allegedly makes plans of genocide.

A cease-fire is agreed upon, but repeatedly broken.

1992  
*Interahamwe* and CDR members hold violent rallies. Approximately 2 500 Tutsis are killed in retaliations for the RPF’s advancements.

United Nations Security Council urges the combatting parties to respect the cease-fire.
1993

In January a Broad Based Transitional Government is appointed as part of the peace agreement and democratisation negotiations.

Approximately 300 Tutsis are killed in northern Rwanda. RPF leaves negotiations to organise a new assault, but the Rwandan army attacks them before they could regroup. France claims this was an unprovoked RPF attack and increases their support of the Rwandan armed forces.

In March the RPF returns to peace negotiations.

The Rwandan government and RPF make a joint request for a neutral international UN force to aid in the implementation of the peace agreement referred to as the Arusha Accords.

In July the RTLM begins their broadcasts.

The Arusha Accords are signed on August 4 and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) is established in Kigali between October and December.

1994

January

Juvénal Habyarimana is appointed President of a transitional government, but the establishment of this government is blocked by both RPF and the Rwandan extremist parties.

RTLM broadcasts, the CDR rallies, and the Interahamwe cause insecurity in Kigali.

An informant tells UNAMIR of weapons caches and the plans of genocide, as well as details of how the Interahamwe are trained to kill Tutsis. UNAMIR relays information to UN headquarters and requests to raid the weapons caches. The request is denied due to the restricted mandate of the UNAMIR.
**February**

Requests for an expansion of the mandate are denied.

**April**

On April 5 the United Nations threatens to withdraw the UNAMIR if the Arusha Accords are not implemented.

On the April 6 the aircraft carrying Habyarimana from a meeting in Daar-es-Salaam is shot down by unknown assailants. Within hours, roadblocks are set up all over Kigali.

On the April 7, systematic killings of Tutsi and moderate Hutu politicians commence. Head of government, Prime minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana is murdered. By the evening not a single politician in favour of the Arusha Accords is left alive.

Ten Belgian UN soldiers assigned to the protection of Uwilingiyimana are murdered.

*Interahamwe* is unleashed. Identity cards are checked at every roadblock. All Tutsis are immediately killed, with the exception of some women who are detained and systematically raped.

On April 8, Théodore Sindikubwabo declares that a transitional government is appointed, with himself as President.

While France sends troops to evacuate all foreigners in Rwanda, Belgium announces their intention to leave the UNAMIR, due to the murders of the ten soldiers.

On the 20th the last Belgian troops leave Rwanda, leaving thousands of Rwandans without protection.

On April 21 the United Nations adopts Resolution 912 which entails the reduction of UNAMIR to a skeleton crew of 270 military personnel. Ghanaian soldiers refuse
to leave, leaving approximately 500 UN soldiers in Rwanda.

On the 29th the Security Council debates whether or not the events in Rwanda constitute genocide. USA and Great Britain strongly opposes the use of the word. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali asks the council to re-evaluate the decision to reduce the UNAMIR.

May

On May 1, the United States Ministry of Defence secretly decides to avoid the term Genocide, since that could force the US to contribute to a peace-making force.

On the 4th, following the example of Pope John Paul II, Boutros Boutros-Ghali declares that genocide is being committed in Rwanda.

On the 13th, Boutros-Ghali suggests implementing the plan initially suggested by UNAMIR General Roméo Dallaire to send 5 500 soldiers to Rwanda to stop the genocide. This is approved on May 17 through Resolution 918, but no member state is willing to lend troops to such a mission.

On May 22 RPF takes control of Kigali Airport and forces the FAR to retreat further south.

On May 23 the RPF takes the Presidential Palace.

On May 31 Boutros-Ghali recommends that the Security Council extend the UNAMIR mandate.

June

On June 8 the Security Council extends the UNAMIR mandate to December and places the mission, known as
UNAMIR II, under Chapter 7 of the UN charter, entailing peace-making by military means.

On June 17, France announces its plans to place troops in Rwanda until the launch of UNAMIR II.

On June 22 the Security Council approves the French Opération Turquoise.

On the 24th, the French troops are in place in eastern Rwanda.

July

On the July 4 the RPF takes Kigali and declares their intention to set up a new government in accordance with the Arusha Accords.

On the 5th, the French set up a security zone along the Zaïrean border.

On the 13th the RPF take Ruhengeri. Approximately 1 million people flee to the French safe zone. Among them are perpetrators, militia, members of the army and the transitional government.

On the 18th the RPF defeats the last of the FAR strongholds, officially ending the genocide.

On July 19 the RPF establishes a national unity government, headed by Hutu Pasteur Bizimungu, who was appointed to show goodwill, while RPF leader Paul Kagame assumed the position of vice president.

October

A UN report from a commission of experts concludes that genocide has been committed against the Tutsi.
November

The UN Security Council adopts resolution 955 which contains the decision to establish an international tribunal.

1995

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) begins indicting people suspected of having committed Category I crimes of genocide – those who planned, orchestrated, instigated genocide, or carried out large scale massacres.

More than 120,000 people are detained in the Rwandan prisons. Due to the overcrowding of the prisons, only people suspected of having committed Category I crimes are arrested.

1997

In January 1997 the trial of former bourgmestre Jean-Paul Akayesu begins as the first trial in the ICTR. The trial, which ended with Akayesu being found guilty of genocide, and he was the first to be convicted of rape as a crime of genocide.

2000

RPF leader Paul Kagame assumes presidency of Rwanda after the resignation of Pasteur Bizimungu, who is subsequently arrested and imprisoned for seven years after having established an oppositional political party.

2001

The traditional gacaca courts are adapted to be allowed to handle crimes of genocide, in order to ease the burden of the Rwandan national courts and accelerate the judicial processes.
2003  Paul Kagame wins the Presidential elections with 95.1 percent of the vote.

2006  The ICTR Appeals Chamber takes judicial notice that genocide was committed, thus recognising the genocide as an indisputable fact.

2007  Rwanda abolishes the death penalty.

2008  The *gacaca* courts are given mandate to handle Category I crimes.
2011  Pauline Nyiramasuhuko is the first woman to be tried by an international tribunal, and was the first woman to be convicted of genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide, and rape as a crime of genocide.

2012  An Arusha branch of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (IRMCT) is established to continue the work of the ICTR.

In December, the ICTR delivers its last judgement before handing over to the IRMCT.

The work of the gacaca courts ends, having conducted 1,958,634 trials. Of these, 1,681,648 individuals were found guilty of crimes of genocide.

2015  The Rwandan parliament passes an amendment to the constitution. While maintaining the two-term limit they reduced the length of terms from seven to five years. Paul Kagame is exempt from this amendment, and is allowed to run for a third seven-year term, followed by two five year terms if he so pleases.

The ICTR officially ends as IRMICT assumes responsibility for the archive and any unfinished work of the ICTR.

2017  Paul Kagame is elected President for a third seven-year term, winning the vote with 98.79 percent.
Sources

Kangura

Anastase Makuza, ”Gatutsi-Nyenzi a Lance Une Attaque Suicidaire”, Kangura No. 10, February 1991
Anonymous, ”A Sister who Exposed Herself”, in Kangura No. 30, January 1992
Anonymous, ”He Who Kills by the Sword Shall Die by the Sword”, Kangura, No. 3, July 1990
Anonymous, ”Nous les Hutu, Dieu nous proteges, faisons notre examen de conscience”, in Kangura, No. 20, August 1991
Bonoaparte Ndekezi, “When the Minority is in Charge”, Kangura, No. 27, December 1991
Bonoaparte Ndekezi, ”Who Benefits From the Current Attacks?”, Kangura, No. 35, May 1992
Déo Karangira, “Ils se cachent derriere les partis politiques croyant que nous, nous sommes endormis!”, Kangura No. 30, January 1992
Déo Karangira, ”They Hide Behind Political Parties Believing That We Have Fallen Asleep!”, Kangura, No. 30, January 1992

Editorial, “L’Ancien Plan des du Pouvoir est a la Mode Aujourd’hui” in Kangura No.4, August 1990

Grégoire Kayibanda, “Power is Democracy”, Kangura No. 40, February 1993


Kangura No. 30, 1992

Kangura No. 53, December 1993


Nkekezi, “Hutus of the World, Unite”, Kangura No. 5 October 1990, International

November 1990

Papias Rubera, “When Will Kigeli’s Descendants Understand that Africa has Said No to the Rule of Lie”, Kangura, No. 30, January 1992


Théoneste Segafunzi, ”The Bitter Truth, or Pleading For an Ethnic Group”, in Kangura, No. 27, December 1991

Unknown, “MINEPRISEC (Ministry of Primary and Higher Education): Agathe Uwilingiyimana is not fit for the job”, in Kangura No. 2, June 1990.

Unknown, “Zaire: Why is There a Problem Identifying Nationals in the Regions of North and South Kivu?”, in Kangura No. 4, International, August 1990

Images

Image 1. Kangura No. 55, January 1994
Image 2. Kangura No. 56, February 1994
Image 13. *Kangura* No. 4, November 1990
Image 14. *Kangura* No. 43, June 1993
Image 15. *Kangura* No. 18, July 1991
Image 16. *La Médaille-Nyiramurabiri* No.17, November 1993
Image 17. *Kangura* No. 23, October 1991

**RTLM**

RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0004, 12 April 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0009, 18 May 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0011, 28 May 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0026, 9 June 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0027, 9 June 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0027, 9 June 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0030, 19 June 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0031, 19 June 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0038, 23 June 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0039, 1 July 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0040, 2 July 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0042, 3 July 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0047, 15 May 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0065, 14 April 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0084, 10 June 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0109, 16 June 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0113, 9 June 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0132, 20 May 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0137, 28-30 June 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0142, 24 May 2994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0143, 6-7 December 1993
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0144, 8 December 1993
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0146, 9-10 December 1993
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0155, 15-17 January 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0168, 16 March, 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0171, 18 March 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 177, 21 March 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0188, 31 March 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0190, 2 April 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0192, 3 April 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0195, 16 April 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0195, 28-29 May 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0198, Unknown day, October 1993
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0205, 22 April 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0211, 13-14 May 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0215, 2 July 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0257, 2 July 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0300, 23 June 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0304, 27 June 1994
RTLM Transcript, Tape No. 0340, 14 March 1994

ICTR

Georges Ruggiu, *This Criminal Ideology and the Methods Used by RTLM to Broadcast Them*, ICTR-99-52-T, Prosecution Exhibit P92 B
ICTR-00-55B-T (Hagegekimana), Transcript, 16 April 2009
ICTR-00-56-A (Ndindiliyimana et al.) *Appeals Chamber Judgements*, 11 February 2014
ICTR-00-56-I (Ndindiliyimana et al.), 20 October 2005
ICTR-00-56-I (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 20 October 2005
ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), 29 March 2006
ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 2 June 2005
ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 3 October 2005
ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 4 April 2005
ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 4 December 2007
ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 9 June 2004
ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 11 May 2006
ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 14 November 2006
ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 17 January 2006
ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 19 October 2005
ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 20 June 2005
ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 20 October 2005
ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 22 June 2005
ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 23 February 2005
ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 30 March 2005
ICTR-00-56-T (Ndindiliyimana et al.), Transcript, 17 January 2008
ICTR-01-65-T (Mpambara), Transcript, 8 February 2006
ICTR-01-66 (Seromba), *Judgement and sentence*, 13 December 2006
ICTR-01-66 (Seromba), Transcript, 2 November 2005
ICTR-01-66 (Seromba), Transcript, 31 March 2006
ICTR-01-66-T (Seromba), Transcript, 5 April 2006
ICTR-01-66-T (Seromba), Transcript, 7 October 2004
ICTR-01-66-T (Seromba), Transcript, 27 March 2006
ICTR-01-66-T (Seromba), Transcript, 13 October 2004
ICTR-01-66-T (Seromba), Transcript, 15 October 2004
ICTR-01-66-T (Seromba), Transcript, 26 November 2007
ICTR-01-66-T (Seromba), Transcript, 27 June 2006
ICTR-01-66-T (Seromba), Transcript, 28 June 2006
ICTR-01-66-I (Seromba), Transcript, 28 June 2006
ICTR-01-68-T (Ndahimana), Transcript, 11 November 2010
ICTR-01-70-T (Rukundo), Transcript, 12 September 2007
ICTR-01-70-T (Rukundo), Transcript, 13 September 2007
ICTR-01-70-T (Rukundo), Transcript, 24 September 2007
ICTR-01-71-T (Ndindabahinzi), Transcript, 30 October 2003
ICTR-01-73-T (Zigiranyirazo), Transcript, 8 February 2006
ICTR-01-73-T (Zigiranyirazo), Transcript, 19 October 2005
ICTR-07-91-T (Nshogoza), Transcript, 24 March 2009
ICTR-1A-T (Bagilishema), Transcript, 5 November 2000
ICTR-2000-61-T (Gatete), Transcript, 9 March 2010
ICTR-2000-61-T (Gatete), Transcript, 10 March 2010
ICTR-2001-65-I (Mpambara), Amended Indictment, 7 March 2005
ICTR-2001-66-A (Seromba), Judgement, 12 March 2008
ICTR-2001-66-A (Seromba), Transcript, 26 November 2007
ICTR-2001-66-I (Seromba), Indictment, 8 June 2001
ICTR-2001-66-I (Seromba), Judgement and sentence, 13 December 2006
ICTR-2001-66-T (Seromba), Transcript, 5 April 2006
ICTR-2005-84-I (Serugendo), Judgement and sentence, 12 June 2006
ICTR-96-10 & ICTR-96-17-T (Ntakirutimana et al.), Judgement and sentence, 21 February 2003
ICTR-96-10-T (Ntakirutimana et al.), Transcript, 22 August 2002
ICTR-96-10-T; ICTR-96-17-T (Ntakirutimana et al.), Transcript, 8 May 2002
ICTR-96-14-T (Niyitegeka), Transcript, 10 July 2007
ICTR-96-3-T (Rutaganda), Judgement and sentence, 6 December 1999
ICTR-97-31-T (Renzaho), Transcript, 6 September 2007
ICTR-98-41-T (Bagosora et al.), 1 December 2005
ICTR-98-41-T (Bagosora et al.), Judgement and sentence, 18 December 2008
ICTR-98-41-T (Bagosora et al.), Transcript, 24 June 2003
ICTR-98-41-T (Bagosora et al.), Transcript, 30 May 2007
ICTR-98-42-T (Nyiramasuhuko et al.), Transcript, 6 September 2005
ICTR-98-42-T (Nyiramasuhuko et al.), Transcript, 8 March 2007
ICTR-98-42-T (Nyiramasuhuko et al.), Transcript, 28 September 2004
ICTR-98-42-T (Nyiramasuhuko et al.), Transcript, 30 April 2009
ICTR-98-44A-T (Kajelijeli), Transcript, 16 April 2003
ICTR-98-44C-T (Rwamukuba), 13 December 2005
ICTR-98-44C-T (Rwamukuba), Transcript, 1 December 2005
ICTR-98-44C-T (Rwamukuba), Transcript, 13 December 2005
ICTR-98-44-T (Karemera et al.), 21 April 2010
ICTR-98-44-T (Karemera et al.), Transcript, 4 May 2010
ICTR-98-44-T (Karemera et al.), Transcript, 26 October 2010
ICTR-98-44-Y (Karemera et al.), Judgement and sentence, 2 February 2012
ICTR-99-50-T (Bizimungu et al.), Transcript, 9 June 2004
ICTR-99-50-T (Bizimungu et al.), Transcript, 9 June 2004
ICTR-99-52 (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 2 April 2003
ICTR-99-52 (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 17 May 2001
ICTR-99-52 (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 18 August 2003
ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 1 April 2003
ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 3 April 2003
ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 4 April 2003
ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 7 April 2003
ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 13 March 2003
ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 19 August 2003
ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 21 March 2003
ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 23 September 2002
ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 24 March 2003
ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 27 March 2003
ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 28 March 2003
ICTR-99-52-T (Nahimana et al.), Transcript, 31 March 2003
ICTR-99-52-T, (Nahimana et al.), Judgement and sentence, 3 December 2003
ICTR-99-52-T, List of RTLM Tapes, Prosecution Exhibit P. 102
ICTR-99-54-A (Kamuhanda), Transcript, 19 May 2005
ICTR-99-54A-A (Kamuhanda), Judgement, 19 September 2005
ICTR-99-54A-T (Kamuhanda), Transcript, 28 August 2003
ICTR-99-54-T (Kamuhanda), Transcript, 6 May 2002
ICTR-99-54-T (Kamuhanda), Transcript, 22 January 2003

UN documents

Letter dated 29 April 1994 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council, A/1994/518, 29 April 1994
S/RES/872 (1993), Resolution 872, 5 October 1993
UN Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda, S/1994/470

303
Other

*Administrative Report of the National Service of the Gacaca Courts 2012*, 12-08-2013
*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1324

Internet


Republika y'u Rwanda, Justice and Reconciliation, (http://gov.rw/about-the-government/justice-reconciliation/), 2018-03-21


Literature


Gasanabo, Jean-Damascène, 2015, ‘Dehumanization and Anti-dehumanization in Schools’, in Jean-Damascène Gasanabo, David J.
Simon, & Margee M. Ensign (eds.), *Confronting Genocide in Rwanda: Dehumanization, Denial, and Strategies for Prevention*, Bogotá, Colombia.


Lasswell, Harold D., 1927, Propaganda Technique in the World War, New York, NY.

Linden, Ian, & Linden, Jane, 1977, Church and Revolution in Rwanda, Manchester; New York, NY.


Rittner, Carol, Roth, John K., & Whitworth, Wendy (eds.), 2004, *Genocide in Rwanda: Complicity of the Churches?* Newark, Notts., U.K.


Weinberg, Ben, 2015, *God in Pre- and Post-Genocide Rwanda: Understanding People’s Perspectives*, SIT Study Abroad.


Bengt Nilsson: Kvinnornas roll mellan 1800- och 1900-talets första hälft. 1996.


Tina Wanhalls organisation och konflikt i senmedeltidens Sverige. 1998.


