

**MANIPULATION OF ETHNIC IDENTITY DURING THE  
COLONIAL REFORM OF ADMINISTRATION (1926-  
1931) AND CONFLICT IN RWANDA**

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**Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements**

**For the Degree of Masters of Human Sciences in the**

**Programme of Conflict Resolution and Peace studies (CRPS)**

**University of Kwazulu Natal**

**(February 2004)**

## DEDICATION

To my Wife Susurutsa Anne Marie who encouraged me with her love, patience and endless support and advice throughout this Masters course

To my daughter Bana Sun

## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby declare that this dissertation, unless specifically indicated to the contrary in the text, is my own work.

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February 2004

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Most sincere thanks to Professor Rwigamba Balinda, the initiator of the project through which this Masters course and this dissertation are completed.

Thanks to Professor Seleti: without his guidance this dissertation would not have been completed.

To Professor Geoff Harris for his invaluable advice, encouragement and enthusiastic help throughout this Masters course

To my family in general and all people who assisted me, in particular Ingabire Lillian, Ruben, Betty Kanangire and all colleagues from ULK.

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## LIST OF ACCRONYMS

OPRR: The Office of the President of the Republic of Rwanda

PAREMHUTU: Party for Emancipation of Hutu People

RPF: Rwandese Patriotic Front

ULK: Kigali Independent University

UN: United Nations

UNR: Rwandese National Union

## ABSTRACT

This study aimed to highlight factors used by the Belgian authorities to divide Rwandans during the Colonial Reform Process between 1926 and 1931. More specially, it is aimed at identifying how they mobilised Hutu, Tutsi and Twa social classes and transformed the ethnic identities.

To achieve this goal, unstructured interviews and a questionnaire were used. In addition, several data analyses were also used to measure and decipher the attitudes of both the interview and survey's respondents.

The results indicated the conflict started when the Belgian colonisers implemented indirect rules that highlighted a selected elite from the Tutsi Tribe. This group benefited from social and economic advantages which totally excluded the Hutu and Twa tribes. With the reform, the previous traditional structure was destroyed, and with the new administration only Tutsi chiefs remained whereas Hutu and Twa chiefs were rendered obsolete. Tutsi were seen as born chiefs. On the contrary, they judged the Hutu good for manual work and exploited them as a labour force.

For a deep acceptance of this new order, colonisers reinforced ethnic policies with ideological assumptions which defined Tutsi as the superior race. In this regard, several ethnologists and anthropologists attempted to prove the Hamitic origin of the Tutsi, allowing Belgians to use the "Hamitic Myth", which assumed that the Tutsi was the only group able to understand development and to command at the request of the colonial state. In addition, Belgians decided to issue identity cards which clearly stated the bearer's tribal origin. This undoubtedly influenced people to develop ethnic feelings and disposed the most fiercely rival groups (Hutu and Tutsi) to ethnic competition that led to outbreaks of violence in 1959 when Belgians shifted their allegiance from Tutsi to Hutu as the former was asking for independence.

The scarcity of environmental resources increased the desire to monopolise control of the country as this was continually perceived as only means of access to resources. This led Rwandan politicians to use ethnicity as a way to secure power. Consequently, a culture of ethnic violence became entrenched. This culminated in genocide from April to July 1994.

## **CHAPTER ONE:**

# **INTRODUCTION: PROBLEM STATEMENT AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

### **1.1. INTRODUCTION**

Among several aspects of human life, identity qualifies as primary. In this regard, the issue of identity has a profound influence on global politics and affects relationships between individuals, groups and states. Many conflicts involve identities because interests are often negotiable through identities. Lauren (1988: 3) argues that in their attempts to maintain or increase power, prestige, or wealth groups find it easy to invest in or accept the idea that others are somehow different from them. Several identities can be instrumental in discrimination but ethnic identity offers the facility that increases one's consciousness of belonging or being a member of a certain group. In Rwanda, the concept of ethnic identity requires a careful examination in order to understand how it contributed to the most violent ethnic conflict by the end of 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

### **1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Recent research on the Rwandan conflict has focused mainly on the genocide of Tutsi as an unimaginable outcome of several decades of intensive ethnic mobilisation. This reaction is understandable if one considers that genocide encompasses the systematic and physical elimination of an identified ethnic group. As defined by the United Nation Convention, December 9, 1948 (quoted in Staub, 2000: 339), Genocide consists of "acts committed with intent to destroy in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group"

One particular feature which still attracts curiosity in the Rwandan genocide is that in a mere three months, the killers armed only with machetes succeeded in executing approximately one million people. This unique case where killings were very fast made the Rwandan genocide the first one in which civilians participated in massacres against other civilians. Furthermore, it singularly proves how the manipulation of ethnic identities worked more successfully in Rwanda than it had anywhere else.

Before 1994 there had been outbreaks of violence in 1959, 1963, and 1973 but at no time did it reach the proportion of the mass killing of 1994. The violence was ethnically motivated but was not officially organised. The Rwandan people are made up of three ethnic groups: the Hutu, Tutsi and Twa. The Twa tribe represents only 1% of the population and was never part of Hutu-Tutsi dichotomy. For this reason, the Twa are often omitted from accounts of the Rwandan conflict.

However, one must take into account that violent conflict involving ethnic identities did not occur before the Belgian colonization of Rwanda. In this regard, oral traditions and several researches testify to stable traditional institutions with cultural, political and religious unity. Many historical arguments conclude that the Tutsi were not necessarily dominant, nor were the Hutu their subjects.

Socially, Rwandans were grouped into three social classes corresponding to Tutsi, Hutu and Twa. Hutu, Tutsi and Twa were not ethnic identities but social classes. According to Duly (2000) the terms Hutu and Tutsi were largely constructed as social categories representing different socio-economic positions within Rwandan society rather than as objective biological or cultural differences. Pamphile (2000:86) emphasizes that before

colonization the Hutu tended to be farmers, the Tutsi were stockbreeders and the Twa were hunters or potters. But given the complex ancestral history, these were by no means exclusive categories.

It has been proved that all human beings recognise and usually live up to the moral obligations of the people with whom they identify (Shibuthani and Kwan, 1965: 57). The above researchers stress that ethnic groups do not always differ significantly, but they differ to the extent that the members define situations differently and behave differently. Ethnic groups do not always differ in this respect, but when they do, the differences that are important are cultural.

As testified by oral traditions, a number of myths have circulated for many years purporting to explain the genetic roots of the Rwandans. Whilst these legends may help to explain certain aspects of the genesis of the long stability of the Rwandan people before the colonisation, evidently Hutu and Tutsi continue to share culture, the language known as “Kinyarwanda”, customs and traditional religions. Another particular fact that merits attention is the powerful role that clans play in kinship. The clan allowed diversity within Rwandans in the pre-colonial period; Newbury argues that all clans contained Hutu, Tutsi and even Twa members. The clan identified each individual Rwandan with words such as “umuzigaba”, “umukono” and “umwega”<sup>1</sup>. In areas where the terms Hutu and Tutsi were in common use, their meaning tended to indicate status, wealth, or region, and not ethnicity (1978:26).

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<sup>1</sup> These are examples of names of clans in Rwanda.

Rwanda was politically divided into self-directed mini-monarchies, and either a Tutsi with both Hutu and Tutsi subjects or a Hutu with members of both tribes could rule any given kingdom. Amongst them was the kingdom ruled by the clan of Nyiginya, which became powerful and with the assistance of the Europeans, conquered the rest of monarchies in the last half of 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Duly emphasizes that before colonialism, Rwanda was a region that, although not without problems, had a healthy degree of social harmony and cultural cohesion between the members of the tribal groups (Duly, 2000).

The arrival and active involvement of Europeans in Rwandan political affairs during the colonial rule resulted in profound changes that destroyed the previous traditional socio-economic institutions. The colonization of Rwanda is divided in two phases: the first lead by the Germans and the second by the Belgians. By 1897, Germany had established a colonial system, and with the strategy of indirect rule they decided to reinforce the Tutsi monarchy intending to control Rwanda through selected Tutsi elite. The end of the German colonial rule in Rwanda coincided with their defeat at the World War I in 1916. Even though the presence of Germans in Rwanda was relatively short, it left a negative mark on previous diversity.

As outlined above, the Germans contributed to creating a centralised Tutsi monarchy in extending the control of Nyiginya dynasty over the rest of mini-monarchies, particularly those located in North. The mini-monarchies in the north had mainly been ruled by Hutu. By ignoring and, finally annihilating Hutu mini-monarchies, the Germans initiated a structure of conflict that continued to be reinforced by the Belgians in later years.

Since their arrival in Rwanda in 1926, the Belgians set up a system that involved colonial administrators, European anthropologists and the Catholic Church who were all committed to proving the superiority of the Tutsi and to prepare Tutsi elite, which could act as administration auxiliaries. The following statement by the Bishop Class cited by Duly (2000) highlights the above view: "...the Tutsi are the best suited to understand progress and the ones the population likes best. The government must work mainly with them". Then the myth of Tutsi superiority became a leading idea particularly during the Colonial Reform of Administration. Their rise in status was accompanied by better educational and employment opportunities, a process which began in 1926 and ended in 1931. As Newbury explains the new chiefs were almost invariably of Tutsi status, Hutu in turn came to be associated with and eventually defined by an inferior status (Newbury, 1978: 21).

In summary, the colonial reform constituted a crucial shift that established the ethnic cleavage. At the end of this Colonial Reform of Administration the new Tutsi elite and even poor Tutsi adopted attitudes of superiority towards their Hutu neighbours. On the other hand, the Hutu, confronted with the new reality of discrimination, developed feelings of inferiority and became increasingly discontented.

The Belgians institutionalised the politics of the manipulation of ethnic identities when they distributed identity cards which indicated whether the holder was Tutsi, Hutu or Twa. The perception of ethnic identity became hierarchical with Tutsi on the top, followed by Hutu and finally Twa. This seed of ethnicity continued to be propagated among Rwandans culminating in several killings and the 1994 genocide. What is clear is that people have used the differences built up under colonial rule to make Rwandans confront one another.



### **1.3. GENERAL PURPOSE OF THE STUDY: MAIN RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The implementation by the colonial state of indirect rule in Rwanda implied a new political and economic structure which led to great changes (Staub, 1998) that affected the previous traditional order, in particular Hutu and Tutsi relations. Therefore, this study will focus on ethnic identities as the means used to manipulate and mobilise Tutsi and Hutu in order to establish the colonial rule during the Colonial Reform of Administration conducted from 1926 to 1931 and its consequences.

The main research questions are:

- To what extent are ethnic identities socially constructed?
- What was the nature of ethnic identities before the Belgian colonial reform (1926-1931) in Rwanda?
- What policies or strategies did the Belgians use to institutionalise fixed ethnic identities and to build rigid boundaries?
- What were the consequences during the reform process and later, and what has been the implication for the present?

### **1.4. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

As the study assumes that the manipulation of ethnic identities during the Belgian colonial reform constitute the root cause of the conflict between Hutu and Tutsi in Rwanda, the specific objectives of this study are:

- To identify social, economic and political actions taken during the colonial reform, that mobilised Tutsi and Hutu social statuses, raising a new consciousness of their ethnic origin;

- To assess the sense of survival developed by each group from their new fixed ethnic positions after the systematic elimination of the traditional structure that allowed social mobility;
- To examine stereotypes, myths and ideological discourses developed by colonialists that entrenched the boundaries between Hutu and Tutsi and that continue to maintain suspicion and discrimination;
- To assess how the control of power became the only means of access to resources and how this led to violent ethnic competition; and
- To find solutions

### **1.5. DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This study is undeniably a historical contextualization of root-causes of the conflict between the Hutu and Tutsi in Rwanda. Subsequently, the researcher will focus mainly on the period of Belgian colonial reforms (1926 to 1931).

### **1.6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The chapter on methodology will encompass the methods of investigation used in this study. The research design, population, sample, research instruments and data collection process will be described. The procedure of data analysis and the limitations of the study will be presented.

### **1.6.1. Research design**

The study used qualitative and quantitative methods due to the nature of the topic. The hybrid method was used in this study as a response to some methodological limitations imposed by the nature of the sensitive topic and the high degree of ethnic prejudice in Rwanda and subsequent attitudes. If properly executed, a combination of qualitative and quantitative was judged better for this study. In this regard, Ouho (2002: 6) states that when research is riddled with prejudice, biased measurements and interpretations are likely to produce spurious results. The researcher should therefore collect quantitative and qualitative data, which should be subjected to more rigorous analytical techniques than intuitive interpretations. As Ouho highlight, the latter is inevitable where data does not allow for statistical analysis (Ouho, 2002:7). However, carefully selected qualitative techniques can promote useful insights into issues that require interpretations of broad perspectives rather than accurate measurements. The qualitative approach was the leading approach in this study as the subjective perceptions of Hutu and Tutsi about the impact of the Colonial Reform of Administration on ethnic relations in Rwanda was thoroughly investigated. As de Vos and Romanucci-Ross emphasise, methodologically, ethnic identity is best studied through an analysis of the subjective meaning of behaviour in an interactional social context (1982:4).

### **1.6.2. Population sample and sampling**

The non-probability sample was selected because it produces acceptable results, which are less expensive in terms of means and time. Cooper and Schindler (2001:121) assume that this approach may present evidence that is overwhelming and that a more sophisticated sampling procedure is unnecessary. One of its major advantages is the restriction of

intuition and subjectivity when the researcher operates within the same overall cultural framework as his or her respondents.

The target population was all Rwandans living in Kigali City and Kigali rural province. A survey was administered to 145 respondents of which 120 completed the survey. This signifies an acceptance response rate of 85 per cent.

Black (1999) assumes that most populations can be segregated into several mutually exclusive subpopulations or strata. The sample population consisted of both genders, their ages varied between 20-60 years for the category of young respondents, and 61-100 years for the category of old respondents. The level of education was two categories: uneducated respondents comprised levels of illiterate, primary school and under secondary school; and educated respondents comprised levels of secondary school, under-graduate, and post-graduate. As outlined above, the location of the respondents were both urban and rural.

A convenient method was employed and as Black argues, convenience sampling represents an unrestricted type of non-probability sampling method. The term convenience applies that researchers have the freedom to choose what suits the convenience of the study; cheap and easy to conduct, with the convenience sampling there is no need for a list of the population (Black, 1999).

### **1.6.3. Research instruments**

The information was primary in nature and was collected from various sources, via unstructured interview and questionnaire. Complementary information was collected through observation by the researcher during the period June- July 2003. The literature source that has been used was secondary.

#### **1.6.4. Methods of data collection**

##### **1.6.4.1. Interview**

The informal conversational interview was judged appropriate for this study. As argued by Patton (1990:343) the strength of this method resides in the opportunities it offers for flexibility, spontaneity, and responsiveness to individual differences and situational changes. It provides useful insights into issues and where more rigid methods do not permit accurate measurement. Questions can be personalised to deepen communication with the interviewee and to make use of the immediate surroundings and situations to increase the concreteness and immediacy of the interview questions.

##### **1.6.4.2. Questionnaire**

When the questionnaire was ready to be administered, two assistants were employed in the administering of the questionnaire given the extreme difficulties of reaching the required audience. Fifty-six respondents out of a total of 120 who accepted to respond the questionnaire were old people. This category was important as they had witnessed the Belgian colonisation. The old category of respondents allowed the study to assess the problem of mobilization of ethnic identities from its starting point. The young category informed the researcher about its impact on subsequent generations. This guided the researcher to explore all factors that raised ethnic awareness as a result of the manipulation of ethnic identities during the Colonial Reform of Administration process. Gender, level of education and location will allow the researcher to measure meanings of ethnic beliefs and opinions and to assess how the categories of respondents are affected differently by ethnicity in accordance with the above variants. The questionnaire had two parts, the first part was about the identity of respondent; the second part contained questions related to the case study (see Appendices 1). Respondents were requested to complete the questionnaire.

The questionnaire took a maximum of 10 minutes to complete, and the interview took a maximum of 40 minutes.

#### **1.6.4.3. Participant observation**

By means of participant observation, the researcher come closest to understanding what the respondents were expressing verbally and how they acted with reference to one another.

The researcher had a period of observation during the two last weeks of June and the whole month of July 2003 which was the period of presidential and parliamentary elections in Rwanda. This time period was of crucial importance for this study, illustrating how some candidates attempted to mobilise ethnicity in a very closely-contested competition for power. The research tried to observe how people from the two groups reacted and behaved during that period of competition.

#### **1.6.5. Methods of data analysis**

Data from interviews were analysed manually. As argued, one of the instruments of collecting data was an unrestricted type of non-probability sampling. This implied the analysis of findings by descriptive statistics. Findings were presented in frequencies distributions in tables. According to Black (1999), descriptive statistics do not imply the use of correlation coefficient measure; rather it allows clear observation of frequencies and percentages of respondents' information.

#### **1.6.6. Reliability and validity**

Reliability is a matter of whether a particular technique, applied repeatedly to the same object, would yield the same result each time (Babie and Mouton, 2002).

Validity is concerned with whether the findings are really about what they appear to be about. In conventional usage, the term validity refers to the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration (Babie and Mouton, 2002).

Generalisability is a concern that researchers may have about the design of their studies insofar as their study results are generalisable; that is, whether their findings may be equally applicable to other research settings. Consequently, the questionnaire and the unstructured interview that was used in this study provided both reliable and valid results, which are similar to other studies: Newbury (1978, 1988), OPRR (1996), Linden and Linden (1977), Des Forges (1995), Staub (1989).

### **1.6.7 Limitations**

On a general level, respondents were reluctant to participate in the survey. The reason is probably the study itself, which relates to ethnic identities in Rwanda. Some of them were openly hostile to hearing the words “ethnic issue”. This reaction is understandable if one considers that the genocide took place in Rwanda only nine years ago. Suspicion and fear persist, particularly in this period of Gacaca<sup>1</sup> and people are really sensitive about their ethnicity.

Another limitation included the financial difficulty in accessing large numbers of respondents from the various provinces in Rwanda.

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<sup>1</sup> In Rwandan language Gacaca means ‘Justice on the grass’: a juridical process in which the Rwandan public tries and judges those who wish to confess or have been accused of genocide crimes. In the pre-colonial era, Gacaca was a popular indigenous form for resolving local disputes over family matters, property rights and other concerns. The Rwandan government officially launched the present-day Gacaca court system on 18 June 2002 in response to the overwhelming number of prisoners whose cases remain untried since the genocide. Estimates suggest that prior to January 2003 between 100.000 and 125.000 Rwandans awaited trial in overcrowded prisons (Corey and Joireman, 2004: 81-82)

Another limitation encountered was the problem that research is underdeveloped in Rwanda. There is particularly a shortage of studies of social identities. As a consequence, this has been a limitation of this study in terms of empirical references.

## **1.7. OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION**

The dissertation is a study of the mobilization of ethnic identities of the Hutu and Tutsi in order to establish the colonial rule during the reform process from 1926 to 1931 and its consequences.

In this Chapter the problem statement, main questions of the study, specific objectives, and delimitations, methodology of collecting data and data analysis; and limitations have been presented . The rest of the dissertation is organised as follows:

Chapter Two offers a theoretical framework that explains the concept of ethnic identity. It examines general aspects which define ethnic identity and assesses the concept as a potential source of conflict.

Chapter Three examines the nature of ethnic identities in Rwanda before the Belgian colonial administrative reforms of 1926 to 1931.

Chapter Four presents the research results based on the questionnaires and interviews. The discussion of the results attempts to gauge the role of Belgian colonial reforms in the manipulation and mobilization of ethnic identities that culminated in violence in subsequent years.



Chapter Five provides the main conclusions of this study and suggests some recommendations for future studies and for peacemaking policies in Rwanda.

## **CHAPTER TWO:**

### **THE CONCEPT OF ETHNIC IDENTITY AND CONFLICT**

#### **2.1. INTRODUCTION**

Social identities are connected to each aspect of a person's life and ethnic identity is the most dynamic and the most evident social identity concept. In consequence, it is necessary to gain an unambiguous meaning of ethnic identity as social identity. The common sense of the concept of identity is an individual's understanding of who he is and of who other people are. Jenkins states that human social life is unimaginable without some means of knowing who others are and some sense of which we are (1996:5).

When encountering a stranger, the first step is to try to locate him on one's own very broad social map of various categories of identities. Each individual incorporates different identities, and as a result, has different perspectives of life and problems. Identity is a very influential and active concept in the mind – whether consciously or unconsciously. Some identities are more valuable than others but ethnic identity is one of the most influential identities.

#### **2.2. ETHNIC IDENTITY AS SOCIAL IDENTITY**

##### **2.2.1. What is social identity?**

Fisher et al argue that each person is born either male or female or born into a particular way of life. For example, a bushman from the Kalahari and an urban citizen of Johannesburg have different experiences of life. Each person has his or her own values and

thinking, which guide his behaviour. These values and thinking are informed by the different identities the person holds (Fisher et al, 2000: 47)

Appiah (1994: 150) states that the concept of 'social identity' evokes what is called collective descriptions such as religion, gender, ethnicity, race and sexuality. Social identity is never a final or settled matter and can be understood as consciousness, process and recognition. Identity is a necessary prerequisite for social life; consequently people form individual and collective consciousness of it from an early age. One learns to feel and behave as prescribed by one's culture and collective consciousness (Jenkins, 1996:4).

For example, a systematic set of beliefs, ideas, knowledge and practices differentiate Zulu from Tutsi ethnic groups and Catholics from Muslims. The awareness of social identity is progressively formed and shaped through various forms of social interactions, cultural symbols and codes. Ericksen (2002: 13) argues that there is a systematic establishment of significations between an individual and the collectivity through relationships of similarities and differences.

The concept of identity is constituted by 'similarity' and 'difference' as two elements internally and inflexibly linked. According to Jenkins 'similarity' and 'difference' are "the dynamic principles of identity, the heart of social life, the practical significance of men for one another in the most varied forms; both are the great principles of all internal and external development" (1996: 6). In the light of above, each principle makes possible another, for example Kikongo as the common language of the Bakongo is an important factor of similarity among them but also the same language signifies the difference between them and non – speakers of Kikongo. The above aspects of social identity are a convenient way of daily interactions, so that the whole social organization is very

concerned with this. Social identities are in themselves one foundation upon which order and predictability in the social world are based.

### **2. 2.2. How is social identity acquired?**

Several researchers indicate that social identity is acquired. It has its roots in one's earliest process of socialisation. According to Hayes (1991), a human being cannot exist alone. The birth of children initiates human beings into a life-long process of mutual adaptation. The interaction with other children, the intimate relationship found in families and the broader social environment shape individuals identities. Ethnic identity dominates this development because it is a cultural element.

With more clarity Mc Adams, quoted in Hayes (1991), argues that emotionality, activity, impulsivity and sociability are the four basic temperament dimensions present in human beings. Sociability is presented as the most important, and defined as the tendency to be outgoing and friendly and to enjoy the company of others. This dimension is present in infancy and childhood continuing to grow throughout adulthood. As a consequence, social life is a necessary prerequisite for identity and during social interactions people prefer to seek out those who hold the same culture or ethnic identity as themselves. In this connection, Jenkins (1996:20) emphasizes the idea that identity is not meaningful in isolation from the social world of other people. Interactions and relationships formed throughout a lifetime shape individual traits.

However, interactions between individuals and society raise the question of authenticity of the individual personality. This authenticity requires one to reject much that is conventional in society. (Appiah, 1994: 154)

A French philosopher, Jean Paul Sartre in his roman “La Nauseé” supports the above idea arguing for absolute freedom for every human being to choose the way of his life. To be realistic there are not many options: individuals form their ‘selves’ from a tool kit of options made available by their culture and society (<http://www.com/priate/philosophers>). In some way this position is in accordance with French author Jean Jacques Rousseau. Analysing social influences in his study ‘Emile’ thinks that the nature of each human being is initially good but progressively corrupted by society during the process of socialization (<http://www.russian-mafia.de/untermenues/Fun/Zilate/jeanjaques%20Rousseau.html>).

However, an autonomous ‘self’ or a built ‘true self’ personality seems to not be achievable. As Billington, Hockey and Strawbridge (1998: 40) point out, it supposes two distinct entities: ‘Self’ and ‘Society’, which are often opposed, with the latter imposing constraints. It is human nature to want to break out and ‘do our own thing’. As argued above, the true self or the uniqueness is not possible. From infancy, parents and society are seen as limiting the core self from the outside. Furthermore, in the adulthood there is often a need to see one’s identity confirmed and recognised by others in one’s society.

It may be debated whether individuals are merely empty recipients of a complex interplay of social forces such as family, ethnic background, religion, education institutions and peer groups. Billington, Hockey and Strawbridge emphasize that as an awareness grows of how one’s personal and social histories shape one’s lives, creative potential can be released to fashion one’s roles and relationships and to struggle against the socially structured relationships of power that constrain and oppress (1998: 56). The struggle to recognise and celebrate difference is a key issue in the politics of identity. This issue is fundamental for

many ethnic groups such as Albanians of Macedonia, ethnic groups in South of Sudan and the Banyamulenge in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

### **2. 2.3. Individual, personal and collective identities**

According to Appiah (1994:151) each person's individual identity is seen has two major dimensions. There is a collective dimension, the intersection of their collective identities, and there is a personal dimension, consisting of other socially or morally important features such as intelligence, charm, wit and cupidity. These features are not themselves the basis of forms of collective identity because researchers admit that social identities of intelligent or honest people do not exist (Jenkins, 1996: 4)

We understand this distinction through following example. "My name is 'S', a Rwandan. I am honest, intelligent and likable". In this case, the person's individual identity is his name, and the fact that he sees himself as an honest man, Rwandan, intelligent and likable. The collective dimension of his individual identity is that like him there are many other Rwandans with whom he shares many features, which characterise each Rwandan such as language, culture and traditions.

This notion suggests in addition, that there is a distinction between a person's 'nominal identities' and their 'virtual identity'. The former is the name, and the latter the experience of an identity, or what it means to bear it. It is possible for individuals to share the same nominal identity, but in practice this may mean different things to different people (Jenkins, 1996: 24). For example, the French term "deputé" means to be Member of Parliament but in the popular language in Rwanda, pregnant women are also called 'deputé'.

On the issue of personal identity, Billington, Hockey and Strawbridge present another explanation, which refers to the individual's sense of who he is:

We lean towards the view that not only is our experience of who we are deeply affected by culture but so also are theories about the nature of the "self". The connection between the English sense of self and the house illustrates the above notion. The private house can in some ways be seen as symbolising the private self. It is a container with clear boundaries, which shut out the public world. Home ownership is not just for the rich: increasingly, it has become something for every English person to aspire to: the Englishman's home is his "castle", it is interesting that ownership is linked to house purchase, and to identify and belonging: "myself", "I own it", "it is my own home" (my privacy). (1998: 37).

#### **2. 2.4. The dynamism of social identity: difference, diversity and fluid identity**

Jenkins insists on the dynamism of social identity through the concepts of 'similarity' and 'difference'. Similarly Beall (1997: 8) deals with 'difference' and 'diversity'.

He makes a distinction and shows its importance in communities with various identities:

"I believe this to be a helpful distinction when moving from social policy analysis to the practice of social development". The approach of Beall is undoubtedly helpful. It avoids conflict and can even serve as an important way of achieving peace particularly when ethnicity is a serious problem.

'To diversify' as a verb, means, "to make diverse, to vary, modify, variegate". Another interesting meaning, which meets conflict resolution criteria, is "to guard against loss".

In the context of social policy and planning, it implies having an open mind and being receptive to different processes of integration. The act of diversity implies variations, modification and protection against loss. Beall states that the meaning of loss here needs to be taken in the sense of discrimination. The verb to diversify does imply action among, or by people, rather it implies that it is a process performed on or for them. It allows innovative intervention and interaction to flourish (1997:9). The same researcher is clear in the following statement:

I would argue that it is equally important that planning, management, partnership and activism interact creatively with diversity, which is more dynamic and flexible concept than static one of difference.

By contrast the verb “to differentiate” implies “labelling, naming and othering”. At best it implies categorisation, privatisation, prioritization and potential hierarchies. At worst, it can imply discrimination and victimization (Beall, 1997: 9).

## **2. 3. WHAT IS ETHNIC IDENTITY? RECURENT NOTIONS OF DEFINITION**

### **2. 3.1. The basic notion of ethnic identity**

Identities are often described in terms of particular groups that individuals belong to or with whom they associate. Fisher et al (2000: 47) define ethnic identity as a concept referring to the group with which one shares a particular language, culture, religion and / or race.

Enloe proposes that ethnic identity has both a communal and personal dimension. It refers to a peculiar bond among persons that causes them to consider themselves a group distinguishable from others. The content of bond is shared culture (1973: 15).

On the personal level, ethnicity equips an individual with a sense of belonging and it positions him in society. As social relations become complex and impersonal, ethnic identity may be grasped tenaciously. It is a familiar and reassuring anchor in a climate of turbulence and uncertainty (Enloe, 1973: 15). The concept of ethnic identity can be defined under various criteria; in this regard Stavenhagen (quoted in Fisher et al, 2000: 48) lists the following criteria that he judges as factors of ethnic identity:

- The common language is the powerful indicator of ethnic identity.
- Religion has historically been an important formulator of ethnic identity. In urban industrialised society, people interact independently of religion. But in those



societies in which religion intervenes in public life, it may become a determinant factor for ethnic identity.

- Territory is also the basis of economic and political structures. The majority of ethnic groups in the world are identified with some territory, which is not only their vital environment, but also their real or mythical land of origin.
- Social organization refers to institutions and social relations that provide consistency to an ethnic group over and beyond the personal identity of its members. Social organization establishes the boundaries of an ethnic group; it is the framework within which 'we' and 'they', 'insiders' and 'outsiders' are distinguished.
- Culture is often seen to include factors of language, religion and social organization as mentioned above. Other elements include the material aspects of culture such as cultural artefacts, and value systems, symbols and meanings, norms and customs, which are shared by members of an ethnic group.
- Race is a particularly significant factor in ethnic identity. It commonly refers not only to the biological attributes of the individuals such as skin colour, facial features and body shape, but also to the supposed social, cultural and psychological qualities that are associated with them. Not all ethnic differences are racial differences, but ethnic distributions tend to be stronger and longer lasting to the extent that they include racial criteria.

### **2.3.2. The dominance of ethnic identity among social identities**

At this point the distinctiveness of ethnic identity among many other social identities also visible in society needs to be understood. Billington, Hockey and Strawbridge argue that human beings live not in isolation but with others. The individual 'self' is constructed through relations and social interactions. Among these cumulative interactions are those involving interactions with social groups, distinguished in terms of their status, power and social characteristics (Billington, Hockey and Strawbridge, 1998: 293); As a consequence, individuals are placed in a number of identities such as social class, religion, occupational role and so on.

All of these identities are relevant within societies but ethnic identities possess the more influential and distinctive aspects such as language, skin-colour differences, physical type and appearance, and other elements that distinguish members of one ethnic group from another. However, some researchers find that the predominance of ethnic identity does not always carry effectiveness. In view of that, de Vos and Rommanuci-Ross argue that skin colour, physiognomy and other unalterable features are of relatively minor importance. These researchers specify that some indicators of ethnic identity which are assumed to be intrinsic to groups or categories are often manipulated (1975: 86). An example of this manipulation occurred in the Rwandan conflict. During the 1994 genocide many Tutsi escaped killings by obscuring their ethnic ties and adopting clothes and manners which were the most ethnically neutral.

### **2.3.3. Consciousness and awareness of ethnic identity**

Identity can be seen as how the subject classifies himself. Studies on the level of ethnic awareness of young children have established that a child has ethnic awareness and can

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correctly classify and point out different groups. Using a game involving children from various ethnic groups, who were presented with dolls of different ethnicities, Powell-Hopson noted the child's willingness to associate himself with the doll that is a representation of his ethnicity. A child's willingness to associate with his race depends on the social experience that has operated to form his attitudes (Powell-Hopson, cited by Billington, Hockey and Strawbridge, 1998:293).

A child's identity attitude is mainly conveyed to him or her via several media. These include parents, teachers, peer groups, the mass media, the community and other cultural communicators. Once an attitude has been formed, a child begins to identify and show preference for a particular identity. This explains how identity is flexible and how it changes.

Furthermore, ethnic consciousness arises when in relation with other ethnic groups, two or more ethnic groups engage in competition for various interests. Baker states that consciousness assumes greater saliency when groups compete for scarce resources, power or other desired goals, but group awareness also emerges when groups perceive their valued attributes to be threatened by the action of others. Whether that threat is real or imagined it may become a cause of friction with other groups (Baker, 1983: 11).

According to the same author group consciousness can be awakened or sharpened under varied circumstances, including, among other, conquest, migration or other contact type situations. Blumer argues that not all contacts lead to ethnic consciousness, threat or conflict but when resources are scarce, groups compete for them. This exacerbates the attributes by which groups differentiate 'we' from 'them' (Blumer cited by Baker, 1983: 11). Many researchers assume that ethnic, racial or communalist identity is basically a

psychological phenomenon. The essence of group identity is a psychological self-consciousness of common features shared with other individuals so that together they constitute a group identity.

Walker (1978: 379) describes two levels of identity: that of individual or group awareness and that of individual or group consciousness:

In terms of awareness, individuals or groups recognize their unique attributes or "markers" but do not regard these as meaningful bases for interaction with others, whereas with consciousness individuals or groups acknowledge their unique traits as a unifying basis for mobilizing members for interaction with others.

The situation of conflict occurs when diverse factors or situations act to convert awareness in consciousness. Consciousness represents the potential for mobilisation.

The author continues that many groups live with an awareness of their identity. This awareness is a latent and permanent resource of consciousness. Thus, before consciousness there is an awareness that remains dormant (Walker, 1978: 379). Geertz calls them sentiments that remain dormant until particular situations arise such as when interests are threatened or the group defends values that are judged as important. However, if the group or its members attach no special significance to interests or values, the consciousness will not be awakened (Geertz, cited by Walker, 1978: 340)

#### **2.3.4. The function of ethnic identity**

Anthropologists have studied ethnicity in its functions. Barth seeks to discover why a group (or individuals) might wish to distinguish themselves from other group. He assumes that while all people are understood to belong to an ethnic group, individuals are shown to choose to activate and emphasise such allegiance and to assume a certain utilitarian

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rationality in this process, maximising the benefits to themselves (Barth, cited by Webster, 1991: 245).

In the light of above, the first function of ethnic identity becomes a survival means in a widely societal interaction where people use ethnic belonging for their daily struggle for life. Barth argues that ethnicity increases when there is intense spatial-geographical and social contact between groups. For example there is more chance that the Flemish people in Brussels, who always have to speak French, will become more “consciously” Flemish than their ethnic brothers and sisters in the rather isolated rural areas of West Flanders or Limbourg where mother tongue is spoken. Barth emphasizes that the most isolated group of people is probably the least ethnically self-defined (Barth, cited by Roosens, 1989: 12)

Another function of ethnic identity is that belonging to an ethnic group provides a way of self-identification or self-affirmation in relation to other groups. The ethnic identity allows a person to fulfil himself, to realise that he is unique, original, and irreplaceable as a member of an ethnic group and irreducible from the outside to something else. As Roosens (1989: 18) points out:

If I see and experience myself as a member of an ethnic group, and others-fellow members and outsiders-recognise me as such, “ways of being” become possible for me that set me apart from the outsiders. These ways contribute to the content of my self perception, because of one’s ethnic identity; one is enclosed in some realities and simultaneously excluded from others.

Visibly, one of the important functions of ethnic identity is to confer self-esteem to its members. When this function is not fulfilled, the ethnic identity may lose its current attraction. When a group do not impute positive values it affect the self-esteem of members: for example, in Rwanda, in an attempt to avoid the negative effects left by the genocide on their ‘ethnic identity’, many people never affirm themselves ethnically.

## **2.4. ETHNIC IDENTITY AS POTENTIAL SOURCE OF CONFLICT**

### **2.4.1. Manipulability and constructivism theory of ethnic identity**

The manipulability of ethnicity is facilitated by the absence of distinguishable ethnic boundaries such as culture, skin colour, territory, and religion. Bruce (1994: 7) discovered some conflicts that were more psychologically constructed than others and therefore resulted in more complex and deep social divisions. Weber argues that ethnic membership does not constitute a group; it only facilitates group formation of any kind, particularly in the political sphere. On the other hand it is primarily the political community, no matter how artificially organised that inspires the belief in common ethnicity (Weber, cited by Jenkins, 1997:10)

Therefore, researchers have highlighted other aspects that define ethnicity. In this regard, Maré argues that ethnicity is not only a common identity for people. It is also a term used to explain occurrences (Maré, 1992:42). In order to understand the occurrence of ethnic identity, one needs to refer to experiences shared by a group of people during for example a long victimization or marginalisation. For example, during the years of apartheid in South Africa, ideologically the Black identity had the connotation of “oppressed people”. This led to the emergence of a collective consciousness that in turn became a powerful factor of mobilization (Maré, 1992: 42). As Maré highlights, an ethnic identity is similar to a story. It becomes a way of dealing with the present through a sense of identity that is rooted in the past. Ethnic identity calls on what has been, what appears to be known and what there is certainty about in an uncertain world (Maré, 1992: 42).

Ericksen argues that in recent years anthropologists have been concerned with the way in which history and cultural symbols are manipulated in the creation of ethnic identities and organisations. Such a focus implies that ethnic identity can be consciously constructed

(Ericksen, 2002:69). The following some examples illustrate this: As Roosen argues, the Huron Indian of Quebec are today a respected Canadian 'tribe'. Unlike many other indigenous peoples, they have succeeded in presenting themselves to society at large as an oppressed people with a unique, if vanishing, culture, who have for centuries been harassed, massacred and deprived of civil and territorial rights by colonialists and Canadian authorities (Roosens, cited in Ericksen, 2002:72). Another example is the Thonga a South African tribe, which is disappearing as an ethnic identity and collectively because for several decades Thonga men have been adopting Zulu ethnic identity.

According to Webster, the attitude Thonga men is highlighted by the function of the ethnic identity proving again that the commitment to the ethnic identity is important when it is represents substantial interests:

A widespread local belief is that one's chances of finding employment are enhanced if one is Zulu. This may be true given the penchant of white employers to stereotype the Zulu as strong, masculine, militaristic and reliable, whereas most have never heard of the Thonga...For over thirty years Zulu has been the medium of instruction in the schools, while there is no written tradition in Thonga. It is also true that Zulu has become the prestige language and all the people speak it (Webster, 1992: 254).

In this case what appears to be evident is that ethnic identities are important for individuals because they allow a positive self-image and allows access to resources. From this perspective Cohen states that ethnicity has primarily to do with politics and economics. In other words, ethnic groups are interest groups, and ethnicity can adapt to new contexts (Cohen cited by Baker, 1983:10).

In accordance with the interest or particular reasons realised by social interaction, ethnic identity can be constructed. This aspect highlights the feature of ethnic identity as a typical social identity. It is true that ethnicity is a social creation and a fact of nature and that



ethnic variation does not necessary correspond to cultural variation (Ericksen, 2002:64). Regarded as contingent on political organisation, identity is formed in situations of competition over resources. The above author concludes that is therefore difficult to predict which ethnic or other identities will be dominant for any given population in the future.

Clearly, power and resources are central in the process of identity maintenance and change. Identity is something over which struggles take place and with which stratagems are advanced. It is both a means and an end in politics (Jenkins, 1996: 25)

#### **2.4.2. Ethnic boundary**

Ethnic boundary is an important aspect of group differentiation, which works against outsiders and insiders in a very subjective manner. Ethnic boundary is both individual and collective. As defined by de Vos and Romanucci-Ross, it is a factor of sameness internally:

A sense of common origin, common belief and values 'common cause' common sense of survival- in belief, a 'common cause', permanently informed by cultural materials; it has been of great importance in uniting members into self-defining in groups. Growing together in a social unit, showing a common verbal and gestural language allows members to develop mutually understood accommodation, which radically diminish situations of possible confrontation and conflict (de Vos and Romanucci-Ross, 1975:5).

Many authors have attempted to define the concept of an ethnic boundary. Jenkins argues that the production and reproduction of differences vis-à-vis external others is what creates the image of similarity internally, vis-à-vis external others and the image of similarity internally (Jenkins, 1997:12). Understanding ethnic boundary as a means of recognition of the significant difference between 'them' and 'us', de Vos distinguishes two levels of definition of ethnic boundary. In broad group terms it will normally be couched in terms of culture, race, nation or religion. In a more narrow individual perspective, the same difference may be described in terms of the minutiae of behaviour. Ethnicity intervenes at



both levels in terms of the organization of society and organization of difference (de Vos and Romanucci-Ross, 1975:3).

Wallman describes how boundaries work in practice and function in group interaction. She argues that members of group X are likely to work, marry, interact with other X's than with members of Group Y, and that they are more likely to do these things in different ways" (Wallman, 1975:30). In the following description the same researcher highlights the structure of ethnic boundaries:

'We' of group X are not like Y's... 'They' do not work, marry and interact with us, the Xs, or in the way that Xs do...we feel them to be, know them to be different from ourselves. However all elements differentiating groups are strongly involved in boundary formation and boundary maintenance (Wallman, 1975: 30).

Those elements are cultural ones and they play a key role in the life of group members, resulting in creation of ethnic personality defined by Devereux as what one does more spontaneously as a result of being socialised within an ethnic group from childhood (Devereux, cited by de Vos and Romanucci-Ross, 1975:5).

Fried clarifies the above explanations. He argues that the boundary is something, which differentiates members from non-members or non-members from members: the boundary can be read from either side. According to the same author, using this logic, ethnic boundaries must be both an interface line between inside and outside and an identity line between 'us' and 'them': We identify 'us' differently to 'them', we use the boundary for our purposes according to our need (s) at any given time in any given context. 'They' identify themselves by contrast to the rest of us. They use boundary for their purposes. The 'interface' is the border around the familiar, the normal, and the unproblematic. The performance, appearance, activity and social structure is different (Fried, 1983: 32).

### 2.4.3. Competitiveness

Etymologically, Jenkins defines ethnicity as a word, which comes from the ancient Greek word 'ethnos', which seems to have referred to a range of situations in which a collectivity of humans lived and acted together (Jenkins, 1997:9). In this definition the word 'act together' is very interesting because it agrees with Weber's view which seems to be suggesting that the belief in common ancestry is likely to be the convergence of collective political action rather than causing people to see themselves as belonging together and having a common background -as a consequence of acting together- collective interest thus do not simply reflect- or follow from similarities and differences between people; the pursuit of collective interest does however encourage ethnic identification (Weber, cited by Jenkins , 1997:10).

This characteristic of ethnicity is confirmed by Barth who emphasizes that ethnic identity is generated, confirmed or transformed in the course of interaction and transaction between decision-making, strategising individual. Ethnicity is perhaps, before anything else, a matter of politics, decision-making and goal orientation (Barth cited by Jenkins, 1997:12). Cohen acknowledges the factor of competition in his definition of the ethnic organization which is essentially viewed as a kind of political organisation. In Cohen's view, social interaction and organization are essentially dual phenomena. They comprise aspects of utility and aspects of meaning. Ethnicity, he argues, is an organizational form, which exploits this duality for particular ends, ends which may or may not be acknowledged by the agents themselves (Cohen cited in Ericksen, 2002:44).

In connection with this point, Ericksen suggests something which supports the above theory: "ethnicity has an immediate appeal because it offers answers to perennial problems of life: the question of origins, destiny and ultimately, the meaning of life" (2002:44). As

outlined above, ethnic consciousness arises when, in relation with other ethnic groups, one or many ethnic groups engage in competition for various interests. Various writers have approached this issue. Baker states that consciousness assumes greater saliency when groups compete for scarce resources, power or other desired goods, but group awareness also emerges when groups perceive their valued attributes to be threatened by the action of others, be that threat real or imagined (Baker, 1983: 11)

## **2.5. CONCLUSION**

In this chapter the concept of ethnic identity has been defined in terms of the study at hand, particularly, an aspect through which this concept appears powerful as a typical social identity. In addition the chapter explains ethnic identity as a potential source of conflict and violence. The following chapter will examine how identities worked in Rwanda in the whole social system before the Reform.

## **CHAPTER THREE:**

### **IDENTITIES BEFORE THE COLONIAL REFORM OF ADMINISTRTION AND MAIN POINTS OF THE REFORM**

#### **3.1. IDENTITY BEFORE THE COLONIAL REFORM OF ADMINISTRATION**

##### **3.1.1. Crucial role of clans before the Colonial Reform of Administration**

Before colonization in Rwanda, the clan was a fluid identity in the sense that it allowed Hutu and Tutsi to share a common descent.

As Linden points out, Hutu and Tutsi shared membership in all the 19 main clans of Rwanda. Furthermore, the history of pre-colonial Rwanda, passed down through oral traditions gives clear explanations assuming that speaking the same language and sharing the same culture Hutu, Tutsi and Twa, conscientiously developed a system of clanic belonging accompanied by a sense clanic solidarity without any consideration of economic status (Linden and Linden, 1977:17). This means that under the clanic identity Tutsi were not necessarily dominant, nor were Hutu their subjects because of a supposed common ancestral origin<sup>1</sup>. On the contrary clans constituted a basic space of solidarity between different members from Hutu, Tutsi and Twa groups belonging to the same clan and consequently considering themselves as brothers (Linden and Linden, 1977: 17).

Maquet argues the evidence of clanism as a factor of fluidity. He states that all clans in Rwanda contained Hutu, Tutsi and even Twa members (Maquet, 1961: 135). Rennie came

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<sup>1</sup> The most unifying element of Rwandans before the Reform in Rwanda (1926) was the clan: only the clan mattered (i.e. the clan one belongs to). Lineage was the other aspect that counted, this means to be able to say: I'm the son of Mr. So and so, himself son of Mr. So and so, etc. (OPRR, 1996:72)

to a similar conclusion confirming a stable common opinion among researchers about the presence of Hutu and Tutsi in the same clan as an immutable factor of long-term unity and diversity (Rennie, 1972: 33). Furthermore, he mentions the blood-brotherhood pact as an important aspect proving the social organization in Rwanda, which particularly allowed Hutu and Tutsi from different clans to develop a brotherhood (Rennie, 1972: 34).

An attentive examination of clans in Rwanda, particularly the fact that all clans contained Hutu, Tutsi, and even Twa members highlights the evidence that clans were not absolutely based on common descent. Catherine Newbury clarifies this notion. She states that clan identities in Rwanda are seen to result not from the individual relationship alone (as implied by descent theory concepts of clan) but from the classification of groups within the larger structure (Catherine Newbury, 1988:390). Migration is another common explanation of Hutu and Tutsi mutability within the structure. Newbury states that a person who had migrated to a region where he had no family ties would join an established clan for both social and economic reasons (Catherine Newbury, 1988: 390). Clan changes were not simply a function of movement or clientship ties but also “a result of changes in the very conceptual categories from which clan identities derived” (Newbury, 1988: 390).

### **3.1.2. Social status**

During the pre-colonial period, social status in Rwanda was a result of economic differentiation and stratification between various occupations. In large part, Tutsi, Hutu and Twa roughly corresponded to occupational categories. Thus, most academics agree that when talking about Hutu, Tutsi and Twa, one is not dealing with tribes or ethnic groups but with social status. As the historian David Newbury notes, the Hutu tended to be farmers, the Tutsi were stockbreeders and the Twa were hunters or potters (David

Newbury, 1991: 277). David Newbury argues that many “Hutu” in western Rwanda owned cattle, sometimes in very important numbers, a family could move from one group to another over generations as its political and economic situation changed (Newbury, 1991: 277). Maquet (1961: 135) makes similar observations about the social mobility:

A person could be “socially recognised” as a Tutsi without having been begotten by a Tutsi father, or that a Twa who had been ennobled or the son of a rich Hutu cattle owner and of a Tutsi woman, was sometimes regarded as a Tutsi. Whatever their origin, successful men tended to become Tutsi, that is, to adopt their identity and way of life. Poor men or politically uninfluential men tended to become Hutu.

It is assumed that social status was rarely important in every day life and could change as people moved over vast areas in pursuit of trade or new lands, and conflicts were more often within clan categories than between them, as people fought over sources of water, farmland, or grazing rights.

Social mobility was common in Rwanda between Hutu and Tutsi and even involving Twa. Economically successful Hutu and Twa became Tutsi. What is quite certain is that being a Hutu or a Tutsi is to belong to a different wealth group, which also determines the kind of relationship existing between the two ethnic groups and this is reflected at the clientship level ([www.hamline.edu/apakabar/basisdata](http://www.hamline.edu/apakabar/basisdata))

### **3.1.3. Clientship**

When dealing with clientship, researchers adopt polemical views divided into two approaches. The “existentialist approach” puts forward the conflicting essence of ‘Hutu’ and ‘Tutsi’ assuming that conflict between Hutu and Tutsi existed before the first European travellers reach Rwanda. The main argument proposed is that inequalities always existed between Hutu, Tutsi and Twa, and that they had nothing in common. Amongst such proposers is Lemarchand who notes the use of the term Hutu to mean social

subordinate, client or ruled and the term Tutsi as meaning the patron or ruler (Lemarchand, 1988: 10).

There is also a “functionalist approach” meaning that conflicting relationships between Hutu and Tutsi are consequences of Belgium colonization. Oral considerations and researchers in their majority strongly support the view that Hutu, Tutsi and Twa lived together, would take wives from either group, socialise with each other, helped each other, and fought for their country sharing everything (Maquet, 1961, Newbury, 1978, 1988, Prunier, 1995). The following statement by Newbury supports this view:

Individuals could and did move between the categories Hutu and Tutsi as their fortune rose and fell, and intermarriage was not uncommon. If your father were Hutu, you would be a Hutu. But if you then made sufficient wealth, and could buy cattle, then you might become Tutsi. There was a ceremony of becoming Tutsi, which recognised this. Your children would be Tutsi (1988: 275).

As argued above in the traditional “Ubuhake”<sup>1</sup> (clientship) system, the patron/client relationship was open resulting in a continual process of individual mobility. Accordingly, Newbury (1988: 276) states that the Ubuhake institution appears to have kept the people together:

It is a highly personalised relationship between two individuals of unequal social status. This patron/client relationship involved reciprocal bonds of loyalty and exchange of goods and services. It provided a place, a status, within a hierarchical system. The patron was mostly Tutsi, but the client could be Hutu or Tutsi of inferior social status.

The OPRR states that one person could be a client as well as a patron. Even Tutsi patrons of Hutu could be clients of yet another Tutsi. Theoretically, the only person ultimately not a client of this system was the Mwami (King of Rwandans) himself. Thus, most Tutsi were

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<sup>1</sup> A form of clientage named “Ubuhake” in Rwandan language was a system in which a patron grants a cow and usufruct rights a client who in return provides some form of labour (usually agricultural) for the patron. Traditionally, Ubuhake was a relationship based on a measure of reciprocity; through such ties, the client gained a certain level of protection and even prestige through his patron (Newbury, 1988: 275). Ubuhake was not a universal practice in precolonial Rwanda (Maquet, 1961: 135)

clients and some Hutu were patrons. At the top, however, there were always Tutsi and at the bottom always Hutu and/or Twa (OPRR, 1996: 24).

Another fact clearly and commonly assumed by historians in relation with Ubuhake system, is that it did not take a form of slavery or caste. The system was circular, and furthermore Rennie emphasizes that Hutu clients were often adopted into Tutsi lineages (Rennie, 1972:23). Furthermore the system was not extended on the whole Rwandan territory. The Ubuhake system, defined by the dominance of cattle symbolizing wealth and prestige, was predominant in central Rwanda, a pastoralist region.

According to Maquet, in the northern and south-western regions, dominated by Hutu, different systems, mostly based on land-lease contracts or donation of agricultural products, were developed and the patrons were exclusively Hutu. This system is called “Ubukonde”<sup>2</sup> (Maquet, 1961:135).

#### **3.1.4. Regional identities as a limitation of Hutu, Tutsi and Twa identities**

Several researchers found variations in the meaning of the terms Hutu and Tutsi, and then their patterns of use appear to have been a function of an area’s ties to the central court. As Newbury points out, in regions with fairly loose or nonexistent ties to the court, the terms may not have been used at all (Newbury, 1988: 157). Consequently, any reliable analysis has to consider the regional element of identities in pre-colonial Rwanda because Hutu and Tutsi were not immutable or universal identities. It was perhaps this intersection of regional aspect and wealth, which led some respondents of Newbury’s research in Rwanda to explain that the term Tutsi referred to inhabitants of a certain region (Newbury, 1988:

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<sup>2</sup> Another form of clientage based on land-contract.



253). Father Alexis Kagame (1972: 202), a Rwandan philosopher and historian, argues that the term Tutsi often refers not to origin (descent) but to wealth, especially with regards to cattle:

Whoever is rich will often be referred to as Tutsi. Frequently also, because of their manner and their language ... the inhabitants of the provinces of central Rwanda, Nduga and Marangara, as well as those of Buganza are referred to as Tutsi.

In fact that region was Nduga, and whoever came from Nduga (situated in central Rwanda) was simply called Tutsi. The evidence that the central region of Rwanda was a pastoralistic region dominated by the central court and Tutsi chiefs confirms the above statement. Therefore, this regional feature provides an important argument about limitation of Tutsi and Hutu identities to a particular region before colonisation.

Other groups of Tutsi could be found in other regions but in this case holding identities of those regions such as 'Abakiga' and 'Abanyakinyaga'. It must be remembered that even in the present day, regional identities are still used despite the limit imposed by the more powerful Hutu and Tutsi identities, which assumed more importance since the Colonial Reform of Administration.

To return to the importance of these regional identities, one must notice that many people were more proud of their regional identities than of their Hutu-Tutsi economic status. Until the arrival of Europeans some of these regions had been autonomous chiefdoms, which became powerful enough to threaten the King, whose influence was limited to the central region. For that reason, Louis notices how it was surely clear to King Musinga that without German backing, effective control over certain outer lying regions would not have been possible (Louis, 1996: 157). An example of this situation in the northwest is cited by Mamdani (1996: 14),

A region that had long prided itself on its independence from the central court, inhabitants referred to themselves, not as Hutu, but as 'Kiga' or 'Abakiga', a practice that persisted even after the end of colonial rule. Similarly in Kinyaga, despite their intimate knowledge of Rwandan society and practices, inhabitants referred to themselves as Kinyagans or 'Abanyakinyaga.'

However as already mentioned, a Rwandan was individually identified by his clan, the unique universal identity in Rwanda shared by Rwandans from all families, all social statuses, and all regions.

### **3.1.5. Hutu, Tutsi and Twa identities in the political structure before the Colonial**

#### **Reform of Administration**

Examined through the traditional structure, it appears clear that Hutu and Tutsi identities allowed social integration, meaning that each group participated at all levels of political, economic and military functions. Vansina highlights this fact arguing that before the Belgian Tutsification of 1930's, which resulted in the monopoly of political and administrative power in the hands of Tutsi, traditionally Hutu, Tutsi, and even Twa, exercised political power together (Vansina, 1962: 67).

The same researcher emphasizes that by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, many areas of the Rwandan Kingdom had developed a complex and high-organised administrative structure encompassing provinces, districts, hills and neighbourhoods. The king (a Tutsi) was the supreme court/judge in traditional society. High chiefs or army commanders, which could be Hutu or Tutsi, normally administered the provinces, the districts were administered by two chiefs appointed by the Mwami (king), there was one cattle chief who was in charge of cattle taxes, was always Tutsi, and there was one land chief responsible for agriculture levies, who was always Hutu (Vansina, 1962: 67).

According to Vansina (1962: 68) Rwanda did not and still does not have villages in the same sense of concentrated homesteads. The hill was the basic administrative unit and normally had not one but three main chiefs, namely:

- The “chief of the pastures” (always a Tutsi), in charge of delimiting grazing rights;
- The “chief of land” (always a Hutu), in charge agricultural matters and land taxes.
- The “chief of men” (Hutu or Tutsi), who was in broad terms, the king’s army recruiter
- The “chief of forests” (a Twa), appointed to protect forests and to manage hunting activities. Twa are particularly known in Rwanda as people who fulfilled the function of private informers of the king

In addition many writers assert that Hutu were predominant in the very powerful king’s advisers class (Abiru). Until 1959, their head was a Hutu whose name was Rukeba.

King Rwabugiri’s reign, at the end of 1800’s is the best-known case illustrating the above structure. As Des Forges explains, King Rwabugiri gave new reality to the traditional idea that the Mwami (king) was above the distinctions between Hutu and Tutsi. He granted important commands to Hutu, for example Chief Bisangwa who was deputy-supreme army commander after the King. As the above author points out, he also welcomed complaints against the notables as one way of disciplining the powerful. This is perhaps the reason why Rwabugiri was very popular among “lowly” (Des Forges, 1972: 13).

### **3.1.6. An intricate structure of identities: source of misunderstanding and manipulation**

Separated from power, wealth, clans and even regional considerations, Hutu and Tutsi identities before the Colonial Reform of Administration of administration cannot be understood. Their study needs to consider this large social and political organisation. The King was Tutsi but there were several Hutu principalities, which remained defiant until the beginning of 19<sup>th</sup> Century. They shared clans which was the most important traditional identity that almost played the role of ethnic identity. Cattle herders were, by definition Tutsi. Moreover, all activities and institutions displayed the mixing between Hutu and Tutsi and every one whether Hutu or Tutsi spoke the same language.

In the light of above any distinction in pre-colonial Rwanda was not a simple distinction because of social mobility one could be born into one group and die as another. Unfortunately, in the face of this complexity, and with the desire of domination, the colonizers found it very easy to define Hutu, Tutsi and Twa as three distinct ethnic groups. The existing diversity then became a source and means of division. As Sanders points out, this distinction has been greatly exaggerated both by European colonialists and missionaries stressing the superiority of Tutsi to Hutu:

...We will have no better, more active and more intelligent chiefs than the Tutsi. They are the ones best suited to understand progress and the ones population likes best; the government must work mainly with them (Sanders, 1969: 251).

The Belgians acted in the most brutal fashion towards colonised Africans. They were not willing to spend the time and energy dealing with the 'intertwined fingers' of Rwandan, between Tutsi-Hutu relations, it was much easier to divide society between Tutsi and Hutu" (Kimber, 1996: 2).

The lack of consensus in interpreting certain information about Rwanda particularly the origin of Tutsi became one factor underpinning the creation of ethnicity (Pamphile, 2000: 87).

Without any effort the system of clientship was confused with feudality in the Europe of Middle-Ages, and as observed by Pamphile, the clientship, which was not a segregating aspect of the Rwandan social structure gave the Belgians the basic means for a new ethnic vision of Hutu and Tutsi identities (Pamphile, 1999: 87). By the end of 1920's, the logic of rule through ethnic division culminated in the Reform that discriminated Hutu in the eyes of the colonial administration. Since then, all Hutu have been associated with inferior status. Linden states that several colonizers and missionaries adopted humiliating attitudes as one administrator had openly declared: "...a Hutu does not want to be commanded by a Hutu" (Linden and Linden, 1977: 162). Thus Hutu were appointed for labour-intensive works ("Akazi").

### **3.2. EARLIER ANTHROPOLOGICAL HYPOTHESIS: UNINTENDED SEED OF DIVISION**

The first Europeans who reached Rwanda were interested in understanding the people of Rwanda and found that with characteristics such as solid institutions organization and physical features of Tutsi, already qualified as a 'Caucasian race'. Logically this motivated explorers and anthropologists to establish the first hypothesis about the origin of Tutsi. Frederick of Mecklenburg, 1912: 370) was the first German researcher to write a book on Rwanda. He describes the population as follows:

...The population is divided into three classes – the Watussi, the Wahutu, and the Watwa, a pygmy tribe, who dwell chiefly in the bamboo forest of Bugoe, the Swamps of Lake Bolero, and on the island of Kwidschwi on Lake Kivu [...] The primitive inhabitants are the Wahutu, an agricultural Bantu tribe, who one must say, look after digging and tilling...they are medium sized people, whose ungainly figures betoken hard toil, and who patiently bow themselves in abject bondage to the later arrived yet ruling race, the Watussi.

The above author connects the Tutsi with the great tribal movement, which brought the Massai race to East Africa. The same argument that led observers at the beginning of

colonization to believe that the Massai came from the north of Africa and more particularly from Egypt, or perhaps even from the Middle-East (Israel), may also hold good in the case of the Tutsi (Frederick of Mecklenburg, 1912: 369) .

Although many researchers have endeavoured to trace the origin of the words Hutu and Tutsi, it is not easy to trace the origin of these problematic words. Bishop Kanyamacumbi is among recent researchers who had dedicated many pages to this issue, but his conclusions are only hypotheses. For him, the only obvious fact is that it is enough to trace the origin of Hutu and Tutsi to both Western and Central Africa Regions (Kanyamacumbi, 1995:87).

Many other researchers such as Schepatz and Ki-zerbo take the same view mainly due to certain archaeological discoveries<sup>1</sup>.

The particular origin of Tutsi has raised many hypotheses the most passionate of which was Hamitic hypothesis<sup>2</sup>. The Hamitic hypothesis is based on a stereotype which alleges that any well-organised institution, such as political administration and a social organisation, can never be formulated and carried out by Black people. It is rather thought to be the work of people of white origin (OPRR, 1996)<sup>3</sup>.

In a reappraisal of Rwanda's historiography, several researchers such as Fujii qualify the Hamistic view in terms of a pseudo-scientific theory called Hamistic hypothesis, which

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<sup>1</sup> After archaeological findings Shepartz and Ki-zerbo argue that there is no evidence to ascribe Tutsi origin in Ethiopia or Abyssinia. On the contrary they state that some Ethiopian ethnic groups such Galas would find their origin in Great Lake Region (Rwigamba, 2003: 42)

<sup>2</sup> The word "hamite" takes its origin in one hypothesis assuming that Tutsi are descends of a biblical personage called Chem (and then Chemites, Chamites and finally Hamites descendants) son Noah, this explains their Semitic origin, their organizational and physical superiority to their neighbouring Negro ethnic groups such as Hutu and Twa (Rwigamba, 2003: 43).

<sup>3</sup> The office of the President of the Republic of Rwanda, appointed a team of thinkers to organise debates and analyses of the issue of ethnicity in Rwanda (OPRR Report, 1996).

ranked all races according to innate intelligence and abilities (Fujii, 2001). According to Sanders, the Hamitic hypothesis assumes that every trace and or sign of what is usually termed “civilised” in Africa was attributed to alien, mainly Hamitic origin. The same author emphasizes that Tutsi Hamites were supposedly Caucasian in origin, which explained their superiority to other non-Caucasian races particularly the “Negroes” of sub-Saharan Africa (Sanders 1969: 530). As Des Forges points out, the Belgians assumed that Tutsi had descended from a different people than the perceived dumber, lazier Hutu, and had probably migrated to the region from the North, presumably from Egypt or Ethiopia (Des Forges, 1999:36).

Describing the Tutsi as a superior race was also based on biological arguments. Fujii states that certain physical characteristics that distinguished many Tutsi from most Hutu, such as the Tutsi’s taller builds, thinner noses and lighter- coloured skin, provided the physical evidence confirming the Hamitic view (Fujii, 2001). In addition to biological superiority, however, Tutsi were also anointed with cultural superiority. As Sanders explained:

Because the Hamites discovered in Africa South of Sahara were described as pastorals and the traditional occupation of the Negro was supposedly agriculture, pastoralism and all its attributes became endowed with an aura of superiority of culture, giving the Hamites a third dimension: cultural identity (1969: 530).

### **3.3. THE COLONIAL REFORM OF ADMINISTRATION IN RWANDA: MAIN CHARACTERISTICS**

#### **3.3.1. Role of the colonial administration**

Rwanda experienced three phases of colonisation, the first phase of German colonization (1896-1916), military occupation by the Belgians (1916-1924) following the defeat of German troops in Rwanda by the end of the First World War, the official Belgian

occupation of Rwanda (1924-1962) under the mandate of the Society of Nations, which later became the United Nations.

At the start of the German colonization, Hutu and Tutsi identities were not entrenched and relations remained almost unchanged until the Belgian Colonial Reform (1926-1931). The Germans used the existing social structure to fulfil their colonial interests as Frederick of Mecklenburg (1912: 369) argues:

The people hold their "Mwami" which is the official name of Sultan, in the greatest awe and reverence [...] it is desired to strengthen and enrich the Mwami in authority, and to increase thereby their interest in the continuance of German rule, so that the desire for revolt shall die away, as the consequence.

Although Germans affirmed the superiority of Tutsi over the Hutu, the country was allowed to keep its traditional organization and the Mwami was given full jurisdiction over his fellow-people, helped by traditional chiefs (Hutu and Tutsi) as it was before the arrival of Germans. By contrast, when the Belgians succeeded the Germans, they transformed the state structure to exclude Hutu and Twa entirely. They became a subject people.

From 1926 to 1931, there was an important reform of administration commonly known in Rwanda as the "Mortehan's Reform" referring to the Belgian Resident (colonial representative) who put it place execution under the supervision of Voisin who was the Belgian Governor of Ruanda-Urundi at that time based in Bujumbura. With the Reform, Belgians decided to take control of Rwanda by indirect rule. As OPRR points out, Frank who was the minister of colonies wrote a letter of principle on Rwanda's structure: "...the government have to use indirect rule, which means to get under control the whole Rwandan population by using Tutsi" (OPRR, 1996: 120).



As Prunier argues, the ruling class, which had under German rule contained elements of Hutu and Twa, was changed into one almost wholly made up of Tutsi who were willing to act entirely in accordance with the colonialist's wishes (Prunier, 1995:21)

Thus the Belgians rammed through a methodical transformation of the previous social traditional structure:

- The previous system of having three chiefs for each area, one at least of whom was normally a Hutu, was replaced by having a single chief for every locality. By the end of the Colonial Reform of Administration in 1931, 43 out of 45 chiefs were Tutsi as well as 549 sub-chiefs out of 553 (Kimber, 1996:6)
- Hutu principalities were suppressed resulting in deprivation of political representatives of Hutu as group. Forced labour was imposed on the Hutu. According to Kimber, various compulsory work activities for the state could absorb over half of a man's time. Those who refused such work were punished and sometimes abused (Kimber, 1996: 7). As Newbury emphasizes, the colonial law, institutionalised "Uburetwa" (forced labour) which became required of all Hutu men and thus "symbolised the servitude of the Hutu (Newbury, 1988: 141)
- The educational policy became one of the most effective means by which the Belgians and the Catholic Church suppressed the eliminated Hutu. According to Linden, the goal was to train the Tutsi elite who would form the nucleus of a colonially administered government bureaucracy and the next generation of Rwandan rulers and chiefs (Linden and Linden, 1977: 152). To accommodate and further encourage this process, the Catholic Church adjusted its educational policies in order to train the Tutsi elite and in 1928 founded the "Indatwa" (Elite) school in

Astrida (Butare: Appendice 3), which was managed by the Brothers of Charity. With some exceptions, Hutu received only the minimum education required for working in the mines and industry.

By the end of 1929 the consecration of Tutsi elite resulted in ethnically defined “Christian aristocracy” composed of Tutsi (Newbury, 1988:115). In order to reinforce the ethnic cleavage, the Belgian administration introduced identity cards. On the basis of quite arbitrary criteria, every Rwandan was henceforth registered as Tutsi, Hutu or Twa (Maquet, 1961:56)

In a three-way entente between the Belgian administration, the Catholic Church, and the Tutsi elite, the lowly Hutu was caught, as Newbury points out. In the course of carrying out their official duties, chiefs found innumerable ways to enrich themselves, at the expense of a majority of lowly Hutu, Tutsi and Twa (Newbury, 1988: 128)

- Introduction of taxes and “uburetwa” (forced labour). A compulsory tax was required from every man who had to pay three and half (3.5 francs) per year. However before providing for the new Rwandan authorities salary in the colonial budget in 1940s, these authorities had been paid with the money that was deducted from the tax according to how much was the collected tax (OPRR, 1996: 62). Thus, in order for those authorities to collect more taxes, and thereby ensure their own salaries, they pestered any man, young and old.

According to Newbury, the most hated and humiliating was ‘Uburetwa’, a particularly servile form of clientship that required a client to perform manual services for the local hill chief as payment for use of land. Under colonial law

'Uburetwa' became required of all Hutu men and thus symbolized the servitude of Hutu vis-à-vis the dominant small group of privileged from Tutsi group (Newbury, 1988: 141). In order to escape the new harassing administration many Hutu fled to British colonies. Accordingly Reyntjens (1985: 141) states that,

Around 1930, there were 50, 000 Rwandans (i.e. one young man or one man in six) who emigrated to Uganda, and almost all of them came back and went back again. Until 1959, Rwandans who were known as having been to Uganda were numbering 350. 000, 35.000 others had gone to Tanzania. They were fleeing corveés (forced labour) cultivating fallow land, growing coffee, tax and severe punishments, which were provided for those who did not carry out this forced labour.

- The ultimate consequence of the Colonial Reform of Administration was that the monarchy lost value. The king lost the right to give cows or take them back from the chiefs without the Belgian Resident's approval. The Governor prohibited the function of king's secret advisors. The head of king's secret advisors, Gashamura was exiled away to Gitega in Burundi. The monarchy's image changed and lost its forces. The King lost his freedom and he was no longer capable of taking decisions and implementing strategies of freely governing the country. He was not Rwanda's mediator any more as he had been previously. Within the framework of the Colonial Reform of Administration, Musinga remained with only the name of King (OPRR, 1996: 8).

Because of his increasing opposition to the Belgian changes, in a decree from the King of Belgium, Musinga was deposed on 12 November 1931. Rudahigwa, a son of Musinga was proclaimed as the new King of Rwanda. Rudahigwa had strong support from the Belgian rulers and the Catholic Church. Musinga was moved to Kamembe in Northern Rwanda but the population continued to go to him as their King, obliging colonial authorities to move him to Kalemie (in Belgian Congo) (OPRR, 1996: 9).

### 3.3.2. The influence of the Catholic Church

During the Colonial Reform of Administration, Catholicism considered itself and was considered as a government religion. Fathers gave advice to colonial authorities, and participated in enforcing some instruction, such as appointing or dismissing some chiefs. As de Lacger points out, at that time many documents were written by priests suggesting that the Tutsi were more intelligent than the Hutu and that it was the Tutsi who could govern. This attitude is reflected in a letter written by Monsignor Leon Paul Class, Bishop of Rwanda to Mortehan the Belgian Resident of Rwanda, dated 21, September 1927:

If we want to be practical and look after the real interest of the country we shall find a remarkable element of progress with the Watussi youth [...] Ask Bahutu whether they prefer to be given orders by an uncouth person or by nobles and the answer will be clear: they prefer the Watussi, and quite rightly so. Born chiefs. the latter have a knack of giving orders. [...] Here lies the secret of how they peacefully managed to settle in this country and hold it in their grip (Cited in Linden and Linden, 1977: 31).

Declarations like this without doubt promoted beliefs of superiority among Tutsi when Hutu almost certainly developed beliefs of inferiority. This became a seed of discrimination and division. This collaboration between the Church and the Belgian colonisers is proved by the General Governor of Belgian Congo and Ruanda-Urundi who actively participated in the religion feasts such as the Church jubilee of 50 years in Rwanda (OPRR, 1996: 16).

The colonial authorities' support of Catholic Church was accompanied by the oppression of other religions. Consequently there were disputes between religions themselves: such as between Catholics and Lutherans and Catholics and Muslims. These disputes were instilled in the members of the Church as well (OPRR, 1996: 17).

### **3.4. CONCLUSION**

The system of identities in Rwanda was particularly complex in comparison with ethnicity in other countries but it allowed unity and diversity. This system was characterized by three major factors: clans, classes (clientship) and regions.

This chapter defined the Colonial Reform of Administration. In brief, Rwandans had their own method of organising administration that had unified them since the existence of their nation. In the following chapter attention will be paid to factors used by Belgians to manipulate and to mobilise Hutu, Tutsi and Twa in the programme of colonial state to destroy the traditional order and the tragic consequences it had on the unity of Rwandans.

## **CHAPTER FOUR:**

### **PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 PRESENTATION OF INTERVIEW'S PARTICIPANTS**

Interviews were conducted with ten people (5 Hutu, 4 Tutsi and 1 Twa). There were six men and four women. The ages varied between 22 and 85 years and the level of education varied between primary school and post-graduate. The most important tasks of the research were to explore the colonial Reform as a catalyst of ethnicity in Rwanda that affected relations between Tutsi and Hutu. Interviews were reasonably detailed but took a maximum of forty minutes to conduct. Many interviews' respondents were reluctant to participate in the conversational interviews on this topic (ethnicity and conflict in Rwanda) but the old category of participants was more enthusiastic during the conversations.

#### **4.2. DEMOGRAPHIC DISCUSSION**

A total of 145 questionnaires were administered to respondents but only 120 questionnaires were returned completed.

Based on the results, the respondents fell into the following categories: men (64%), urban (56%), educated (60%) and young respondents (53, 3 %). This openness can be explained by their accessibility and their ability to understand and to fill in the questionnaire rapidly.

The rest of respondent's categories (women, rural and uneducated) were reluctant to participate and less available, and many of them required an assistant to fill in the questionnaire for them.

**Table 4.1: Frequencies and percentages of the respondents' demographic information**

<b>VARIABLES</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE (%)</b>
<b>1. Gender</b>		
Female	46	38.3
Male	74	61.7
<b>2. Age</b>		
Younger than 60years	64	53.3
Older than 60 years	56	46.7
<b>3. Level of education</b>		
Uneducated	48	40
Educated	72	60
<b>4. Location</b>		
Rural	52	43.3
Urban	68	56.7

#### **4.3. ATTITUDES OF RESPONDENTS RELATNG TO MANIPULATION OF IDENTITIES DURING THE COLONIAL REFORM OF ADMINISTRATION**

In this part of the study data will be discussed and interpreted centring around three major themes related to the objectives and questions of the study:

- Identity before the Reform
- Factors of manipulation during the Reform
- Implications on relationships between Hutu and Tutsi

Each theme will reflect the attitudes of the survey's respondents and the interview's respondents.

**Table 4.2. Data relating to the case study: frequencies and percentages of responses relating to the manipulation of identities during the Colonial Reform of Administration.**

<b>PROPOSAL</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
<b>1. Before Colonial Reform Tutsi and Hutu referred to economic position</b> Agree Not sure Disagree	68 25 27	56.7 20.8 22.5
<b>2. Before the reform, clan was the most important and unifying identity</b> Agree Not sure Disagree	81 28 11	67.5 23.3 09.2
<b>3. Before Reform, Hutu and Tutsi participated equally in political responsibilities</b> Agree Not sure Disagree	69 26 25	57.5 21.7 20.8
<b>4. The Reform generated privileges for Tutsi and discrimination against Hutu creating a violent division</b> Agree Not sure Disagree	85 17 18	70.8 14.2 15
<b>5. Ethnic mention in identity cards contributed to the development of ethnic beliefs</b> Agree Not sure Disagree	86 11 23	72 09 19
<b>6 Forced labour imposed to Hutu during the Reform raised strongly</b>		



<b>consciousness of Hutu identity</b>		
Agree	76	63
Not sure	24	20
Disagree	20	17
<b>7. Hamitic myth reinforced division between Hutu and Tutsi</b>		
Agree	91	76
Not sure	22	18
Disagree	07	06
<b>8. The Catholic Church played a crucial role in division of ethnic groups during the Colonial Reform.</b>		
Agree	77	64.2
Not sure	20	16.6
Disagree	23	19.2
<b>9. The Rwandan elites used ethnicity as unique means of access to power exacerbating division</b>		
Agree	80	66.7
Not sure	14	11.6
Disagree	26	21.7
<b>10. Ethnic competition became a continual resource of insecurity for all ethnic groups</b>		
Agree	70	58.3
Not sure	30	25
Disagree	20	16.7
<b>11. The Colonial Reform of Admin. resulted in structural violence and finally lead to a cycle of violence</b>		
Agree	79	65.8
Not sure	27	22.5
Disagree	14	11.7
<b>12. Illiteracy and poverty facilitated ethnic manipulation during the reform</b>		
Agree	86	71.7

Not sure	31	25.8
Disagree	03	2.5
<b>13. Reduction of poverty can be used as means of peace and unity</b>		
Agree	89	74.1
Not sure	17	14.2
Disagree	14	11.7
<b>14. Democracy, justice, education for peace can help in reconciliation.</b>		
Agree	71	59.2
Not sure	40	33.3
Disagree	09	07.5
<b>15. National identity and clanic solidarity can reinforce the unity and reconciliation.</b>		
Agree	77	64.2
Not sure	29	24.2
Disagree	14	11.6
<b>16. The integration of the Twa group in the process of the reconciliation in Rwanda can be a means of peace making.</b>		
Agree	65	54.2
Not sure	05	04.2
Disagree	50	41.6

#### 4.3.1. Attitudes of respondents regarding identities in Rwanda before the Reform

##### 4.3.1.1 Role of clans before the Reform

As a unifying element in Rwanda, 67.5 % (Table 5.2) of the survey's respondents found clans useful before the Reform. In addition, the majority of the interview's respondents shared this opinion. Also notable is the influence of the variable of 'Age' on responses: The 89.3% of respondents (Table 5.3) who agreed with the above view were over 60 years

old, while in the category younger than 60 years only 48.4% agreed as represented in the following table (Table 4.3):

**Table 4.3 Cross-tabulation of age and responses relating to clans before the Colonial Reform of Administration**

Before the Colonial Reform of Administration clans were the most important identity and unifying factor in Rwanda	Age		Total
	Younger than 60years old	Older than 60years old	
Agree	31 (48.4%)	50 (89.3%)	81(67.5%)
Not sure	26 (40.6%)	2 (3.6%)	28(23.3%)
Disagree	7 (11%)	4 ( 7.1%)	11(9.2%)
<b>Total</b>	64(100%)	56(100%)	120 (100%)

One can easily understand the reason for this discrepancy. The old people grew up when the traditional structure dominated by clans was still influential in 1940's. On the contrary, young respondents grew up in a social structure already influenced by ethnicity since 1959.

Generally all the interview's respondents from the old category stated that clans were a unifying factor. In addition many of them argued that clans were a powerful element of Rwandan culture. One of participants explained disappointingly his view as follows:

...Ask a man of my age to tell you his ethnic identity, he will say for example "I'm "Umwega"<sup>1</sup> or "Umusinga"...but if you ask the same question to a young man of 25 years he will immediately tell that he is Hutu or Tutsi [...] these are fruits of political propaganda. My clan is "Umwega" and I'm proud of it, with other "Bega", from Hutu, Tutsi or Twa groups we share brotherhood because we believe in common ancestors. But how can you be proud of Hutu or Tutsi identities with their histories of killings? Who is ancestor of Hutu? Who is ancestor of Tutsi?

<sup>1</sup> A name of one of powerful and prestigious clan, known for its rivalry with Nyiginya, another powerful and dynastic clan in Rwanda

Furthermore many researchers found that all Rwandans (Hutu, Tutsi and Twa) shared clans. In his research on clans of Rwanda, Hertefeldt argues that ethnic identity referred in ancient Rwanda without any doubt to “Umwega”, “Umusinga”, “Umusindi” (Hertefeldt, 1971:31). Similarly the OPRR stresses the role of clans arguing that when “Umusinga”, “Umwega” or “Umusindi” travellers (be they Hutu, Tutsi or Twa), arrived among other “Basinga”... he was well received and feeling at home (OPRR, 1996:5).

Bloom highlights above statements with the role that the social environment plays in an awareness of social identities. He states that the development of self-awareness is mediated to the child by the attitudes of his environment or family. The family does not need to make specific pronouncements about the social meaning of the child’s colour or race. Approval or disapproval can be communicated by implicit acceptance and rejection of attitudes and behaviours (Bloom, 1971: 48)

#### **4.3.1.2. Hutu, Tutsi and Twa: economic positions**

The majority of survey’s respondents (56.7%: Table 5.2) believe that Hutu, Tutsi and Twa referred to economic positions rather than tribes before the Reform. Similarly the majority of the interview’s respondents stated that these identities referred to economic position. In his study on Hutu and Tutsi conflict Newbury (1988: 170) comes to a similar conclusion:

The origin of the term Hutu and Tutsi is obscure, but in fact Tutsi refers to a noble, as Hutu refers to a commoner and not to different tribes. As demarcations of status, he goes on to explain, Hutu and Tutsi were not immutable categories. Powerful Hutu lineages, for example, that had acquired respect and influence amongst neighbours and the local administration might be absorbed into the upper class and its Hutu origins forgotten. Merging was apparently preferred over competing.

Additional evidence is found in the writings of Kagame, a prominent Rwandan philosopher and historian. He argues that whoever possesses many heads of cattle is called Tutsi (Kagame, cited in Newbury, 1988: 253).

Asked to clarify their position about the origin of Hutu, Tutsi and Twa, all respondents gave vague views; for example one of them stated that what is quite certain is that to be Hutu or Tutsi is to hold different levels of wealth, cattle or agricultural occupation. Another respondent argued that one should bear in mind that the Hutu and Tutsi concepts existed for a very long time. Moreover, in their attempt to understand the background of the Hutu and Tutsi identities, researchers found that the words Hutu, Tutsi and Twa were present in monarchical family trees (Ubucurabwenge in Kinyarwanda, the common language of all Rwandans). These Hutu and Tutsi concepts were also present in poems praising acts of bravery under King Cyirima Rujugira's reign, which dates as far back as the 1650's (OPRR, 1996: 59). In relation to inequalities among the three ethnic groups, respondents approved their existence, but they argued that no one was condemned to stay in the same group, social mobility was frequent.

There was no visible correlation in Rwanda, between ethnicity and class, which means that there was not a situation that people belonging to specific clan or tribe also belonged to specific social classes. Clan or ethnic membership seems to not have appeared to operate as an important factor in class membership. Linden (cited by Martin, 1998) uses the term class to refer to a group of people having the same relationship to the mode of production. ([www.law.emory.edu/EILR/volumes/fall98/martin.html](http://www.law.emory.edu/EILR/volumes/fall98/martin.html))

As in the previous cross-tabulation of age and responses regarding clans, the same variable is operational in the question of economic status in the category of respondents over 60

years, 83,9 % believe that Hutu, Tutsi and Twa referred to economic positions while only 32.8% of those aged below than 60 years believe the same:

**Table 4.4. Cross-tabulation of age and Hutu, Tutsi and Twa as economic positions**

Before the Reform Hutu, Tutsi and Twa referred to economic positions	Age		Total
	Less than 60	More than 60	
<b>Agree</b>	21(32.8%)	47 (83.9%)	68 (56.7%)
<b>Not sure</b>	19(29.7%)	6 (10.7%)	25(20.8%)
<b>Disagree</b>	24 (37.5%)	3(05.4%)	27(22.5%)
<b>Total</b>	64 (100%)	56(100%)	120 (100%)

The strong divergence of attitudes may be attributable to the fact that for the young category of respondents many decades of political mobilization have actively used ethnic identities. Hutu politicians often compared clientship with feudality and even slavery during their campaign against the Tutsi. However, some researches proved that at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century there were more Tutsi in clientship than Hutu. For example in Butare a city in Southern Rwanda, the research demonstrated that only 8.2% of 207 questioned persons agreed that their grandfathers were clients; 6.6% whom were Hutu, 12.3 % being Tutsi, and 16.0 % of their fathers (16% were Hutu, while 19. 3% were Tutsi). These results are unambiguously presented bellow (Table 4.5):

**Table 4.5. Situation of clientship in Butare in beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

Question	Hutu		Tutsi	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Was your grandfather a client?	6,6%	83,4%	12,3%	77,7%
Was your father a client?	16%	84%	19,3%	70%

(Saucier, quoted in OPR, 1996:33).

In consequence:

- Clients were very few
- There were more Tutsi clients than Hutu and Twa clients
- Clientship was increased during the colonial period.

Even if there was clientship in some parts of the country this does not mean that there had been clientship for a very long time, because there were other places (such as Kinyaga) in which clientship did not exist or had just started in the 19<sup>th</sup> century such as in Kinyaga (Newbury, 1978)

#### **4.3.1.3 Hutu-Tutsi participation in the traditional political structure**

The majority of interview respondents (57, 5%: Table 5.2) and survey respondents believe that before the Colonial Reform of Administration Hutu, Tutsi and Twa had participated without discrimination in political and social responsibilities. Globally the interview's respondents, particularly in the old category, stated that although the King was a Tutsi, Hutu subjects were represented. Further they specified that within Rwanda, three men, all of them representing the King ruled each locality:

...The Mwami (King) was the top authority and supreme chief of all armies. He normally appointed in hills Tutsi as cattle chief, Hutu as chief of land, the chief of men were Tutsi and sometime Hutu. However, our interview's respondents argued in their majority that the appointment of Twa in this structure was rare.

The above statement agrees with the sense of Vansina's research assuming that as head of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Rwandese state, the Mwami (King) owned all land and cattle. He ruled despotically, but had a political board of great chiefs and a permanent council of Abiru (ritual specialists) who advised him about the divine obligations connected to his office. The great chiefs appear to have been dominated by Tutsi, while the ritual specialists of the Abiru seem to have been Hutu (Vansina, 1962).

With regards to army, the respondents stated that the army was the most symbolic act of patriotism and unity of the Rwandan Nation. This is confirmed by Kimber (1996: 136):

...War with neighbours' states, which was quite common, took two forms. Often it was a largely unifying act when armies would gather but the fighting was confined to "champion" from either side. The Tutsi and Twa dominated this sort of war. But when more serious combat was necessary, the Hutu took the leading part. For example the great Rwandan conqueror Kigeli IV Rwabugiri 1853-1885), who meant business when he went into battle, preferred to recruit mostly Hutu armies, which were perhaps less elegant but more efficient, so war acted as a "social coagulant", breaking differences.

In the same way Vansina agrees that the army had a 'multi-ethnic' composition, stratified in the way that Hutu and Tutsi were higher military officers but the majority of Hutu were higher intermediate ranks followed by Twa (Vansina, 1962). What becomes clear is that the social traditional structure in Rwanda was an integrating one in relation to Hutu and Tutsi identities. Even the smallest Twa group, at a certain level was represented more than it is at the present time.



## **4.2.2. Factors of ethnicity as result of the Colonial Reform of Administration**

### **4.2.2.1. Privileges for Tutsi, discrimination against Hutu**

The majority of survey's respondents (70, 8%: Table 5.2) and interview's respondents admitted that the Tutsi were more privileged in terms of social and economic means, and that this was accompanied by discrimination against Hutu during the Reform of 1926. In summary, the interviewees argued that that between 1926 and 1931, the Belgians followed a policy aimed at restructuring the Rwandan traditional administration. They systematically dismissed Hutu and Tutsi chiefs appointed by the King. As one respondent said,

There is a lot one can say about origins of fight between Hutu and Tutsi. but the main point is the discrimination against Hutu which reached their hearts and minds as it was accompanied by speeches stating that Hutu are good executers of physical works and orders while Tutsi were described as born chiefs and more intelligent. Since then, Hutu and Tutsi became prisoners of these negative ideas.

Another important factor of this conflict is that Belgians introduced taxes and many forms of punishments and the Hutu were victims of increasing resentment against the Tutsi as noticed a respondent:

...The tax was progressively increased and when collecting taxes for the colonial Administration, Tutsi chiefs harassed Hutu who in consequence developed resentment against all Tutsi'. 'People were beaten and imprisoned for days and months or years... Their bad actions were ordered by Belgians, then Tutsi chiefs and chief- assistants had to show commitment in execution of instruction given by colonialists, because they could also be dismissed. In fact, punishments were often accompanied by really going too far due to the will of chief or the chief-assistant.

The general colonial atmosphere was hostile towards the Hutu but the most discriminating factor against the Hutu was education. According to OPRR 'Nyanza School' was the first School to be established in 1919 by the Belgian colonial government. This school was intended for Tutsi, and was often called the 'School for the chief-children'. It closed in 1935, after the Secondary School of Astrida "Astrida School" had just started.

Among the 48 chiefs who were governing, in 1950's, only 14 had studied at School in Butare while the others had been educated at the public School Nyanza as well as in other schools. It is clear that this Colonial government's School which was in the category of primary Schools, had an important role to play in the future of governing Rwanda (OPRR, 1996:18)

However, all doors were not totally closed for Hutu. As Linden points out, the Catholic Seminary offered other avenues for advancement since it was the only way Hutu could obtain a secondary education (Linden and Linden, 1977:200)

Hutu were also able to emigrate and to achieve social improvement but gaining a consciousness of ethnic discrimination, as Newbury (1988, 177-178) notes:

For despite the structures of the Belgium- Tutsi controlled state, a small group of Hutu was able to achieve economic security mainly through labour migration and the church. It was in this limited avenue of advancement that Hutu were exposed to new ideologies that contrasted sharply with the reality of their subjugated state at home... while this consciousness started out as one of class, it quickly shifted to an ethnic ideology.

On the other hand, the social and political discrimination against the Hutu went hand-in-hand parallel with the impoverishment of a large body of Tutsi. With the exception of a small group of privileged Tutsi, particularly a small class of colonial collaborators, the Reform resulted in serious economic problems for the majority of Tutsi due to changes occasioned by the new colonial state. As Linden and Linden (1977:226) highlight:

The facile division between Tutsi cattle-owning and Hutu subsistence forming poverty, always an oversimplification, became thoroughly misleading after the war. During the colonial period a large body of Tutsi became, or remained, impoverished and lacked cattle, while returning Hutu migrants and successful coffee-growers accumulated cows and were relatively prosperous.

To reinforce the above statement, Prunier cites the results of a survey in mid-1950's of representative sections of the population excluding holders of political office. This survey

showed that the average household income of Hutu and Tutsi families were, in fact very similar whilst the Twa families had a very much lower income.

**Table 4.6. Ethnic comparison of economic income in Rwanda in mid-1950's**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Number of families</b>	<b>Average income (Belgian francs)</b>
<b>Tutsi</b>	287	4,439
<b>Hutu</b>	914	4,249
<b>Twa</b>	2	1,446

Source: Prunier (1995:33)

These shifts in economic relations, coupled with the emergence of an educated Hutu elite from seminaries, created the conditions of ethnic competition for scarce resources.

In this regard Lemarchand (1970:139) argues,

...For those few Hutu who were able to obtain a secondary education, the world outside the seminary fairly reflected the Tutsi- dominated inside. Educated Hutu were unable to rise beyond lowest ranks of the civil services and found themselves shut out from most avenues of social and economic advancement simply because of their "Hutuness". Being systematically denied opportunities to which they felt entitled bred a growing resentment and sense of injustice among these small elite.

OPRR (1996:19) emphasizes the issue of what was already known as a competition for scarce resources:

... Those from seminaries had no known profession. Apart from some of them who were Tutsi and who were helped by their relatives in order to be appointed as chief- assistants, and a few others who became teachers in primary schools, most of them remained jobless. Those who could do it went outside, like Usumbura, Bukavu. That fact of being jobless for those from seminaries generated some thing like jealousy, because the colonial government was not taking care of them. Instead of doing that, they were kept at distance.

Frustration, marginalisation and inequality are some of the reasons, which generated the disputes between the elites before 1959.

As argued previously, a scarcity of environmental resources, combined with policies of the Reform created a context within which ethnic affiliations took place, thereby raising competition between Hutu and Tutsi. These statements highlight why anti-Tutsi attitudes were reportedly much stronger among more educated Hutu than among the mass of the Hutu population. As illustration, the following table shows that the majority of uneducated respondents reacted with a ‘not sure’ (58.3%) answer about privileges given to Tutsi and discrimination against Hutu. This means that ethnicity became important in this category of the population only after mobilization by politicians.

**Table 4.7. Cross-tabulation of level of education and privileges for Tutsi, discrimination against Hutu**

The Reform generated privileges for Tutsi and discrimination against Hutu creating a violent division	Level of Education		Total
	Uneducated	Educated	
Agree	20 (41.7%)	65 (90.3%)	85 (70.9%)
Not sure	28 (58.3)	04 (5.5%)	32 (26.6%)
Disagree	00 (0%)	03 (4.2)	03 (2.5%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>48 (100%)</b>	<b>72 (100%)</b>	<b>120(100%)</b>

A careful review of the evidence shows that ethnic affiliations became more salient among the elite than among the peasant or uneducated classes. In this regard, Varyrynen (1996) argues that at the centre of the question of why violent ethnic identification takes place, is the question of why some of identities become securitised. In other words identity is perceived to be threatened in a manner that the only way to maintain or, rather, construct the identity is seen to be an issue of survival. In general, issues become securitised when

leaders, whether political, societal, or intellectual begin to talk about them in terms of existential threats against some valued revered object. Securitization is thus, in essence, an ‘intersubjective establishment of an existential threat with a saliency, sufficient to have substantial political effects requiring emergency measures outside the normal bounds of political procedure’ ([www.gmu.edu/academic/pcs/varyryn.html](http://www.gmu.edu/academic/pcs/varyryn.html))

#### **4.3.2.2. Attitudes of respondents a propos ethnic mention in identity cards**

An impressive majority of our survey’s respondents (72%: Table 5.2) and many of the interview’s respondents support what view? One of the interview respondent argued that the mention of ethnic belonging in identity card was indirect publicity of ethnic difference and as such, it had been a direct cause of the division in Rwanda by obliging Hutu, Tutsi and Twa to think that they are different ethnic groups. More clearly, another respondent stated that the identity card was an administrative way that ranked the identities of people and this influenced the perceptions of the holders of those ethnic cards. To be a Tutsi was a ‘positive’ identity or ‘Good’ identity, whereas to be a Hutu was a less valued identity.

Linden and Linden (1977) highlight that the card distribution by Belgians eliminated uncertainty as to the ethnic identity of the cardholder so the distribution strengthened Belgian control over Rwanda and perpetuated the myth of Tutsi superiority. This favouritism was largely appearance-driven and some Tutsi were given the best positions in the colonial regime. This brought more prestige and self-confidence to the Tutsi than it did to the Hutu.

Similarly Kimber (1996) argues that Belgium ‘froze’ the movement between groups by instituting identity cards and increased the class identification by favouring Tutsi for

powerful positions and easy access to power. As mentioned above, a series of measures that transformed the social structure forced the majority of Hutu to remain poor. The new identification by identity cards also led to the racialization of consciousness that affected everybody.

Accordingly, Prunier highlights that even the insignificant Tutsi who did not benefit from the system in any way, started to believe they were indeed a superior race and that under the same rags as their Hutu neighbours wore, a finer heart was beating. The Hutu, deprived and exploited by both the White and a small group of Tutsi collaborators, began to hate all Tutsi, even those who were just as poor as they (Prunier quoted in Kimber, 1996).

Among interviewees was a scholar and historian, Professor Faustin Rutembesa who is a senior researcher in the Conflict Management Centre of the University of Rwanda. He argued that 'ethnic mention' in identity cards was instrumental in the mediatization of ethnicity that created a new 'conflictual space' of difference and otherness. Anderson (cited by Varyrynen, 1996) shares the view that mediatic practices in ethnic politics create an 'identity space' in which ethnic identification and the production of difference takes place. In short, media counts among the social practices which shape ethnic identification and produce parochial 'ethnicity subjects' ([www.gmu.edu/academic/pcs/vayryn.html](http://www.gmu.edu/academic/pcs/vayryn.html)).

In the case of Rwanda, 'ethnic cards' strengthened by structural changes introduced important ethnic labels in everyday life.

#### 4.3.2.3. Forced labour as factor of Hutu identity consciousness

Almost all of the interviewees and the majority of the survey's respondents (63%: Table 5:2) accepted that forced labour contributed to reinforce the consciousness of Hutu identity. As revealed in Table 5.7, people located in rural areas (82.7%) strongly agreed with the view that forced labour acted as an important factor of ethnic consciousness among Hutu group members. This reveals that this category of population was more exposed to all forms of exploitation and injustices than those living in urban areas.

Explaining his view about this issue, one informant stated:

... Belgians did not want to spend their money to develop the country through paid labour. They said that Hutu were good to perform hard labour, when generally their counterparts Tutsi were not concerned. Then people worked without remuneration and those who refused to carry out this forced labour were punished: even beaten. Forced labour was a hard and heavy burden for people ... each citizen found that forced labour was very bad.

**Table 4.8. Cross-tabulation of location and forced labour and other forms of exploitation that raised the consciousness of Hutu identity**

Forced labour and other forms of exploitation were a strong factor that raised the consciousness of Hutu identity	Location		Total
	Rural	Urban	
Agree	43 (82.7%)	27(39.7%)	70(58.3%)
Not sure	04 (7.6%)	26 (38.2%)	30 (25%)
Disagree	05 (9.7%)	15 (22.15)	20 (16.7%)
<b>Total</b>	52(100%)	68(100%)	120(100%)

The respondents gave many examples of activities, which were implemented:

- Building houses for administration and transporting building materials such as trees, bricks and so on,
- Growing trees,
- Building and maintaining roads,
- Digging over-flow ditches.

According to OPRR, around 1930, those who were requested to perform hard labour for Government and to pay taxes were categorized as 'Adult healthy Male' (Homme Adulte Valide: H.A.V in French): young people and men who were strong (OPRR, 1996:21).

Forced labour is seen as important factor of division and hatred between Hutu and Tutsi. For the most part, it was Tutsi 'chiefs of line' and 'town criers'<sup>1</sup> appointed by the colonial authorities who supervised hard labour and the collection of taxes. The Belgians' laws provided salaries for chiefs and chief-assistants, meaning that chiefs of line and town criers were not remunerated. But this did not prevent them from carrying out their work with zeal because they were still able to profit from it as people under their supervision, Ingabo went to cultivate for them and gave them beer when they had got some (OPRR, 1996: 21).

Many respondents stated that 'chiefs of line' and 'town criers went beyond the limits of their posts and gave themselves rights, which exceeded those set for them by the chief-assistant. It is clear that the people were forced to remunerate them. These made people feel resentment against them. Evidently this was another key element of consciousness of a new identity developed by people who were marginalized, excluded and exploited. Although ethnic tensions are not reported at that time, this was already a bad seed for the

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<sup>1</sup> Chiefs, chief-assistants, chiefs of lines and town criers composed the hierarchy of indigene colonial administration in Rwanda. The latest under supervision of chief-assistants and chiefs of line were charged to check houses to make sure that every man has gone to work.



future generations. The Belgians did not take any action or measures against that exploitation as outlined by OPRR:

In the year of 1927, the Resident of Rwanda devoted one day to Corvées (forced labour) every seven days for each healthy young man and woman (H.A.V.). What was required from a household before was now required from each individual on his own; in such a way, Rwandan authorities during the colonial period gained much new manpower to work for them without remuneration (OPRR, 1996:22).

According to another informant, forced labour could not be enforced if there was not punishment for those who refused to perform. Some of those punishments were harder than others. Below is a quote from one of the interview respondents:

The first one is the flogging which was applied to many people. The low number of floggings was light, and was applied to any person who had not well mulched coffee plantations or who had not finished the field of cassava... He laid down naked on his belly and then was flogged eight times. This was called "remove your clothes" (kurimpuzu), because people were ordered to remove clothes from their buttocks, so that the flogging enters into the skin. The flogging made people suffer, and made people who were using it and who ordered to use it feel that they were superior, and those who were flogged feel that they were inferior.

Other punishments were fines, imprisonment and dismissal for chiefs and chief-assistants who had not followed colonial instructions. Until now in Rwanda, comments about colonial punishments continue to provide an indelible basis of ethnic stereotypes that targeted indistinctly all Tutsi and this situation strengthened the boundaries between both ethnic groups. In this regard Valerie Percival and Thomas Homer-Dixon (1995) argue that cross-national research shows that cases of severe ethnic conflict share the following characteristics:

- Institutionalised group boundaries and stereotypes,
- An experience of ethnic domination by one or more groups,
- The strong perception by one group that the opposing ethnic group has external affiliations, and,

- Ethnically based parties with no significant interethnic coalitions.

Rwandan ethnic relations exhibited all of these characteristics in particular as the colonial rule institutionalised Hutu and Tutsi boundaries.

(<http://www.library.utoronto.ca/pcs/eps/rwanda/rwanda2.htm>).

#### **4.3.2.4. Hamitic myth as factor of ethnicity**

Seventy-six percent of the survey's respondents shared the view that the Hamitic myth contributed to create and maintain division in Rwanda. Similarly, the majority of the interviewees admitted that the Hamitic myth had negatively affected the relationship between Hutu and Tutsi as a result of the Colonial Reform of Administration. Many respondents declared that they did not know the origin of the words 'Hutu', 'Tutsi', and 'Twa'. Some respondents speculated that the meaning of Hutu was "umugaragu", meaning servant. They also stated that Tutsi meant "gutunga", meaning to become rich, and that Twa was connected to "Batwa", and related to groups of pygmies, most of them living in the equatorial forest of Democratic Republic of Congo (RDC).

Even though there is no evidence of the origin of either of the terms, some people venture to assert that Hutu and Tutsi are two different races, whose blood has nothing in common, whose education is totally different. This notion was popularised since 1900 and still exists.

Another informant argued that the ideology of difference was introduced in a form of scientific research, namely the "Hamitic hypothesis". As one informant stated, despite a long and peaceful coexistence among Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa which found them living together, helping each other, socializing, and taking wives from either group and fighting

together for their country, the Hamitic hypothesis considers Tutsi as superior and the other groups as inferior. Now the majority of Tutsi think that Hutu and Twa are really inferior to them and Hutu see Tutsi as arrogant people, colonisers with Hamitic origins in other words, foreigners.

de Lacger (cited by Percival and Homer-Dixon, 1995) states that the greatest harm the Belgian colonisers inflicted on the Rwandan nation was the introduction of the “Hamitic myth”, naming the Tutsis as being of Hamitic descent.

Supposed to be born leaders and, in principle, had the right to a history and a future almost as noble as that of Europeans [...] before becoming black these people were tanned. His stature resembles more closely that of a white person rather than that of a Negro.

In fact, it would not be an exaggeration to state that he is a European who happens to have a black skin.

(<http://www.library.utoronto.ca/pes/eps/rwanda/rwanda2.htm>).

To be sincere, in a restricted way some people can be morphologically classified Hutu or Tutsi. But this physical variability cannot constitute a confirmation of Hamitic myth. In Rwanda as in many other regions of the world there is simply a sense-making, which means, according to Canfield (2003) the often hidden symbolic activity that accompanies non-verbal communication (<http://www.canifield.ltext/preface.htm>).

This sense-making refers to how the Hutu define their Hutuness, Tutsi their Tutsiness and Twa their Twaness. Their five senses provide them with information about the social world they inhabit. Their bodies symbolise social interactions that create meanings, continually identifying and labelling these bodies.

Tutsi were described as a good race while Hutu and Twa were labelled as having an inferior racial status. Obviously, these assumptions would have influenced them consequently producing meanings of ethnic differences that affected their bodies.

To repeat the words of canfield (2003), people perceive themselves and others symbolically, labelling their own bodies and the bodies of others. People hold conversations with themselves, about themselves, about others and about events. In short there is a symbolic, cognitive activity involved in the presentation of self and in the interpretation of the non-verbal behaviours of others (<http://canfield.ltext/preface.htm>)

The main sense of the Hamitic myth was that the Tutsi are a superior race. This increased the frustration of Hutu. One respondent made it clear when showing the role of this frustration among the Hutu in genocide of Tutsi in 1994. He argued that the Hutu elite felt threatened by the massive return of Tutsi in public affairs. Perhaps they felt something like inferiority. Instead of competition with the Tutsi in a new Rwanda, unfortunately they chose to annihilate them totally, hence the genocide.

The above statements are in some way illustrated by some forms of behaviour noticed during the genocide. Hutu militiamen asked captured Tutsi ladies, to remove their clothes in order to see what a naked Tutsi lady who was presumed to be more beautiful than Hutu ladies, looked like. Barbu highlights such behaviours. He argues that human behaviour derives from innumerable factors, including one's belief system and psychological needs, such as a valuable social identity and self-esteem. As the same author continues, whether the person is or is not aware of these factors, they shape his perceptual field. Moreover, his behaviour and interaction with others is based on what he perceives as reality. The meaning that the people attach to situations and events, are largely the consequence of their

experiences, most of which transpire within political, economic and social structures (Barbu cited quoted in Baker, 1983:89).

Evidently, the long economic and political marginalization of Hutu and their inferior status officially declared through ‘Hamitic myth’ predisposed them to violent interactions with Tutsi. As Barbu emphasizes, an individual is not simply a robot of socialization forces, consequently the significance of structures in socializing and shaping the psychological perceptions of individuals cannot be discounted. If individuals are deprived of economic resources or means of livelihood, thereby making survival itself difficult, they are behaviourally affected which in turn affects their interactions with others (Barbu, quoted in Baker, 1983: 90).

If the attitudes of respondents through gender variable are examined, an imposing majority of female respondents (87%: Table 5.8) is found who agreed that ‘Hamitic myth’ played a crucial role in the division of Hutu and Tutsi.

**Table 4.9. Cross-tabulation of gender and Hamitic myth**

Hamitic myth is one of important factor that led to ethnic division in Rwanda	GENDER		Total
	Female	Male	
Agree	40 (87%)	51(69%)	91(76%)
Not sure	02 (04.3%)	20 (27%)	22(18%)
Disagree	04 (08.7%)	03 (04%)	07(06%)
<b>Total</b>	46 (100%)	74 (100%)	120 (100%)

This reveals that Rwandan women are victims of this myth more than the men. Related to this issue, women respondents stated that particularly Hutu girls or women who plan to marry a man from the Tutsi group, face habitually strong opposition and even rejection from the man's family. Similarly, they argued that a Tutsi girl, who wished to marry a man from the Hutu ethnic group, faced opposition from her own family.

Many respondents regardless of gender (76%: Table 5.2) and other characteristics admitted that after the genocide, Tutsi were very opposed to intermarriage between Tutsi and Hutu. This attitude can be partially understood as a reaction due to atrocities endured by Tutsi women during the genocide. In many cases atrocities were carried out by their own husbands or they were killed by their own brothers-in-law from the Hutu group.

#### **4.3.2.5 Attitudes of respondents regarding the role of the Catholic Church during the Colonial Reform of Administration**

During and after the Reform, the Catholic Church in Rwanda remained very influential in colonial administration, even in the creation of ethnicity. This is confirmed by the survey's results (66.7 % agreed). In addition our interview respondents agreed largely with this opinion.

Many other researchers have found that the Catholic Church played a key role in the institutionalisation of Tutsi supremacy. As Linden and Linden state, the Church backed the Belgian policies of reform. For example he states that Monsignor Classe, the top authority of the Church in Rwanda had always believed that without Tutsi hegemony, the country would dissolve into chaos. Particularly Monsignor Class saw missionary work as a way to

create an ethnically defined Christian aristocracy composed of Tutsi (Linden and Linden, 1977:186).

The Church believed that if the Prince was converted, the people would follow. So the Catholic Church focused on the conversion of the Tutsi elite. An informant described the negative role of the Church in destruction of traditional institutions, particularly the monarchy: "...when Belgian missionaries arrived in Rwanda, they hoped that conversion of the central court would be followed by the conversion of all Rwandans. At that time, they tried to convert King Musinga who resisted because he considered himself as the symbol of the continuation of the traditional religion, which was a key element of unity of Rwandans. His intransigence against baptism, caused bishop Classe to plan his dismissal"

Des Forges confirms this view. He states that because of the refusal of Musinga to bow to colonial pressure, he was replaced on the throne with his son Rudahigwa who had been educated by White Fathers. This was done with the full support of Monsignor Classe (Des forges, 1969: 188).

One thing that disturbed unity among Rwandan youth is the school that was called 'Astrida School' in Butare which was supervised by the Brothers of Charity and which opened its doors in 1932. This secondary school was supervised by Monks and subsidised by the government and in particular was aimed at preparing Belgians' assistants at the different levels: doctors in medicine and veterinary surgeons, agronomists, secretaries and people who would become chiefs in administration section (OPRR, 1996:16). In other words, it was a training ground for the next generation of elite in Rwanda. As the above source continues, apart from the administration sections in which future chiefs were studying, all other sections were mixed (Hutu and Tutsi). But from 1932 to 1959, Hutu were

discriminated against even in the other sections. Registration of students each year showed clearly the high proportion of Tutsi as opposed to Hutu pupils (Appendice 2).

In addition, as OPRR emphasizes all those who completed their studies in that school were taken care of by the Belgian authorities and Brothers who had educated them so that they kept being “elites” (indatwa), and became superior to other Rwandans. When they completed their studies, they were immediately given a job to work with white people. They were offered accommodation in cities like Kigali and Astrida (now called Butare), where they lived in special areas so that they could not mix with other Rwandans. (OPRR, 1996:17)

By the end of 1928 Bishop Classe had issued clear entrance guidelines for the school that discriminated against Hutu (Newbury, 1988:115). Linden and Linden emphasise that Classe could hardly be accused of Hutu compassion when he explained to the Fathers in 1928: “they [Hutu] also need to be schooled and educated, and they will take up places in mines workings and industry” (Linden and Linden, 1977:164). The Catholic Church had an important role to play on the social and political level, due to the fact that colonial authorities respected it.

### **4.3.3. Factors of the Reform’s implications on Hutu-Tutsi relationships**

#### **4.3.3.1. The culture of ethnic mobilization as a unique means of access to power**

The survey’s respondents (64.2%: Table 5.2) stated that the culture of ethnic mobilization for political ends took place in Rwanda. Similarly the interview’s respondents stressed this culture as the central factor of violence in Rwanda since 1959.

One informant explains the problem this way:



...The way Hutu were marginalized, is the same used by Hutu leaders to discriminate politically against Tutsi [...] whereas discrimination of Hutu had been justified by the myth of Tutsi superiority [...] Hutu leaders began their political activities around independencies explicitly using the same logic: defining Tutsi as the Hamitic minority oppressor of the Hutu people.

Another description from respondents reflects the same opinion: "... the Hutu discontent was reflected by a violent rhetoric of their leaders, already in 1958 Tutsi were qualified as the minority oppressor without any mention of the white presence".

Many researchers stress the "Hamitization" of the rhetoric adopted by Hutu leaders during the political struggle of 1950s: an amalgam, which did not denounce the role of colonizers in the oppression of the Hutu. Visibly, exploiting a situation of injustice created by themselves Belgians backed the new Hutu elite to eject Tutsi who began to express the need for independence. Lemarchand (1988:111) explains it clearly:

Belgians did not merely shift their support away from the Tutsi monarchy to a position of nominal neutrality but backed the Hutu outright, so that in the end, it was the Europeans who guaranteed the undoing of a system they themselves helped build...the system would not be "undone" entirely, however, as the events of the early 1960's would prove; it would be reversed. Past forms of domination and oppression would continue to persist, only this time in Hutu hands. The politics of polarised ethnic identity had earned its place in Rwandan history".

During the 1950's Hut-Tutsi conflict was already open, following the line of colonisers and even the Catholic Church transferred its support from Tutsi to Hutu elites. According to Linden and Linden, the Hutu elite also benefited from their new ally in Church in the form of Flemish-speaking White Fathers who knew first hand the experience of being treated as second-class citizens in their own country. The leading person in this new Catholic policy was Bishop Perraudin who was of Swiss origin and argued that the Church's support in the Hutu's cause was social justice (Linden and Linden 1977: 251).

The significance of the historical projection of the Hamitic myth onto the current Hutu-Tutsi problem continued to accelerate in the late 1950's with entrenched Hutu leaders, such as Kayibanda and Gitera. In 1957, Kayibanda formed the "Hutu Social Movement", to promote the objectives articulated in the Hutu manifesto (Linden and Linden 1977: 251)

As Linden continues,

The significance of the Hutu Manifesto was not that it succeeded at arousing a peasant revolt or stimulating class-consciousness; rather, its significance lay in its definitions of the problem as one of "race". In framing the problem thusly, the authors were able to resurrect the Hamitic hypothesis and speak the language of its insupportable (i.e. irrefutable) logic. The purpose was not to debunk its racist assumptions or move beyond its divisive precepts, but to interpret its meaning from the other side, from the perspective of those it had oppressed with its scientific claims.

As argued previously, for the Hutu leaders the foreign invader and Hutu oppressor was the Tutsi, not the European colonizer. The Hutu-Tutsi cleavage was no longer one of class, status or regionalism but represented the biological schism between Bantu and Hamites (Linden and Linden 1977:258).

In a similar analysis, Newbury (1988: 193) argues that during this period, the term "Tutsi" became collectively and increasingly associated with oppression:

In his newly formed newspaper, for example, Gitera extolled rural people "to oppose their Tutsi oppressors, by force if necessary". Kayibanda's rhetoric took on a strongly anti-Tutsi stance and stressed the need for "liberation" of Hutu. In other words, where Gitera's appeal was class-based, Kayibanda's was deliberately ethnic.

The transition from Tutsi to Hutu political domination was characterised by a continual appeal for Hutu solidarity. Subsequently for the first time until then, the dichotomy of the concepts "majority-minority" was introduced and exploited by Hutu leaders in their struggle against the Tutsi. These political developments took the form of anti-Tutsi violence which began on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1959 and resulted in killing and exile of a huge number of Tutsi.

As Newbury (1988: 214) points out, the conclusion is that:

The salient fact was that virtually all those who controlled the state (before 1959) - the chiefs and sub-chiefs- were Tutsi, and here is where the ethnic factor becomes important [...] an appeal to Hutu solidarity became, for Hutu leaders (backed by the Catholic Church and Belgian colonialists), the most effective rallying point. Although Hutu could and apparently did distinguish among Tutsi of different types and attitudes, the fact that the chiefs and other African agents of the state were seen as exploiters, and that virtually all of these were Tutsi, made an appeal to ethnic solidarity potent where an appeal to "all poor people" may have been less so.

#### **4.3.3.2. Structural violence and cycle of violence**

As clarified above, culture of violence is among the many negative consequences of the Colonial Reform of Administration. The fact is pertinent as proved by the survey's respondents (65.8%: Table 5.2) and interview's respondents who agreed that the culture of violence took place in Rwanda since the implementation of Reform's policies that began in forms of structural violence against Hutu and became direct violence since November 1, 1959 and culminate in the genocide of Tutsi 1994.

One respondent argued that the culture of violence in Rwanda is the result of ethnic ideology rooted in the colonial state perpetuated by native politicians in 1950s. He added that ethnic segregation had brought about what one could call a virus in the Rwandan society, which caused some Rwandans to seek the solution to their problems in the extermination of their opponents.

Another respondent stated that due to the colonial policies based on ethnic discrimination, Hutu and Tutsi developed ideas considering themselves as enemies and this was a factor of destruction instead of one of building:

A Tutsi keeps considering himself as a Tutsi, and sees a Hutu as enemy; and a Hutu sees himself as a Hutu first and perceives a Tutsi as an enemy, while the Twa always sees himself as the dregs of society. Thus these different ethnic components cannot have a common ideal, which would help them to move forward together, and they could not detect a common

enemy from abroad aiming to divide them or any fellow Rwandan who could harm in a bid to satisfy his own needs.

Asked to establish responsibility for the massacres of 1959, many interviewees named the Belgians first as being responsible for what happened. One respondent highlight it below:

...During the killings of November 1959 that Tutsi were victims, the Belgian administration did nothing to stop them whereas it had the capacity to do so. On the contrary they destroyed UNAR (National Rwandan Union), which was the party of the King. For example on November 17, 1959, after consultation with Bishop Perraudin and Kayibanda, Colonel Logiest, Commander-in-chief of the Belgian and Congolese armed forces in Rwanda declared in clear words that we must help order elements and fight against disorder elements, i.e. we must collaborate with Hutu and combat Tutsi, because some will be obeyed by people while others cannot.

As mentioned above, the main reason that caused Belgians to choose Hutu as their new collaborators was motivated by the King and some Chiefs accused by Belgians and the Catholic Church of giving priority to independence and being in collaboration with socialist countries members of the United Nations (UN).

Since 1956 Belgians and the Church had been seeking a way to evict the King. In fact, King Mutara III Rudahigwa died (on July 25, 1959 in Bujumbura) in circumstances that remain unclear. His death put an end to the administrative collaboration between Belgians and Tutsi (OPRR, 1996:78). As had previously been the case, the Belgian choice of their collaborators resulted in serious consequences for Rwanda's ethnic relationships. Their choice for new collaborators and their integration into the new administration, due to the end of colonialism, increased the misunderstanding and dissension among Rwandan ethnic.

The situation since the reform can only be summarised as structural violence against Hutu and direct violence against Tutsi. Many researchers define the structural violence as a situation of absence of war but still not peaceful. This concept legitimates the structural violence that Harris and Lewis (1999: 1) explain as follows:

... John Galtung coined 'structural violence' as a result of fieldwork in Rhodesia under British colonial rule. He became increasingly aware of the limitation of defining peace as the absence of violence. He noted that while there was little direct violence by the colonial authorities against the native population, there were structures in society, which had significant negative effects on the blacks.

Clearly structural violence is primarily understood as the absence of a means of living. Its root meaning is lack of care, care in the sense of concern or anxiety about something. Applied to the Hutu in Rwanda, as Harris notices, at a practical level, for those at the periphery, structural violence can mean low wages, landlessness, illiteracy, poor health, limited or no-existent political representation or legal rights and, in general, limited control over much of their lives (Harris and Lewis, 1999: 30).

Summy states that the aims of society should be to strive to create the conditions where every one's universal basic needs can be met, and to do this, one must engage in 'positive peace'. It is through positive peace, directed at the realization of people's basic needs that the cycle of violence is broken. Thus, structural violence is very harmful and creates more victims than direct violence during war (Summy, 1985:64).

Direct violence is an event, whereas structural violence is a slow process which achieves its goals through exploitation, neglect and repression. Structural violence kills slowly by comparison with direct violence but it kills many more (Harris and Lewis, 1999: 64). The notions of positive peace and satisfying human needs are linked. Summy states that basic needs are ontological, survival and universal. Their frustration is a sufficient explanation for political and social instabilities (Summy, 1985:64).

At the interpersonal level, poverty, local inequalities, low self-esteem and, powerlessness and sexism are important underlying causes of conflict. In light of the above, all conflicts do share causes. The Rwandan conflict is dominated by questions about political exclusion

and non-satisfaction of basic human needs by the use of identity criterion defined by ethnicity. This is similar to the “participatory right” linked with “right to living means”

**Table 4.10. Typology of needs and violence, which was working in Rwandan conflict**

Needs	Structural violence	Direct violence
1.Survival	Exploitation (reduce life span)	Killing
2.Well-being (morbidity)	Exploitation (Inequality)	Maiming
3.Identity	Penetration (look at life from top dog point of view) segmentation (each party knows its area)	Desocialisation (take culture away) resocialisation-secondary citizen
3.Freedom	Marginalisation (every one defined as secondary citizen) fragmentation (parts have freedom but are cut off from each other and whole.	Torture, detention, expulsion

Source: Summy (1995)

#### **4.3.3.3. Competitiveness: source of continual insecurity**

The majority of the survey’s respondents (71. 7%: Table 5.2) agreed that competitiveness and fear of each other constitute the continual source of insecurity. Interview’ respondents, in their majority also shared this view. Educated respondents (75%: Table 5. 10) are potentially more affected by insecurity when those (uneducated people: 54.2%, Table 5.9) who ordinary don’t have access to resources feel less affected by insecurity. This imbalance explains why educated people are more involved in ethnic competition, certainly, their educational level acts as means of competition.

**Table 4.11 Cross-tabulation of education level and level of competitiveness and**

**Insecurity**

Ethnic competition is a continual resource of insecurity for both ethnic groups	Level of education		Total
	Uneducated	Educated	
Agree	26 (54.2%)	54 (75%)	80 (66.7%)
Not sure	20 (41.6%)	4 (5.6)	24 (20%)
Disagree	02 (4.2%) (19.4%)	14	16 (13.3%)
<b>Total</b>	48 (100%) (100%)	72	120(100%)

Identity insecurity is a social psychological phenomenon that has been largely neglected in conflict resolution. The colonial policy heightened Hutu resentment and, as discriminated group, this led to insecurity of Hutu elite. Tutsi elite felt the same insecurity more keenly when Belgians switched allegiances in 1959 and abruptly ended Tutsi dominance in Rwanda. Meanwhile, Hutu elite established their mono-ethnic Party of the Hutu People (PARMEHUTU), which established, with Belgian support, a government in Rwanda that totally excluded Tutsi and Twa. In addition to this, attacks against Tutsi inside Rwanda continued after independence in 1962.

The result was an increasing level of discontent Tutsi within the group, the majority of whom had fled to refugee camps across the borders and since July 1962, Tutsi guerrilla forces based neighbouring countries had conducted regular raids and incursions against the new government. Without a doubt, the new evolution of events maintained a state of mutual fear, insecurity and feeling of revenge on both sides that led to a cycle spiralling of violence. As argued above, a conflict based on securitised identity and basic human needs deprivation (Fisher et al, 2000: 8), was alternatively working for both Hutu ethnic groups and Tutsi.



Many respondents stated that after the mysterious death of King Mutara III Rudahigwa, a new King was elected, but with the new alliance of Belgians and Hutu leaders evicted the new King Jean Baptiste Kigeri left the country in June 1960 when criminal acts were directed against members of his new-formed party UNAR. Estimates showed that the number of victims from November 1, 1959 to the date of independence were between 10, 000 and 14, 000. After a short period of stability killings, began again in 1973 when Tutsi began to be hunted down. According to OPRR, the reason was that Hutu leaders were not happy that Tutsi were still occupying over 10% of economic and educational positions reserved for them by the constitution. They used the example of Butare establishment (the former Astrida School) where Tutsi in 1972 still represented around 40% of the student body and the University which also had 40% (OPRR, 1996: 78). The marginalization of Tutsi continued until 1990's leading to new attacks by the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) that ended with the genocide of Tutsi in July 1994 that left approximately one million victims.

In the light of above statements, undoubtedly the Hutu elite isolated the Tutsi as a method of revenge but mainly they did it for the monopoly of control over the country resources. The culture of monopoly as a legacy of the colonial regime showed that key-positions in political institutions were very few and had to be monopolised and one's ethnic group was seen as a guarantor of personal security. The same situation occurred before the genocide. After the Arusha Peace Agreement<sup>1</sup>, the group of Hutu elite holders of power in 1994 felt threatened by "Arusha Peace Agreement" that allowed the massive return of Tutsi refugees with among them highly educated people and hundreds of army officers who had fled to neighbouring countries, particularly to the Ugandan army. Their definitive repatriation

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<sup>1</sup> "Arusha peace agreement" refers to the final result of several phases of negotiations between the armed movement RPF (Rwandese Patriotic Front) and the Government of Habyarimana who was killed when his plane was shot on April 07, 1994; giving rise to the start of the genocide.



caused discomfort and started the idea of the genocide on Hutu elite side. On the other hand, of the Tutsi, the emotional need for repatriation was irresistible and undisputable after more than thirty years abroad in refugee camps.

During the interviews for this study, many uneducated and other similar categories respondents located in Kigali Rural Province, emphasised the role of the elite in the division and regretted their blind involvement in massacres of innocents whilst ignoring the real motivations behind the mobilising speeches of politicians. Conversely, educated respondents had a tendency to argue that what occurred was a result of injustices that took place in society during the colonization or had the tendency to blame the elite from the rival group.

In their analysis of the Rwandan conflict, Percival and Homer-Dixon (1995) highlight the above opinion. They argue that insecurity and the scarcity of environmental resources, created a context of violent ethnic mobilisation. This led to institutionalised ethnic boundaries, and these boundaries were defended by Hutu regimes. As Tutsi were the most powerful ethnic group in pre-independence period, after independence ethnic identity was one means that Hutu elites used assisted by their numerical majority, to establish and maintain control over state institutions, including environmental resources such as croplands. Because of scarce resources, the importance of access to power increased as alternative economic options disappeared. Ethnic mobilization was the key to this access threatened by Tutsi opponents (<http://www.library.ca/pcs/eps/rwanda/rwanda2.htm>)

The above authors highlight that in a context in which ethnic affiliation mattered, such as in Rwanda, environmental scarcity created conditions that increased competition between Hutu and Tutsi. As Percival and Homer-Dixon note from many comparative researches,

severe cases of ethnic conflict share following characteristics that ethnic relations in Rwanda exhibited:

- Institutionalised group boundaries and stereotypes,
- An experience of ethnic domination by one or more groups,
- Strong perception by one group that the opposing ethnic group has external affiliations, and
- Ethnically based parties with no significant ethnic coalitions.

(<http://www.library.ca/psc/eps/rwanda2.htm>)

#### **4.4. CONCLUSION**

With findings and discussion of findings, this chapter has showed how the colonial state exploited ethnic identities using unequal allocation of resources between different groups.

Reinforced by ideological ideas like the Hamitic myth, the above strategy produced its fruit because the Belgians gained the full collaboration of the Tutsi, marginalising Hutu and Twa. When they changed their allegiance from Tutsi to Hutu, the former experienced in turn discrimination accompanied by massacres and finally the genocide that increasingly polarised relations between these groups.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1. CONCLUSION

The question defining the concept of ethnic identity and conflict has been answered in the second chapter, where identity is seen as a necessary prerequisite for social life. Effectively the consciousness of ethnic belonging is progressively formed and sharpened through various forms of social interaction, cultural symbols and codes, as well as through informal and formal communication.

The common classification of ethnic groups includes elements such as culture, religion, territory and race features. However, some aspects of ethnicity have shown that the above features are not always the only criteria. This led researchers to assume that ethnic identity refers to how a group describes itself as a distinct ethnic group, no matter how artificially the group is organised or how much the group believes in its sameness and distinctiveness.

After definition, in the same chapter, the concept of ethnic identity has been examined in its conflicting aspects principally regarded as a source of competitiveness when people see themselves as belonging together and decide on the pursuit of political interests, encouraging ethnic identification and ethnic boundaries.

In trying to understand the conflict in Rwanda though the manipulation of identities by the Colonial Reform of Administration, what appeared clear is that before the Colonial Reform

of Administration there was a situation of diversity and fluid identities among the clans of Rwanda and this played a key role as a unifying factor.

Sharing the same culture and belonging to same clans, this situation presented a solid space of solidarity between Hutu, Tutsi and Twa. As proved by many researchers (Newbury, 1988; Linden and Linden 1977), for the most, the names Tutsi, Hutu and Twa corresponded to occupational categories limited by many regional identities that restricted their usage to a particular area of the country, notably Central Rwanda, so that many people would feel prouder of their regional and clan identities than their economic status.

Unfortunately, the involvement of colonisers through the Reform modified the traditional structure implying change of meaning of Hutu, Tutsi and Twa identities. The previous economic stratum became ethnic stratum. Consequently, clan became meaningless and even progressively forgotten, whilst the new, colonial labels took more importance.

The factors used by colonisers during the Reform to mobilise particularly Hutu, Tutsi and Twa identities have been discussed in Chapter Four. The results and discussions about this point have been counter checked with previous results obtained by other researchers. The questionnaire (Table 4.2) was answered as the researcher collected 120 questionnaires out of a total 145. To make findings generalisable, they were substantiated with unstructured interviews that were conducted with ten people.

Based on the findings and discussions of the findings, all the objectives that were set by the researcher for this study have been accomplished. Clearly the Colonial Reform of Administration entrenched and ethnicised Hutu, Tutsi and Twa social identities. Thus, an

assessment of the factors of ethnic mobilization as discussed in the previous discussions brings to light the following conclusive points:

Ethnicity in Rwanda is a typical social creation and not a fact of nature. Conventional distinction between Hutu, Tutsi and Twa as ethnic groups based on racial characteristics, territory distinctiveness, and cultural difference cannot satisfactorily work. However, sometimes although to limited degree, Rwandans are able to distinguish or to classify themselves as Tutsi or Hutu according to physical features. It is perhaps not sufficient to use the Hamitic hypothesis about the origin of Tutsi as a reason for ethnic division and killings. Different ethnic groups which have coexisted and interacted for several decades are able to make such physical distinctions between, for example, a Muluba of Kassai (DRC) and a Mukusu of Kindu (DRC).

If one assumes that ethnicity in Rwanda is a typical social creations, at the same time it is assumed that this required the involvement of outsiders. To a greater extent the Belgians divided Rwandans into racial categories. As proved by findings of this study and other research, the root-cause of Hutu-Tutsi conflict was based on actions and policies established by the state. The ethnic criteria in allocation of resources between Hutu, Tutsi and Twa appear to have been the most important factor of division and ethnic consciousness.

During the Colonial Reform of Administration, Belgians were the real holders of power in Rwanda. They previously promoted the Tutsi group but in 1950's they shifted their support from Tutsi to Hutu domination. They backed Hutu leaders who exploited the ideology of

the Hamitic myth in the sense of a campaign against the Tutsi who were defined as Hamitic or foreigners.

Division in Rwanda appeared to have both a rational and an emotional attachment due to the combination of ideological aspects and calculation about resources. The rationality is justified by the use of ethnicity as instrumental and expressive of survival needs. However, the emotional aspect became predominant despite the gains to be made by acting in a non-ethnic way. People in Rwanda chose to continue to act ethnically. This is illustrated by the genocide perpetrated after the signing Arusha Peace Agreement that suggested many convenient solutions to the Rwandan conflict.

The action of the Belgians was largely strengthened by the involvement of the Catholic Church. The involvement of the Catholic Church contributed to the conflict as a social factor expressed in terms of the education provided to the Tutsi elite. However, the education given to Rwandans was very limited. For example the famous school of chiefs and their sons, 'Nyanza School', that existed from 1919 to 1935 was categorised as a primary school. Those who studied in this school had an important role to play in governing Rwanda under the supervision of Belgians. In reality the educational level of those of graduate did not allow them to understand the future consequences of their collaboration with the Belgian colonisers. King Musinga who tried to resist against such collaboration was isolated, dismissed and finally banned.

However, if the Belgian action led to creation of division in Rwanda, their action is the root-cause of ethnicity in Rwanda. At independence and in later years, native leaders chose

to support and, even worse, they emphasised ethnic ideology and ethnic policy as means of full control of power.

## **5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The elite seek the control of power as a way of economic and political security. Subsequently, there is a need for a convenient means of access to power that can replace the culture of access to power through ethnic violence, one which can give security to Hutu and Tutsi as the main rival groups. Democracy would be the most appropriate course of action in this case, but it needs to have a constitutional framework that considers local realities and particularly the rights of minorities. In other words, the constitution in its democratic consideration would have to provide some dispositions aimed at protecting minorities that is the Tutsi and Twa, against marginalization by the dominant Hutu group.

Competition between Hutu and Tutsi has resulted in more and more marginalization of the Twa group due to the fact that it represents almost insignificant minority (1% of the total population). This has had another negative consequence for Hutu and Tutsi relations: there is a continual polarization due to the absence of a real multi-ethnic society that can reduce the level of rivalry between Hutu and Tutsi. If Rwandan society had more than three ethnic groups, tension and violence between Hutu and Tutsi would not be at the present high levels. In the light of above, this study recommends ultimately the integration and the empowerment through an appropriate positive action of Twa, as a third Rwandan ethnic group, in all institutions of the country. In the particular case of democracy the results of this study revealed that the Twa group is still marginalised and totally misrepresented in all national institutions. Consequently this study would recommend:

maintained by a continual sensibilization of the whole population in order to secure them in the reconciliation process. The final outcome of this policy should be the predominance of the national identity over ethnic identities.

At the ethical level, the government needs to develop a code of conduct through which the governing class would be judged in terms of ethnicity and any political behaviour contrary to the policy of reconciliation. A national policy that fights against corruption at all levels of state's institutions needs to be set up.

At the cultural level, slackening of the Rwandan culture is among the root causes of misfortunes that Rwanda has experienced in the past and still suffering today. There are many concrete elements in the Rwandan culture that can be rebuilt to recover national unity. In this regard, elements that this study recommends are for example social interaction, solidarity, courtesy, patience, patriotism, customs and rights.

At the religious level, churches in Rwanda should make their contribution to the reconciliation of Rwandans through their social policies, which would unify instead of favour or segregate people by ethnic considerations. They should also avoid referring to ethnic matters in various actions and communications with people as it happened regrettably during previous regimes and particularly during the genocide.



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## Appendix 1: Questionnaire

### INTRODUCTION

This survey is being carried out to determine the perceptions that Rwandans have of Hutu and Tutsi identities their implication in conflict in Rwanda.

It will contribute towards research being carried out for a dissertation in the Masters of Conflict Resolution and Peace studies offered by the Faculty of Human Sciences, University of Natal

### SECTION A: IDENTIFICATION OF CORRESPONDENT

(Mark with x your appropriate answer)

1. What is your educational level?

Primary school:.....

Secondary school:.....

Under graduate: .....

Post graduate:.....

Other (specify):.....

2. What is your age?

Younger than 60 years:.....

Older than 60 years.....

3. What is your location?

Urban:.....

Rural:.....

4. What is your gender?

Woman:.....

Man:.....

## SECTION B: INFORMATION RELATING TO THE CASE STUDY

(Mark with x your appropriate answer)

1. Before the colonial Reform Tutsi, Hutu and Twa referred to economic positions/ Mbere y'uko Ababirigi basenya inzego z'ubutegetsu za kinyarwanda, Umuhutu, Umutunzi n'Umutwa byarangaga inzego z'ubutunzi: . "

Agree/ yego

Not sure/ sinzi

Disagree/ oya

2. Before the Colonial Reform clan was the most important and unifying identity / Mbere y'uko Ababirigi bahindura inzego z'ubuyobozi za gakondo, amako yarangaga yo mu Rwanda nk'Abazigaba, Abasindi n'ayandi yahuzaga Abanyarwanda kuko Abahutu, Abatutsi n'Abatwa babaga bayasangiye:

Agree/ yego

Not sure / sinzi

Disagree/ oya

3 Before the Colonial Reform, Hutu, Tutsi and Twa participated equally in political responsibilities/ Mbere y'Ababirigi wasasanga Abatutsi n'Abahutu mu nzego zose:

Agree/ yego

Not sure/ sinzi

Disagree/ oya

4. The Reform generated privileges for some Tutsi and discrimination against Hutu and Twa creating a violent division/ Imiyoborere ya gikoroni yatonesheje Abatutsi bake, iheza Abahutu n'Abatwa maze bitera amacakubiri y'amaoko:

Agree/ yego

Not sure/ sinzi

Disagree/oya

5. Ethnic mention in identity cards contributed to the development of ethnic beliefs/

Kwandika amoko mu ndangamutu bya kuruye ibitekerezo by'irond' amoko mu Rwanda:

Agree/ yego

Not sure/ sinzi

Disagree/ oya

6. Forced labour imposed to Hutu during the Reform raised strongly consciousness of Hutu

identity/ Gukoresha cyane Abahutu imirimo ivunanyye mu gihe cy'Ababirigi byabateye

kunva bafite ubwoko bwihariye burengana:

Agree/ yego

Not sure/ sinzi

Disagree/ oya

Hamitic myth reinforced division between Hutu and Tutsi/ Kumvikanisha ko Abatutsi

bakomoka muri Misiri na za Etiyopia byakuruye amacakubiri akomeye mu Rwanda:

Agree/ yego

Not sure/ sinzi

Disagree/ oya

8. The Catholic Church played a crucial role in ethnic division in Rwanda/ Kiliziya Gaturika

yagize uruhare rukomeye mu kibazo cy' amaoko mu Rwanda:

Agree/ yego

Not sure/ sinzi

Disagree/ oya

9 The Rwandan elites used ethnicity as unique means of access to power / Abize nabo bunze

mukirenge cy'abakoroni bakoresha ubwoko bishakira ubutegetsu:

Agree/ yego

Not sure/ sinzi

Disagree/ oya

10. Ethnic competition became a continual source of insecurity for all ethnic groups/  
Guhanganisha amoko byakuruye umwuka w'umutekano muke n'bwicanyi mu Rwanda:

Agree/ yego

Not sure/ sinzi

Disagree/ oya

11. The Reform resulted in structural violence and finally lead to a cycle of violence /  
Imitegekere y'Ababirigi iri mubyatangije umucobwo kugandamiza n'ubwicanyi mu Rwanda:

Agree/ yego

Not sure/ sinzi

Disagree/ oya

12. Illiteracy and poverty facilitated ethnic manipulation during the Colonial reform/ Ubujiji  
buri mubyatije umurindi Abakoroni binatera ikibazo cy'amoko gushinga imizi:

Agree/yego

Not sure/sinzi

Disagree/oya

13 Reduction of poverty can be used as means of peacekeeping /Kurwanya no kugabanya  
ubukene mu Rwanda biri mubyashyigikira amahoro:

Agree/ yego

Not sure / sinzi

Disagree/oya

14. Democracy, justice and education for peace can help reconciliation / Demokarasi, ubutabera no kwigisha ubworoherane byakoreshwa mu nzira y'ubwiyunge:

Agree/ yego

Not sure/ sinzi

Disagree/ oya

15. National identity and clanic solidarity can reinforce the unity and reconciliation/ Gushyira imbere ubwenegihugu mu mwanya w'amoko bya shyigikira inzira y'ubwiyunge:

Agree/yego

Not sure/sinzi

Disagree/oya

16. The integration of the Twa in socio-political institutions can reduce ethnic rivalry in Rwanda/ Gushyira Abatwa mu nzego z'ubuuyobozi byagabanya ubukana bw'ikibazo cy'amoko mu Rwanda:

Agree/yego

Not sure/sinzi

Disagree/oya



1954	37	10	0	47	23	13		0	36	3					3		86
1955	50	26	0	76	12	17		0	29	1					1	1	106
1956	40	17	0	57	25	22		0	47		2				3	1	108
57/58	42	12	2	56	36	12		2	50		2				2		108
58/59	26	18	19	63	1	1		43	45		1	1		1	3		111
59/60	13	5	33	51	13	5		33	51							2	104
60/61	14	30	19	63	21	17		5	43	2	1				3	3	112
61/62	58	65	1	124	13	24		0	37	3	3				6		167
TOTAL	850	295	120	1 265	460	277	73	112	922	16	10	1	1	1	29	34	2 250
%	37,7	13,0	5,3	56,0	20,5	12,3	3,2	4,0	40,0	0,7	0,4	0,04	0,04	0,04	1,22	1,5	100

Caption : B.N.I = Unidentified ethnic group C =Congolese B = Belgian G =Greek U = Ugandan H = Hindou  
Source : Register for students registered in Butare School, 1962-1962

Source: Ruterana (1987: 129)

### Geography of Rwanda



Rwanda's countryside is covered by grasslands and small farms extending over rolling hills, with areas of rugged mountains that extend southeast from a chain of volcanoes in the northwest. The divide between the Congo and Nile drainage systems extends from north to south through western Rwanda at an average elevation of almost 9,000 feet. On the western slopes of this ridgeline, the land slopes abruptly toward Lake Kivu and the Ruzizi River valley, which form the western boundary with the People's Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire) and constitute part of the Great Rift valley. The eastern slopes are more moderate, with rolling hills extending across central uplands at gradually reducing altitudes, to the plains, swamps, and lakes of the eastern border region.

Although located only two degrees south of the Equator, Rwanda's high elevation makes the climate temperate. The average daily temperature near Lake Kivu, at an altitude of 4,800 feet (1,463 meters) is 73°F (23°C). During the two rainy seasons (February-May and September-December), heavy downpours occur almost daily, alternating with sunny weather. Annual rainfall averages 80 centimeters (31 in.) but is generally heavier in the western and northwestern mountains than in the eastern savannas.

**Location:** Central Africa, east of Democratic Republic of the Congo

**Geographic coordinates:** 2 00 S, 30 00 E

**Map references:** Africa

**Area:**

*total:* 26,338 km<sup>2</sup>

*land:* 24,948 km<sup>2</sup>

*water:* 1,390 km<sup>2</sup>

**Area - comparative:** slightly smaller than Maryland

**Land boundaries:**

*total:* 893 km

*border countries:* Burundi 290 km, Democratic Republic of the Congo 217 km, Tanzania 217 km, Uganda 169 km

**Coastline:** 0 km (landlocked)

**Maritime claims:** none (landlocked)