

Everyday ethnicities: identity and reconciliation among Rwandan youth

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Drawing on ethnographic research with young Rwandans in Kigali, this paper explores the role of the “ethnic” categories “Hutu,” “Tutsi” and “Twa” in their everyday relations and relationships. Through exploring their narratives, practices and social interactions, the paper demonstrates that—despite current state policies that seek to de-emphasize “ethnic” identities—ethnicity remains salient in contemporary Rwanda. Although many young Rwandans continue to forge inter-ethnic ties, there is a persistent desire to know the ethnic identity of significant others and to categorize them on an ongoing basis. Exploring the complexities, contradictions and uncertainties of these processes of categorization, this paper investigates the relationship between “conceptual” categories and “concrete” persons in contemporary Rwanda. As such, it raises fundamental questions about what young Rwandans understand “Hutu,” “Tutsi” and “Twa” to mean and the role of “ethnic” categories, stereotypes and anomalies in structuring their social worlds. The evidence presented suggests that current approaches to reconciliation do not sufficiently address the “ethnic” logic that persists in Rwanda and may instead be entrenching it, increasing the risk that any recurrence of violence would once again have “ethnic” targets and be as extensive and brutal as in 1994.

Introduction

I am not 100% sure about my ethnicity, but I know I’m mixed . . . When I was little I thought both my mother and father were Tutsi. It was only during the war, when the *interahamwe* came to the house and checked my father’s identity card, that I understood he wasn’t the same as my mother . . . He had a Hutu identity card, but I think he was also mixed. But . . . my brothers are both Tutsis. I don’t know how, but they were both *inkontanyi*¹ . . . So I have always considered myself as Tutsi too. (Paradis, born 1986 in Rwanda)

The origin, evolution and porosity of the categories “Hutu,” “Tutsi” and “Twa”—and whether or not they can be described as “ethnic” groups²—has been an enduring concern of colonial and post-colonial commentary on Rwanda.³ Since the 1994 genocide, these discussions have become increasingly polarized given their centrality to competing explanations of—and hence differential attributions of responsibility for—the events and processes that led to the 1994 genocide.⁴ Despite these debates, the categories “Hutu,” “Tutsi” and “Twa” are often applied in contemporary commentary on Rwanda without reflection. In

ideology"¹⁹ to restrict political competition and curb criticism of its regime.²⁰ Others have argued that the policy of outlawing "ethnism" has been part of a strategy to disguise the "Tutsization" of political and economic power in Rwanda.²¹ Indeed, the reports of individuals and organizations accused of "divisionism" or supporting a "genocide ideology" that have regularly appeared in the press since 2000²² and accusations about the ruling RPF's nepotistic style of politics,²³ have, in fact, served to signal to Rwandans the ongoing importance of ethnic identity in Rwandan politics and society. As one of my informants observed:

Ethnicity is still a big problem today and divisions are being reproduced. In many ways, the current regime continues to use these divisions—even if they aren't open—to keep power and serve its own interests. (Fidèle, born 1978 in Zaïre)

Although many young people I interviewed felt that the Government had promoted inter-ethnic equality in areas such as access to education, there was a widespread perception that "the Tutsi" were in power and that access to influential political posts and state sector jobs was restricted to a small group of Tutsis close to the RPF inner circle.²⁴

We need to get rid of this history of ethnicity . . . but I don't think the Government's approach is working. Even if we no longer have our ethnic group on identity cards, ethnicity still counts in society and in politics . . . 90% of the people in power are Tutsis and the Hutus who are there . . . they don't have any decision-making power. (Théogène, born 1983 in Rwanda)

It seems, however, that the Government has been more successful in suppressing public references to ethnicity. Young people were acutely aware of the sensitivities and most avoided talking openly about "ethnic" issues:

There are just some issues that friends from different tribes²⁵ don't talk about . . . like ethnic or political issues . . . because we mistrust what the other will think or say. Maybe I'm afraid to say what I think because he will think I support another ideology . . . maybe people are also afraid to talk about their past experiences during the war because they will be associated with certain things. (Jean-Claude, born 1976 in Rwanda)

Given this context, I decided before starting my fieldwork that I would never directly ask any of my research participants about ethnicity. Instead, as I talked to each person about their current lives, past experiences and views about violence and reconciliation in Rwanda, and as I observed and participated in their everyday lives, I waited to see, whether, when and how they talked about ethnicity or mentioned the categories "Hutu," "Tutsi" or "Twa." Over time, as trust developed, the issue of ethnicity always emerged and every young person referred to his or her own ethnic identity at some point. Some then talked in depth about the relevance of the categories "Hutu," "Tutsi" and "Twa" in their everyday relations and relationships. It is to these conversations that I now turn.

Ethnic relations and relationships among Kigali's youth

In Kigali today there is little discernable "ethnic" segregation in everyday life. There are no Hutu or Tutsi neighbourhoods and—although some workplaces are perceived to be dominated by people from a particular ethnic group or provenance—there are few offices or organizations that are exclusively Hutu or Tutsi. Equally, there are no visible differences in the way people from different "ethnic" backgrounds talk, dress or behave—especially amongst the younger generation. The majority of Rwandans also continue to respect traditional social obligations. For example, I witnessed how, if there was a marriage, birth or funeral, families invite their neighbours and colleagues without discounting anyone on ethnic grounds. Despite this, I found that ethnicity was omnipresent in Kigali. Although rarely spoken about in public, it was always just below the surface in everyday social life and was regularly discussed in the private sphere among close friends and family. It also was a key factor that shaped the social relations and interactions of young Rwandans.

Although relations between young people from different backgrounds seemed harmonious, almost all the young Rwandans I interviewed exhibited a constant—and almost existential—need to know the ethnic identity of significant others they interacted with and an ongoing propensity to categorize others. Although the zeal with which this "other" categorization occurred varied between individuals and depended on place and circumstance, it appeared important for young people to know the ethnic identity of others in any context in which they had a significant social stake. This included, for example, at work; in the classroom; in their local neighbourhood; in dealings with local officials; and when they were considering forming a close friendship or relationship with a person. Several young people attested to this:

These ideas of differences are fixed inside people's heads today and we can't stop that. All the time, we categorize others. It's our habit. When someone passes by, we will categorize him. It's automatic. We can't stop ourselves. (Vincent, born 1979 in Burundi)

[P]eople they know, they will find out who is who . . . if you like a boy you first have to enquire about him to check—you know—that he is not Hutu. (Stella, born 1984 in Uganda)

It depends on the environment. The majority of people get into the bus without thinking about it—maybe 10% will immediately look around them. But in other situations, between friends and work colleagues, people always want to know the ethnicity of others. (Bosco, born 1976 in Rwanda)

The purpose of this scrutiny was not immediately clear. In most cases where young people knew or thought they knew there was a difference in ethnicity between themselves and another person, this did not stop them interacting with that individual or even forming a friendship. Indeed, although many groups I worked with comprised friends from the same ethnic background—and often the same country of origin—I also came across several examples of young Rwandans in groups of friends, classmates or colleagues of different ethnic

backgrounds. Yet, even these relationships were infused with the conscious assumption of categorical knowing:

Some people always want to know exactly who is who, but others aren't concerned about that at all and try to make friendships between ethnic groups. (Emmanuel, born 1981 in Rwanda)

My best friend is Didier and Didier is Hutu. In fact all my friends are Hutu and I am the only Tutsi, but there are no problems between us. (Hassan, born 1980 in Zaïre)

Although perceived differences in ethnic identity did not impede friendships, they shaped the nature of the relationship—in particular what is talked about and the level of trust developed:

We can be friends without problems, but not very intimate. There is always a barrier. I could never have total trust in someone of the other ethnicity . . . We can't talk openly about the political situation or about the past or our own experiences. (Emmanuel, born 1981 in Rwanda)

The limited knowledge close groups of friends had about each other's backgrounds constantly surprised me. For example, Aimé, Sébastien and Jules had known each other for several years, ran a joint business and were together nearly every day and evening, working or socializing. Yet one day Sébastien admitted that it was only a few weeks earlier that he had told Aimé and Jules he had been an RPF soldier during the war. Similarly, I discovered that Aimé had never talked to the others about his narrow escape during the genocide—where he was threatened due to his “Tutsi-like” appearance. “Ethnic” identification seemed to operate on a dual “need to know” basis—young Rwandans exhibited a constant desire to “know” the “ethnic” identity of others, yet revealed to others only what they “needed to know.”

One of the most sensitive issues was dating and marriage between young people of different ethnic backgrounds. Although I came across a few young people in “mixed” relationships, this was uncommon in Kigali in 2004–2005. Some young people expressly said that they could never engage in such a relationship as the following exchange demonstrates:

[Cédric, born 1987 in Burundi]: I could never love a Hutu girl, never.

[Yves, born 1986 in Burundi]: It wouldn't be possible for me either.

[Cédric]: If I wanted to go out with a Hutu girl, my parents and friends would never let me do that.

[Gilbert, born 1984 in Rwanda]: For me, it wouldn't be possible. She might poison me.²⁶

The usual reason given was an inability to trust a person of the other ethnic group enough to engage in an intimate relationship given what happened during the genocide when some Hutu killed their own families. In most cases, however, it was the parents who were the obstacle. I came across many cases where “mixed” relationships had been prevented or forcibly ended by a parent or senior family member, as Jimmy's testimony illustrates:

Shortly after I arrived in Rwanda [in 1995], I had a girlfriend. One day, she introduced me to her family. I thought everything went well with them . . . But a few days later, she came to tell me that it would be impossible for us to continue. There were too many obstacles and her parents had told her to end the relationship . . . [It was because] she was Hutu, but I didn't care about this. I just loved her. (Jimmy, born 1976 in Zaïre)

Everyday processes of "ethnic" belonging and categorization

In contrast to the decades prior to 1994, where it was common for several generations of one family to live in the same neighbourhood, in many parts of urban Kigali today, there are families that did not know each other before 1994 and therefore have little knowledge of the origins and ancestry of their neighbours.²⁷ Thus, how do Rwandans in Kigali determine the ethnicity of their neighbours, colleagues and acquaintances in the absence of ethnic ID cards; with a lack of firsthand knowledge of a person's ancestry; and in an environment in which people avoid speaking about "sensitive" issues like ethnicity and past experiences? My findings suggest that this process of determining the ethnicity of others—and even the self—is fraught with complexities and uncertainties, which raise fundamental questions about the role and meaning of ethnicity in the lives of young people today.

Hutu or Tutsi by blood? The patrilineal system of ethnic descent

From at least the mid-colonial period onwards, it was the practice for a child to "inherit" the ethnicity of his or her father, irrespective of the ethnicity of the mother.²⁸ In this patrilineal system of ethnic descent, the child of a "mixed" union, for example a Hutu man and Tutsi woman—the most common configuration of intermarriage between the 1960s and 1980s—was considered Hutu (and vice versa). Prior to 1994, the child would have been issued with a Hutu identity card at age 16. Many young people referred to this tradition:

Here in Rwanda, you always take the ethnicity of your father . . . So if your father is Hutu, you are Hutu, even if your mother is Tutsi. (Consolée, born 1988 in Rwanda)

Indeed, despite the significant numbers of people of "mixed" ethnic heritage in contemporary Rwanda,²⁹ they were rarely categorized simply as "mixed." Instead, they were almost always categorized to one "side" or the other, i.e. as "Hutu" or as "Tutsi." Yet in practice, this categorization was often not done on the basis of their father's ethnic identity, but on the basis of other factors:

[I]t's your morphology that counts more often than the ethnicity of your father . . . I was with a girl I know yesterday. She is also mixed, but with a Tutsi father and Hutu mother, but her physique is purely 100% Hutu and everyone takes her for a Hutu. (Théogène, born 1983 in Rwanda)

Hutu or Tutsi by appearance? The ongoing pervasiveness of physical stereotypes

Most young people said that any Rwandan whose heritage is unknown is usually categorized as "Hutu" or "Tutsi" on the basis of their physical appearance:

Whether the nose is long and fine or large and flat. Also, the build, height and here [gums], we say that for Hutu, it's red and for Tutsi, black. Also, Tutsi girls often have spaces between their teeth. (Consolée, born 1988 in Rwanda)

You can tell from the physical appearance. I have a friend and she can always tell 100% who is Hutu and who is Tutsi . . . [For "mixed" people] it's harder, but she can still tell that they have Hutu blood . . . The foot—from the toes and the heel—for Hutus this part is very, very wide. The fingers and hands of Hutus, they are very hard. It is the same for the shoulders—Hutus they are hard, compact . . . they don't really have a neck like us . . . The nose—if it is sharp and long or flat and wide. My friend can tell also from the ears, but I can't. I can tell from the foot and the shoulders and normally I am right. (Stella, born 1984 in Uganda)

Most young Rwandans referred to well-worn stereotypes about differences in body height, physical build and the size and shape of the nose between Hutus and Tutsis, similar to those that have circulated since the nineteenth-century writings of European explorers, missionaries and colonial administrators.³⁰ Some elaborated further to include traits like gum colour; the shape of the heel; hardness of the body; darkness of the skin; and position of the hairline.

What was striking was the confidence with which some young people, like Stella, felt they could determine the ethnicity of others or detect the presence of "Hutu blood" from a detailed repertoire of physical features. The majority, however, said that although physical appearance was the primary factor used to categorize others, it was unreliable in practice. Usually mistakes were put down to the amount of intermarriage in Rwanda rather than the inaccuracy of the physical stereotypes themselves:

It's the morphology³¹ first, but often we make mistakes. In fact, if someone is pure from one side or the other, really pure, we can immediately determine his or her ethnicity without any doubt, but beyond that . . . there have been many mixes. (Faustin, born 1979 in Rwanda)

With [people of mixed heritage], we often make mistakes . . . you can find a boy with a Tutsi father and Hutu mother, who is therefore Tutsi, but he has all the traits of his mother and others mistake him. Like the boys that came to visit my brother earlier—their father is Hutu and their mother is Tutsi. Yet, they have the traits of Tutsis—like true Tutsis—and people think they are Tutsi. They know they are Hutus, but they will let others think they are Tutsis. (Consolée, born 1988 in Rwanda)

The language used by Consolée is revealing. She comments that her brother's friends look "like true Tutsis" although they "know" they are Hutus because of their father's ethnicity. Similarly, Théogène (quoted above) says that his friend's appearance is "100% Hutu" and therefore she is "taken" as a Hutu in spite of having a Tutsi father. Both, therefore, simultaneously employ and contest the physical stereotypes by referring to people of mixed heritage whose physical appearance does not, apparently, betray this mixture and who instead look "100% Hutu" or "like true Tutsis"—presumably on the basis of the stereotypical physical traits discussed above. The implication seems to be that a person's *real* ethnicity *inside* might not correspond to their *apparent* ethnicity displayed on the *outside*.

We are therefore left wondering exactly what Consolée and Théogène understand ethnicity to be or to mean. On the one hand, they imply that a person's *real* ethnicity is genealogically determined because a child inherits the ethnicity of their father whatever the ethnicity of the mother. Yet, on the other hand, they use a set of physical markers that rest on a racial understanding of the differences between Hutus and Tutsis, which, according to them, are genetically determined. In both senses, the implication is that ethnicity is passed through the blood, but in the case of people of mixed heritage, these two positions become inconsistent. A person could be categorized as "Hutu" on the basis of her father's ethnic group but (assuming momentarily that the ethnic phenotypes are undisputed) not possess "Hutu" traits because she has inherited physical traits from her Tutsi mother. In other words, if the child of a mixed union is to "take" or rather be "given" her father's ethnic identity, it seems nonsensical to then categorize that child by her physical appearance as she may not match either stereotype.

Although some young people were confident that the stereotypes were reliable in the cases of "pure" Tutsis and Hutus, others were more doubtful:

Eighty per cent of the time, you can see someone's ethnicity from their nose, but twenty per cent you are mistaken . . . fifty per cent of the time you can determine their ethnicity from their height. There are those who are mixed where mistakes are made, but there are also Tutsis who are small and Hutus who are tall . . . I had a Hutu father and a Tutsi mother, but with my face and height, I am 100% Hutu, even if I am mixed. On the other hand, my sister, she has the face of a Tutsi—100%. (Bosco, born 1976 in Rwanda)

People say that Hutus are short with big noses and Tutsis are tall and lean, but in reality, there have been many mixes and people can easily make mistakes . . . there are also Hutus that look completely like Tutsis and Tutsis like Hutus. (Didier, born 1980 in Rwanda)

Even those who expressly dismissed this mode of categorizing seemed to find it difficult to escape using the physical stereotypes in practice. Although most of my interlocutors said physical characteristics lacked reliability, the stereotypes remained pervasive and young Rwandans tended to employ them without reflection in everyday life. Similarly, when talking about acquaintances that did not match the stereotypes, they frequently used those very stereotypes as a reference point. For example, Didier says he knows "Hutus that look completely like Tutsis and Tutsis like Hutus" and Bosco comments "with my face and height, I am 100% Hutu, even if I am mixed." Knowledge of these anomalous persons did not seem to lead people to consciously or actively change the stereotypes.

Hutu or Tutsi by behaviour? Nature or nurture?

Drawing on theories of "scientific racism," colonial constructions of Rwandan society also stressed differences in character and behaviour between Rwanda's "ethnic" groups. The "Hamitic" Tutsi were often portrayed as being of superior intelligence, cunning, clannish and naturally disposed to lead, whereas the "Bantu" Hutu and "pygmoid" Twa were variously portrayed as slower-witted,

naïve and more suited to physical labour.³² A small but significant number of my informants referred to such behavioural stereotypes:

[Before the war] we always learnt that Tutsis were cunning, that they hid the truth and had secrets. Even today I see this difference—that Tutsis are more cunning than Hutus. Hutus are open—they will tell you what they think directly, not like Tutsis. (Théogène, born 1983 in Rwanda)

Tutsis are more arrogant, more cunning—they always have a sense of superiority over others, they are more closed. These are the negative sides, the faults. But on the other hand, they are calmer, more serious and stable. If they forge relationships, these generally last longer. Hutus are more open and sociable. They make friends easily, but are also unstable. Sometimes, they make friends with you, but it's not too serious and it doesn't last. (Fidèle, born 1978 in Zaïre)

When I asked where these differences in character or behaviour originated, opinions were divided on whether they were innate or learned through socialization:

I think that it's in the blood. (Théogène, born 1983 in Rwanda)

It's about education, how a person is brought up to behave by his or her parents. (Fidèle, born 1978 in Zaïre)

I think they are born like that . . . but there is also the way people speak about certain things that marks the difference. For example, when talking about milk, we can never speak of "*amata menshi*" [lots of milk] or "*amata make*" [little milk]. We can only say "*amata*" [milk] . . . Tutsis never make errors like this, but Hutu make a lot of mistakes. (Consolée, born 1988 in Rwanda)

In spite of expressing these views, the same young people then seemed to contradict themselves by referring to people who did not fit the behavioural stereotypes. When I asked Théogène whether he had a mix of the behavioural traits he described, given he was of mixed heritage, he replied, "No, all the same, I think I am like the Hutus." Equally, Fidèle talked about how people of mixed heritage were categorized:

It depends on a person's tendencies. If he had a Tutsi mother and Hutu father, but he inclines more towards his mother's side, we will categorize him as Tutsi . . . It's more important the character, inclinations and attitude that he has taken. For example, I have a friend who is mixed with a Hutu father and Tutsi mother, but his physiognomy and attitudes are really Tutsi. You can't see the difference. So, we have accepted him in my group of friends as a Tutsi.

Fidèle again uses stereotypes of Hutu and Tutsi behaviour as reference points in describing his friend's character, rather than seeing this anomaly as a challenge to their reliability.

Hutu or Tutsi by experience? How a person's past affects ethnic categorization

There are many everyday situations where Rwandans meet others whose family background is unknown, whose appearance is ambiguous or does not match prevalent stereotypes or where there are apparent contradictions between the conclusions that might be drawn from their appearance, behaviour and entourage of friends respectively. In such situations, I was told that a Rwandan might try to get information about a person's background either from the person themselves or from associates. As talking directly about ethnicity was effectively taboo, questions would often take a more indirect form, for example asking where a person was born or where they were during the war and genocide:

Sometimes people make mistakes about me. For example, when I was at the *Ingando*,³³ there was a guy who told me lots of things about divisionism and all that. He thought I was Tutsi . . . Yet, there was another guy who told me things about the camps in Congo and all the injustices and thought I was Hutu . . . Sometimes, people ask me questions about the past to test me, to know who I am—like “How did you manage to escape?” (Emmanuel, born 1981 in Rwanda)

Emmanuel indicates that others are often confused by his ambiguous physical appearance and sometimes try to discover his ethnicity by asking questions about his past. Yet, in recounting his experiences, Emmanuel demonstrates that he has also made a direct connection between what the others say—about their past or their politics—and their ethnic identity.

I came across many similar examples where young people made assumptions about the ethnicity of others on the basis of their past experiences. For example, if it was known that an individual had spent time in the refugee camps in Zaïre after 1994, he was automatically assumed to be Hutu. Yet—although the vast majority of people who fled to Zaïre were of Hutu or mixed Hutu–Tutsi origin—there were exceptions. For example, two of the eight young people I interviewed who had spent time in the camps identified themselves as Tutsi.

Similarly, anyone who was born outside Rwanda—for example in Uganda, Burundi or Zaïre—and had returned to Rwanda with their families after the RPF victory of July 1994³⁴ was almost always assumed to be Tutsi. The knowledge that someone was a “returnee” from one of these countries was effectively taken as a proxy for them being Tutsi and it was rare for further questions to be asked. Again, whilst it is true that the vast majority were Tutsi, this did not necessarily apply to every single person or family:

[T]here's a family I know . . . they left the country before the war to find work in Uganda . . . They sold their land in Rwanda . . . But when the RPF attacked, this family started to say that they had left Rwanda for political reasons like the others [Tutsis] and they used this to take back their land by force. But this family is Hutu, 100% Hutu. (Jean-Claude, born 1976 in Rwanda)

I would say that from Congo, 70% of families were mixed. But when they came back to the country, they saw that Hutus were considered malefactors and therefore they were never

going to say that they were Hutu or even that they had Hutu family . . . all the people who came back presented themselves as Tutsis. (Jules, born 1976 in Zaïre)

The assumption that there was a correspondence between a person's past experience and ethnic identity also worked the other way round, i.e. knowledge about a person's ethnic identity was often used to make inferences about their past. Despite the complexity of their own experiences, there were strong stereotypes prevalent among young people about *the* "Tutsi experience" and *the* "Hutu experience" of past events. The most common assumption was to equate "Tutsi" with "victim" or "survivor" and "Hutu" with "perpetrator."³⁵

We cannot forget what those Hutus did to our people . . . I can talk to someone Hutu, maybe share a beer with him, but I can't stop thinking he wants to kill me. I feel I can't trust him . . . Even if he didn't kill, for sure his father or brother or uncle did. (Peter, born 1974 in Uganda)

For some young people—especially those who grew up outside Rwanda—any Hutu was automatically suspected of participation during the 1994 genocide. This was in spite of the fact that even the most pessimistic of published estimates puts the proportion of the adult Hutu population who participated in the violence at 25%.³⁶ Nonetheless, many young people were aware that some Hutus risked their lives to save their Tutsi compatriots and that many Hutu were also killed. Indeed, the exclusive equation of "Tutsi" with victimhood denies the experiences of thousands of young people of Hutu or "mixed" heritage who lost their families during the war, genocide and its aftermath. Among my research participants, 7 of the 13 Rwandans born in Rwanda who identified their heritage as "Hutu" or "mixed" had personally survived RPA attacks on their neighbourhood in 1994, in the Kibeho internally displaced persons (IDP) camp in 1995³⁷ or in one of the refugee camps in Zaïre in late 1996 and all but one of these had lost one or both parents in these attacks.

Hutu or Tutsi by politics? Ethnically determined positions on Rwanda's past?

Another common assumption among young Rwandans was that a person's political position and views about Rwanda's past—in particular about the origins of ethnicity, violence and genocide—would be determined by their ethnic identity, i.e. if a person was known or believed to be Hutu (or Tutsi), it was usually assumed he or she held a particular "Hutu" (or "Tutsi") view of past and present events:

There are stereotypes and ideas about politics and the past that are held by people of a certain ethnic background, even if they don't match reality. (Jean-Claude, born 1976 in Rwanda)

If I put myself in the position of a Rwandan from here—not a Tutsi—I will tell you that [these groups] have existed for a very long time, that the Hutus came from Uganda and Congo, the Tutsis from Ethiopia and the Twa were the indigenous population . . . The Tutsis were pastoralists . . . they established the monarchy and were the reigning class and the Hutus were the low people. But the other—Tutsi—response . . . is that before colonization, Hutus and Tutsis existed, but the difference between them was a matter of wealth. The Tutsis were rich and the Hutus were poorer, but a person could change between Hutu and

Tutsi if he earned a lot of money or lost it . . . Then the colonists divided people on the basis of wealth and gave them identity cards . . . (Vincent, born 1979 in Burundi)

Such assumptions were common and in some cases the views a person expressed were used as indicators for their ethnic identity. Equally, their ethnic identity could be used to make inferences about their political views. Yet, when individuals recounted their own views about the past, there was only limited correspondence between their views and their ethnic identity. Although in some cases young people's narratives broadly coincided with the "Hutu" or "Tutsi" meta-narratives of history discussed by some authors,³⁸ in most cases young people gave more mixed or contradictory accounts of past events.³⁹ Yet, as with the other stereotypes discussed above, the assumption that people's political views were ethnically determined endured, despite the weight of evidence to the contrary.

The pervasiveness of "ethnicity" and "ethnic" stereotypes

The material explored above demonstrates the ongoing pervasiveness of the categories "Hutu," "Tutsi" and "Twa" in contemporary Rwanda, despite the Government's efforts to diminish the importance of "ethnic" identity. Although ethnicity is not the only identity that is significant,⁴⁰ my research suggests that it continues to be the most important in everyday, urban social relations. Firstly, young people themselves believe that ethnic identity is still an important factor in Rwanda politics and society—influencing the way people interact, what they talk about, the levels of trust they feel and the intimacy of the relationships they form. Secondly, young Rwandans demonstrate a persistent need to determine the ethnic identity of those with whom they regularly interact and to categorize them on an ongoing basis. Thirdly, there are powerful collective stereotypes about the physical attributes, behaviour, political views and experiences of *the* Tutsi and *the* Hutu, which young people use to categorize others and navigate their everyday social worlds.

The fact that "ethnic" categorization occurs in Rwandan society is in itself unremarkable. In the case of these young Rwandans, however, there were two striking aspects: (i) The sheer pervasiveness of "ethnic" categorization in everyday relations and relationships; and (ii) The persistence of particular "conceptual" "ethnic" stereotypes in young people's imaginaries, despite the number of "concrete" people around them that contradicted these stereotypes.

Knowing the "ethnic" other, concealing the "ethnic" self

The constant need to reveal the "ethnic" identity of significant others clearly reflected a deeply entrenched sense of shock at the brutality and intimacy of the 1994 genocide. Whatever its complexities, the genocide primarily divided Rwandan society on "ethnic" lines, with most of the victims Tutsi and most of the killers Hutu. In many cases, people were betrayed or killed by those closest to them. Although most of my research participants were children in 1994 and

therefore unlikely to have participated in the killing, young people repeatedly commented that this made it difficult to trust other people, especially those of a different ethnic group. This apprehension about others was heightened by the social context in Kigali in 2004–2005 where many people had not known each other before 1994 and rarely spoke openly about their past experiences. It was also intensified by the onset of the *gacaca*⁴¹ trials, which regularly produced new suspects in every neighbourhood and provided opportunities for avenging other grievances by making false accusations.

This need to know the ethnic identity of others was also about the future. Many young people felt there was a real prospect of violence returning to Rwanda and that, if this occurred, Rwanda would once more polarize on “ethnic” lines. This need to categorize the other also, therefore, seemed to be about establishing whether a particular individual would be a friend or an enemy if the violence recurred. Equally, attempts to conceal information about one’s own identity and past—as well as a strategy to make the best of the social climate—might make one a less sure target if violence broke out again.

“Conceptual” categories versus “concrete” persons

The different stereotypes discussed above—physical, behavioural, past experiences, political views—seemed to be key facets of a kind of archetypal or “conceptual” “Tutsi” and its “Hutu” counterpart,⁴² which were central to the way young people understood and navigated their social worlds. Yet the accounts also reveal considerable discrepancies between the “conceptual Tutsi” and “conceptual Hutu” as invoked by young people and the more complex lived reality around them. In many cases, a young person’s own appearance, behaviour, experiences or views did not fit the stereotypes or they gave examples of people who did not match them. Yet these anomalous persons and even blatant counter-stereotypes did not seem to prompt young people to reflect on the validity of the stereotypes and most continued to use them without reflection in daily life. There was a kind of coexistence of the “conceptual” “Hutu” and “Tutsi” and the “concrete” individual Hutus, Tutsis and “mixed” Rwandans that rarely corresponded to them.

It might be argued that such stereotypes or constructs are simply features of the “repertoires of identification”⁴³ or “grammars of identity/alterity”⁴⁴ that structure our social worlds. Each “repertoire” or “grammar” consists of a set of interrelated categories, which are necessarily defined in contrast to each other on the basis of a collection of essential characteristics. These “conceptual” categories act as reference points as we decipher and negotiate our social worlds, even if we are aware that many “concrete” people do not fit neatly within their boundaries or display the archetypal traits assigned to them. The healthy functioning of such schema of selfing/othering, however, depends on social actors being cognisant that the stereotypes are just that—globalized approximations based on traits that have been observed to be common among a particular group—and that in practice they also need to rely on their own practical experience of individuals. Problems arise when the stereotypes come to dominate people’s imaginaries to such an

extent that they become the overriding influence on their thought and action—when they take on a kind of “goes-without-saying” quality and are no longer open to challenge.

Zygmunt Bauman⁴⁵ argues that this is what happened in Europe in the early twentieth century. He says that the presence and estrangement of Jews was central to the self-identity of Christians, but that “the Jewish question” was debated at the level of ecclesiastical theory, at a conceptual level, “set apart from the context of daily life and made immune against the test of daily experience.”⁴⁶ Thus, the “conceptual Jew” could exist almost regardless of the real situation of Jews in society: “To their Christian hosts, Jews were simultaneously concrete objects of daily intercourse and exemplars of a category defined independently of such intercourse.”⁴⁷ Bauman argues that it was the vilification of the “conceptual Jew” in a context of rapid change and uncertainty, which facilitated annihilation of the “concrete Jew.”

Amartya Sen makes a related critique of the “illusion of a singular identity”—the assumption that any person pre-eminently belongs to only one collectivity.⁴⁸ He argues that this reductionist view, which overlooks both the plurality of people’s identities and internal diversity within groups, is a key factor in the production of violence: those intent on using violent means to achieve their goals skillfully cultivate this illusion of a singular identity—eclipsing the relevance of other affiliations through selective emphasis—and then redefine this sole identity in a belligerent form to incite people to commit violence in its name.⁴⁹

There are clear parallels between what Bauman and Sen describe and Rwanda of the early 1990s. In a climate of heightened fear and insecurity due to the economic crisis and ongoing civil war, the organizers of the genocide used sophisticated techniques to incite the civilian population into killing. This included the circulation of propaganda,⁵⁰ which helped to instil an ideology of ethnic division, conflict and fear by literally “teaching” the population about the primacy of ethnic identity.⁵¹ The Hutu population was encouraged to come together under “Hutu unity,” overcome internal differences, forget other affiliations and mobilize to defend their majority rights and the Republic.⁵² The propaganda became steadily more virulent, explicit and violent in tone and “the Tutsi” as a collective, *all* Tutsi, were systematically demonized and presented as the categorical enemy of *all* Hutu.⁵³

The propaganda used a number of racist stereotypes to stress the danger represented by “*the* Tutsi” because of their innate nature: their propensity to rule, intelligence, malice, hypocrisy, superiority complex, secrecy and clannishness.⁵⁴ The specific nature of these stereotypes mattered. Firstly, because they were not new—the genocidal propaganda built on longstanding “ethnic” stereotypes of Rwandan society and history that had existed since colonial times and were reinforced after independence.⁵⁵ Secondly, the fact that the differences between Hutus and Tutsis were constructed as “ethnic” mattered. “Ethnicity” seems to be particularly potent as a mobilizing force in violence, because its content is imprecise and constantly open to (re)interpretation, yet the differences posited are constructed as primordial or innate and therefore unchangeable.⁵⁶

Thirdly, the specific nature of the “ethnic” stereotypes was important. The propaganda constantly warned the population about the risk of “infiltration” by *ibyitso*—“accomplices” of the RPF—who were everywhere, even among them.⁵⁷ This construction of “the Tutsi” as “infiltrators” or the “enemy within” is very close to Omer Bartov’s notion of “elusive enemies” in his work on the Holocaust.⁵⁸ Bartov argues that this notion creates immense paranoia and can be seen as a “crucial precondition for atrocity and genocide, since it posits that the people one kills are never those one actually sees but merely what they represent, that is, what is hidden under their mask of innocence and normality.”⁵⁹ Thus, it can be argued that one reason the propaganda was so effective in persuading many Hutu that their long-time neighbours and friends were in fact “infiltrators”—disguising themselves as civilians and concealing their true identities—was that it resonated with deeply-engrained stereotypes of “the Tutsi” as innately “cunning,” “malignant” and “secretive.”

Yet, even once the “conceptual Tutsi” was imbued with these negative characteristics and defined as the categorical enemy, the process of identifying actual “concrete” Tutsi victims was fraught with uncertainty:

[R]eal bodies in history betray the very cosmologies they are meant to encode. So the ethnic body, both of victim and killer, is itself potentially deceptive. Far from providing the map for a secure cosmology, a compass from which mixture, indeterminacy, and danger may be discovered, the ethnic body turns out to be itself unstable and deceptive.⁶⁰

In 1994, there were many Rwandans who arrived at the roadblocks and did not possess the archetypal physical traits of the “conceptual Hutu” or “conceptual Tutsi” or the traits that matched the *ethnie* written on their identity card. Furthermore, as testimonies reveal, even if they felt certain that their victims were “Tutsi,” many killers recognized a gap between their everyday experience of their Tutsi acquaintances and the homogenized singular construct of the “Tutsi enemy:”

We knew our Tutsi neighbours were not to blame for any wrongdoing, but we thought that all the Tutsis were responsible for our eternal woes. We no longer saw them as individuals, we didn’t linger to recognize what they had been—even our colleagues. They had become a greater threat than everything we had lived together, which surpassed our vision of things in our community. That’s how we reasoned and that’s how we killed at that time (Léopard).⁶¹

Léopard’s words reveal that, in a context of war, fear and uncertainty, the stereotypes had taken over and he and his fellow killers no longer relied on their personal knowledge and experience of particular individuals. At the moment individual Tutsi were killed by these men, they had become a kind of “token” of the categorical being or menace they were supposed to represent. It was as if they were stripped back to some essential core of identity and their “true” inner nature was revealed and the fact that their outward behaviour, characteristics or histories did not match these constructs was of little consequence. Arjun Appadurai argues that this gap between “real bodies” and “abstract categories” creates an existential

uncertainty about the categorical “other” and can help explain both the appalling physical brutality and the intimacy of much “ethnic” violence.⁶²

In contemporary Rwanda—in the absence of ethnic ID cards and in an environment where people avoid talking about ethnicity or the past—the process of identifying the “ethnic” other is even more uncertain. As revealed by the ethnographic material in this paper, there is a sizeable gap between the “conceptual” “Hutu” and “Tutsi” of peoples’ imaginaries and the “concrete” individuals that people their everyday social worlds. Furthermore, the different criteria used to categorize others—physical appearance, behaviour, genealogy, experience, political views—are often inconsistent in practice and can lead to contradictory conclusions about the identity of the same individual. Overall, there seems to be a pervasive fear that a person might not be who or what they seem—that their *real* ethnicity inside might not correspond to their *apparent* ethnicity on the outside. This uncertainty seems to increase mistrust and make the quest to reveal others and conceal the self even more urgent.

Perhaps most worrisome about the accounts considered here is the persistence of particular physical and behavioural stereotypes about Hutus and Tutsis that were a feature of the genocidal propaganda and central to assertions that *all* Tutsis were untrustworthy and RPF “accomplices.” Equally worrying is the addition of new stereotypes that are entrenching new divides. For young Rwandans today, the meaning of these categories is inseparable from the traumatic events of the 1990s and their use immediately conjures up particular associations with the violence that occurred. Although unsurprising given the “ethnic” nature of the violence, what is striking is the power of the stereotypes about *the* Hutu experience and *the* Tutsi experience during these events. Although some young people showed an awareness of the complexities of what happened during the civil war, 1994 genocide and its aftermath, a significant number habitually globalized victimhood to *all* Tutsi and guilt to *all* Hutu.

Reconciliation in Rwanda: “de-ethnicizing” or “ethnicizing” Rwandans?

Although the Government’s goal of promoting a sense of a unified “Rwandan” national identity is laudable, the evidence in this paper suggests that the current strategy to “de-ethnicize” Rwandan society is not working. Instead, it has created an atmosphere in which public discussions about ethnicity are taboo yet continue in private. The result has been to emphasize rather than de-emphasize ethnicity and reproduce the “ethnic” logic that underpinned the genocide. Young people do not talk together about ethnicity or how they feel about their own identity, nor share details about their experiences or their views about Rwanda’s past. Therefore—although young people have some awareness that the stereotypes they use are unreliable—these stereotypes are not subject to the continual test of everyday lived experience of others. Furthermore, the ongoing power of these stereotypes in contrast to a complex lived reality seems to foster a deep-seated sense of insecurity and an even greater need to reveal the “ethnic” other and conceal the self.

In contemporary Rwanda, there is, therefore, an urgent need to challenge the power of the “conceptual Tutsi” and “conceptual Hutu” to influence the thoughts and actions of Rwandans. A first step would be to encourage “concrete” Hutus, Tutsis and “mixed” Rwandans to discuss their views and experiences openly, to acknowledge the plurality of their identities and to foster affiliations with others based on other common experiences and interests. Although such action would entail political risks for the Government, the risks of inaction could prove more damaging. The current pervasive sense of insecurity about the identity of others coupled with the ongoing reproduction of “ethnic” stereotypes that reinforce a sense of difference, division and discord is a dangerous cocktail for the future. Whilst these factors alone will not trigger further violence, history suggests they may mean that any recurrence of violence would once again have “ethnic” targets and risks being as extensive, brutal and intimate as the violence during the 1994 genocide.

Notes and References

- 1 “*Inkontanyi*” [“valiant warrior”] was the name adopted in 1990 by the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA). See Nigel Eltringham, *Accounting for Horror: Post-genocide Debates in Rwanda* (London: Pluto Press, 2004), p 48.
- 2 Commentators disagree on the extent to which this term can explain the complexities of Rwandan society—“Hutu,” “Tutsi” and “Twa” share a single language; similar cultural background; the same territory; and same religions. See Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002), pp 56–59; Eltringham, *Accounting for Horror*, pp 5–27.
- 3 See Jacques J. Maquet, *The Premise of Inequality in Ruanda* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961); Catherine Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression: Clientship and Ethnicity in Rwanda: 1860–1960* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988); and Gerard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide 1959–1994* (London: Hurst and Company, 1995).
- 4 Eltringham, *Accounting for Horror*, pp 163–179.
- 5 For example, Phillip Gourevitch, *We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families: Stories from Rwanda* (London: Picador, 1998); Jean Hatzfeld, *Dans le nu de la vie: Récits des Marais Rwandais* (Paris: Seuil, 2000); and Jean Hatzfeld, *Une saison de machettes* (Paris: Seuil, 2003).
- 6 See for example, articles on Rwanda in Eric Stover and Harvey M. Weinstein, eds., *My Neighbor, My Enemy: Justice and Community in the Aftermath of Mass Atrocity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp 162–182, pp 248–265.
- 7 This age group was chosen as it corresponds to the current definition of youth in Rwanda. See Government of Rwanda, *National Youth Policy*, draft, (Kigali: Government of Rwanda, 2005).
- 8 Almost all the young Rwandan “returnees” I interviewed were born outside Rwanda and had never been to Rwanda until their families returned after July 1994.
- 9 Rwandan Patriotic Army, armed wing of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), which took power at the end of the genocide in July 1994.
- 10 *Forces Armées Rwandaises*, Rwandan Armed Forces 1962–1994.
- 11 The *interahamwe* militia conducted much of the killing during the 1994 genocide. See Prunier, *Rwanda Crisis*, pp 213–280 and Alison Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1999), pp 230–251.
- 12 The “Twa” are Rwanda’s third “ethnic” group making up an estimated 1% of the population. During my fieldwork—using a snowball method of sampling—it was notable that I did not meet any young people who identified themselves as “Twa.”
- 13 In July 1994, the RPF installed the Government of National Unity (GNU), which it effectively dominated and controlled until it won the 2003 parliamentary and presidential elections. See Filip Reyntjens, “Rwanda, ten years on: from genocide to dictatorship,” *African Affairs* Vol 103, 2004, pp 177–210 and International Crisis Group, *Rwanda at the End of the Transition: A Necessary Political Liberalisation* (Nairobi/Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2002).

- 14 For example, the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission states that "building a shared sense of Rwandanness is at the centre of reconciliation in Rwanda," available at: <http://www.nurc.gov.rw/index.php?back>.
- 15 As transmitted in, for example, official speeches and Government policy documents, e.g. Republic of Rwanda Office of the President, *The Unity of Rwandans* (Kigali: Republic of Rwanda August 1999).
- 16 See Johan Pottier, *Re-imagining Rwanda: Conflict, Survival and Disinformation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp 109–129 and Susanne Buckley-Zistel, "Dividing and uniting: the use of 'citizenship discourses' in conflict and reconciliation in Rwanda," *Global Society* Vol 20, 2006, pp 101–113.
- 17 Republic of Rwanda, *Law 47/2001 of 18/12/2001 instituting punishment for offences of discrimination and sectarianism* (Kigali, Rwanda, February 15, 2002).
- 18 The Rwandan Government has used the term "divisionism" repeatedly since 2000 and has been criticized for failing to define it. See European Union Electoral Observation Mission, *Rwanda: élection présidentielle 25 août 2003 et élections législatives 29 et 30 septembre, 2 octobre 2003* (Brussels: European Union, 2003) and Human Rights Watch, *Rwanda Preparing for Elections: Tightening Control in the Name of Unity*, Briefing Paper (New York: Human Rights Watch, May 2003).
- 19 Republic of Rwanda, *Rapport de la Commission Parlementaire ad hoc, crée en date du 20 janvier 2004 par le Parlement, Chambre des Députés pour analyser en profondeur les tueries perpétrées dans la province de Gikongoro, idéologie génocidaire et ceux qui la propagent partout au Rwanda* (Kigali: Republic of Rwanda, June 28, 2004).
- 20 Critics argue that the 2001 law has been used to put individuals under arrest, oblige people to quit their jobs or the country and ban organizations and political parties. For example, in Spring 2003, the law was used to disband the *Mouvement Démocratique Républicain* (MDR) of ex-Prime Minister Faustin Twagiramungu, the key opposition party contending the 2003 parliamentary and presidential elections. See Reyntjens, "Rwanda, ten years on," pp 180–184 and Human Rights Watch, *Rwanda Preparing for Elections*, pp 4–9. Similarly, the June 2004 parliamentary report accused a wide range of media and civil society actors of promoting "genocidal ideology." See Lars Waldorf, "Censorship and propaganda in post-genocide Rwanda," in: Allan Thompson, ed., *The Media and The Rwandan Genocide* (London: Pluto Press, 2007, pp 404–416).
- 21 See Reyntjens, "Rwanda, ten years on," pp 187–190.
- 22 See, for example, "The ideology of genocide," *The New Times*, October 20–21, 2004, p 22; "Bralirwa [Rwanda's main brewery] accused of ethnic sackings," *The New Times*, January 24, 2005, p 1. Similar articles are still published regularly, e.g. "NUR dismisses two students over genocide ideology," *The New Times*, June 5, 2008.
- 23 See, for example, the book by an ex-RPA officer: Abdul Joshua Ruzibiza, *Rwanda: L'Histoire Secrète* (Paris: Editions du Panama, 2005).
- 24 See also Reyntjens, "Rwanda, ten years on," pp 187–190 and International Crisis Group, *Rwanda at the End*, p 11.
- 25 Some young Rwandans used the word "tribe" to refer to the groups "Hutu," "Tutsi" and "Twa," perhaps suggestive of biological differences. This issue is discussed at length elsewhere (Lyndsay McLean Hilker, "Living Beyond Conflict? Identity and Reconciliation among Rwandan Youth," University of Sussex School of Social Science Cultural Studies, PHD thesis forthcoming, 2009).
- 26 There is a longstanding fear of poisoning in Rwandan culture. See Danielle de Lame, *A Hill among a Thousand: Transformations and Ruptures in Rural Rwanda* (Tervuren: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), pp 176–178.
- 27 Kigali has witnessed a huge turnover in its population since April 1994. Tens of thousands of Tutsi and hundreds of Hutu were killed in Kigali during the genocide. Following the RPF victory in July 1994, most Hutu elites fled the city with hundreds of thousands of Hutu. The majority, but not all, of these refugees returned following the forced closure of the refugee camps in Zaïre in late 1996. In the months after the RPF victory, tens of thousands of mainly Tutsi refugees—many of whom had fled Rwanda during the violence of 1959, 1963–64 and 1973—also returned to Kigali from other countries to dominate Kigali's new professional and governing elite. See "Rwanda" in US Committee for Refugees, *World Refugee Survey 2007* (Arlington, VA: US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants), available at: <http://www.refugees.org/countryreports.aspx?id=2015>.
- 28 This patrilineal system of ethnic descent dates back to at least the mid-colonial period. Taylor argues that there is evidence that prior to the colonial period, a matrilineal system applied. See Christopher C. Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror: The Rwandan Genocide of 1994* (Oxford: Berg, 1999), p 167.
- 29 There are no precise estimates of the numbers of Rwandans of mixed heritage today, but many Rwandans say that they represent at least 25–35% of the population. 16 of the 46 young people I worked with (35%)

- described their heritage as mixed. I discuss their lives and experiences elsewhere (McLean Hilker, "Living Beyond Conflict?").
- 30 See Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis*, pp 23–40 and Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror*, pp 55–75.
 - 31 Translation from the French "*morphologie*" meaning the shape or form of something.
 - 32 See Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror*, pp 55–97 and Nigel Eltringham, "Invaders who have stolen the country': The Hamitic Hypothesis, race and the Rwandan genocide," *Social Identities* Vol 12, No 4, 2006, pp 425–446.
 - 33 An "*Ingando*" is a kind of "solidarity" or "re-education" camp run by the authorities, which is obligatory for returnees, released prisoners, demobilized soldiers and state-funded university students.
 - 34 Commonly referred to as "post-1994 returnees," "Tutsi returnees" or "old caseload refugees."
 - 35 Eltringham discusses this in some depth, *Accounting for Horror*, pp 69–99.
 - 36 This figure from Penal Reform International (2006) is an estimate based on the numbers of people likely to be accused of genocide during the *gacaca*, which they put at 750,000 based on figures from the pilot phase. However, as Scott Straus notes, estimates of the number of perpetrators vary massively from "tens of thousands" to the three million figure often used by Government. Straus' own estimate based on micro-level data puts the figure at 175,000–210,000 (7–8% of adult Hutu population). See Scott Straus, "How many perpetrators were there in the Rwandan genocide? An estimate," *Journal of Genocide Research* Vol 6, No 1, 2004, pp 85–98.
 - 37 For a discussion of the RPA killings of several thousand internally displaced persons in the Kibeho camp in 1995, see Pottier, *Re-imagining Rwanda*, pp 76–81.
 - 38 See, for example, Catherine Newbury, "Ethnicity and the politics of history in Rwanda," *Africa Today* Vol 45, No 1, 1998, pp 7–25.
 - 39 See McLean Hilker, "Living Beyond Conflict?"
 - 40 My research also shows that other categories such as country of origin, class and gender are also important in contemporary Rwandan society (see McLean Hilker, "Living Beyond Conflict?").
 - 41 The *gacaca* are a form of community justice currently being implemented in Rwanda to try those accused of crimes of genocide.
 - 42 All my interlocutors implicitly or explicitly invoked a "conceptual" "Hutu" or "Tutsi" at some point, although these were not singular or fixed concepts. Rather there were different clusters of meanings and stereotypes attached to categories "Tutsi" and "Hutu" by different people.
 - 43 Richard Jenkins, *Social Identity*, 2nd edn (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004), p 7.
 - 44 Gerd Baumann and André Gingrich, eds., *Grammars of Identity/Alterity: A Structural Approach* (Oxford, New York: Berghann, 2004), pp ix–xii.
 - 45 Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989).
 - 46 *Ibid*, p 38.
 - 47 *Ibid*.
 - 48 Amartya Sen, *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny* (London: Allen Lane, 2006).
 - 49 *Ibid*, pp 175–176.
 - 50 Most commentators agree that the genocidal propaganda played a role in the processes that led people to kill, but they disagree on its importance compared to other factors such as the context of war, the nature of Rwandan state institutions, fear and social pressure, opportunity and greed. Compare Jean-Pierre Chrétien with Reporters Sans Frontières, *Rwanda: Les médias du génocide* (Paris: Karthala, 1995); Darryl Li, "Echoes of violence: considerations on radio and genocide in Rwanda," *Journal of Genocide Research* Vol 6, No 1, 2004, pp 9–27; and Scott Straus, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2006), pp 9–10.
 - 51 Chrétien with Reporters Sans Frontières, *Rwanda*, p 95.
 - 52 *Ibid*, pp 113–121.
 - 53 Many perpetrators recall the central phrase of the genocide as "*Umwanzi ni umwe ni umututsi*" [The enemy is one; the enemy is the Tutsi], see Straus, *Order of Genocide*, p 225.
 - 54 See Chrétien with Reporters Sans Frontières, *Rwanda*, pp 151–162 and Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell*, pp 73–76.
 - 55 Although authors disagree on the extent of anti-Tutsi sentiment that existed in Rwanda prior to the genocide—compare Peter Uvin, "Prejudice, crisis and genocide in Rwanda," *African Studies Review* Vol 40, No 2, 1997, pp 91–115 and Straus, *Order of Genocide*, pp 9–10.
 - 56 David Turton, "Introduction," in: D. Turton, ed., *War and Ethnicity: Global Connections and Local Violence* (Rochester, NY: Boydell, 1997), pp 4–11.
 - 57 Eltringham, *Accounting for Horror*, pp 25, 92.
 - 58 Omer Bartov, "Defining enemies, making victims: Germans, Jews and the Holocaust," *American Historical Review* Vol 103, No 3, 1998, pp 771–816.

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59 Ibid, p 785.

60 Arjun Appadurai, "Dead certainty: ethnic violence in the era of globalization," in: A. L. Hinton, ed., *Genocide: An Anthropological Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), p 290.

61 Hatzfeld, *Une saison de machettes*, p 147 (author's translation from French).

62 Appadurai, "Dead certainty," pp 291-296.

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