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BEYOND THE POSTCOLONY?
Investigating the Possibility of Genocide Recurring in Contemporary Rwanda.

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Abstract

Doel van deze masterthesis is om op basis van de oorzaken van de genocide die zich in 1994 in Rwanda voltrok, de hedendaagse Rwandese samenleving te analyseren. Nadat het Rwandese Patriottisch Front onder leiding van Paul Kagame de macht greep in juli 1994, is het land in 21 jaar tijd een voorbeeld voor vele ontwikkelingslanden geworden. Rest uiteraard de spreekwoordelijke vraag van 1 miljoen: "Kan een genocide zich vandaag opnieuw voltrekken in Rwanda?". Dit is dan ook het vertrekpunt van deze thesis. We argumenteren dat de genocide in 1994 postkoloniaal was. In die zin dat de doorgedreven materiële en culturele invloed van het kolonialisme de allesbepalende factor is geweest voor de oorzaken van de gebeurtenissen in 1994. De oorzaken van de genocide kunnen in vier grote categorieën worden onderverdeeld: koloniaal Rwanda, binnenlandse politiek na onafhankelijkheid (1962-1994), internationale politieke economie en het internationale politieke speelveld. Alle vier categorieën hebben gemeenschappelijk dat ze gedefinieerd worden door structurele dominantie van (post)koloniale praktijken en discours.

Vervolgens wordt de post-genocidaire ontwikkeling van Rwanda getoetst aan deze oorzaken, om zo antwoord te vinden op de vraag of een nieuwe genocide mogelijk is vandaag, of in de nabije toekomst, onder de huidige regering. De hypothese is dat Rwanda zich enkel aan nieuw geweld kan onttrekken als het zich ook ontdoet van de koloniale erfenis die rechtstreeks heeft bijgedragen aan de genocide in 1994. Analoog aan het eerste deel worden de politieke ontwikkeling van het land, de internationale politieke economie en de internationale politieke kwestie besproken om de situatie vandaag in post-genocidair Rwanda te analyseren. We concluderen dat Rwanda er vandaag er deels in slaagt zich te onttrekken aan het postkolonialisme en zo de kansen op een nieuwe genocide terugdringt.

Contents

Acknowledgments

"*La dernière bataille du colonisé contre le colon*

sera souvent le combat des colonisés entre eux."

(Frantz Fanon)

"*History records that there is nothing so powerful as*

a fantasy whose time has come."

(Tony Judt)

1. Introduction

1.1. All Hope Lost in 1994?

Rwanda, 1994. A country and a year that are tied together and will remain engraved on the collective memory of humanity for years to come. Hundreds of thousands of Tutsi and moderate Hutu were killed in a period of little over three months. The shooting of Rwandan Hutu president Juvénal Habyarimana's airplane over Kigali on 6 April 1994 marked the start of the atrocities that aimed at exterminating a whole population group. The massacres were of such meticulous preparation and scale that the UN Security Council (1994) was prompted to install an international criminal tribunal to investigate whether the mass killings by Hutu extremists constituted crimes against humanity and genocide. This was only the second ever tribunal since the UN's establishment, after the one created to investigate crimes against humanity in former Yugoslavia (Melvern, 2006, p. 274).

In a landmark decision in 2006 the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) ruled that all defendants could argue against their involvement in the genocide but they could no longer question whether genocide had actually taken place in Rwanda in 1994. Political consensus existed already but this decision also marked the judicial and final notice of genocide in the country, aimed at the civilian population based on Tutsi ethnic identification (ICTR, 2006) (Kagame, Preface, 2008, p. xxiii).

The country paid a very high toll to end the massacres. Both the human and material costs of the tragedies went beyond anything imaginable. By the time the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), the Tutsi-dominated rebel group fighting Habyarimana's regime, took power in July 1994, an estimated 800,000 people had died[1]. Furthermore there were 2 million international refugees, over 1 million internally displaced people, thousands of deeply traumatised survivors and around half a million members of the Tutsi Diaspora[2] returning to the country. Also in terms of material damage Rwanda

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[1]Estimates differ significantly according to the consulted source. They range from 500,000 (Des Forges, 1999, p. 15) to over 1 million according to the current Rwandan government (2004). All figures are based on and extrapolated from pre-genocide census data; they thus remain estimates. The number we will use in this paper of 800,000 deaths is therefore not exact. It is however the most commonly cited number and was originally published in a UN Report of the 'Independent Inquiry into the Actions of the United Nations During the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda' (United Nations Security Council, 1999).

[2]Large-scale persecutions of the Tutsi population in Rwanda began in 1959 when the so-called social revolution took place, during which Hutu, supported by the Belgian colonial authorities, gradually took over power. Consequently, and in later years, more and more Tutsi fled or were driven out of the country. This became known as the Tutsi Diaspora. After the Tutsi-dominated RPF gained control, these people returned to Rwanda en masse (Melvern, 2006, pp. 6-10).

was a shattered country: almost all infrastructure had been demolished, banks and small businesses plundered, no operating judicial or education systems remained, health care was in ruins and the country's agriculture (its main economic sector) was completely destroyed (Reyntjens, 2004, p. 178).

The genocide not only marked a dark page in Rwanda's national history but also in that of the international community. Almost exactly 50 years after the liberation of the German Nazi concentration and extermination camps, the world once again failed to prevent large-scale atrocities against certain social groups. How the international community acted in the build-up to and during the genocide has been the source of many academic and diplomatic discussions in the past years. Even today, many publications still stir controversy. The BBC's recent documentary *Rwanda's Untold Story* (2014) for example made a much-disputed interpretation of the genocide and Rwanda's post-conflict reconstruction. The documentary claimed that the true responsibility of the genocide lies with the current government and that more Hutu than Tutsi were killed (Wallis, 2014) (Verpoorten, 2014).

In this thesis, we will investigate the causes and consequences of the genocide, linking those with today's socio-political environment in the country. We will focus on its aftermath and how Rwanda tries to organise its society. Victims and perpetrators are living side by side now and are trying to build a common future on the foundations of a war torn past. As current President Kagame stated in his speech during the ceremony of the 20th commemoration of the genocide, "20 years ago, Rwanda did not have a future, only a past". The President further stressed the need for a unified country around one Rwandan identity, disposing of *colonial* ethnic divisions (Kagame, 2014). In line with this speech, the government's policies, reconciliation programmes, education schemes and perpetrator reintegration initiatives are echoed in this one phrase: "*Never again*". At the time of writing the last hearings of the ICTR have just been held and the verdicts of the court are expected later this year (BBC, 2015). This milestone marks the next step in the country's attempts to overcome its past and to build a common national future.

1.2.   Hypothesis and Structure

One question however triggers an intellectual challenge and it has remained at the heart of Rwanda's reconstruction over the past 21 years: **Could genocide recur in contemporary Rwanda?** It is this question we will try to answer in this thesis. In other words, we inquire if the country has progressed sufficiently so that genocide could not happen again in the current political, social and economic climate. Attempting to answer such a delicate question requires a fundamental

understanding of the genocide in 1994. Based on the far-reaching academic research that has been published on the causes and the events that led up to the genocide, we will try to understand Rwanda's environment today.

Ingelaere and Verpoorten (2014) already attempted to answer this question in a short article in light of the 20th commemoration of the 1994 genocide. Whilst they mainly focus on the authoritarian state of previous and current governments, we will argue that their perspective is too limited, for we will try to understand where this alleged authoritarianism is coming from.

Our approach of the issue is what makes this thesis stand out in the scientific literature around the Rwandan genocide and its aftermath. We will use the framework of postcolonialism to understand the causes of the 1994 genocide. When doing research, it has come to our attention that previous scholarly work is too fragmented and required a more holistic approach. The framework of postcolonialism made such comprehensive explanation possible. This work thus also is an invitation to social scientists to falsify our outcomes. Furthermore, this thesis could also serve as leverage for future research. For it is our ambition to not only contribute to the scientific work on post-genocidal Rwanda but to genocide and post-conflict studies in general. Investigating the possibility of transposing our interpretations to other states or regions in which genocides (did not) take place, could certainly be a legitimate research subject.

One of the pillars of the country's reconstruction is the attempt to fight ethnic division and genocide ideology, to prevent the ultimate outcomes of such discourse. The Rwandan constitution that was adopted in May 2003 explicitly denounces genocide and genocide ideology in its preamble and it is emphasised that national unity and reconciliation must be strengthened and promoted (Parliament of the Republic of Rwanda, 2003) (Reyntjens, 2004, pp. 177-179). This means that the foundation of the country's development should be that no genocide could ever occur again. Throughout this paper we will try to establish if Rwanda is reaching this objective, or, if there are certain factors that may induce new mass killings and lead up to a new genocide. The government's politics based on the idea of *never again*, unification and economic development could be undermined by internal or external drivers making it impossible to reach national reconciliation and unification, possibly eventually leading up to new mass persecutions of specific ethnic group(s).

We consider the concept of genocide, its definition and causes as one of the central issues in this paper. We will thus start with a thorough explanation of the concept of genocide and apply this to the Rwandan case, based on the ideas of Martin Shaw, which he elaborates in his book *What is*

Genocide? (2007). The definition of genocide that serves as the basis for his research is the one provided in the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 9 December 1948. However, we will see that he considers this definition too narrow, he therefore proposes a more sociological approach to the concept.

After that we look at the causes of the 1994 genocide. We will argue that the massacres in that 100-day period can be defined as a *postcolonial genocide*. For this we will first expand on the concept of postcolonialism. This specific type of genocide, we will argue, is not based on characteristics of the genocide itself but rather on the drivers of it. We will defend our argument that the 1994 genocide was in such a defining way influenced by the continued cultural and political ramifications of imperialist colonialism in Rwanda that we ultimately consider it to be the root cause of the genocide. This therefore makes the adjective *postcolonial* absolutely indispensable. In other words we will use the scientific framework of postcolonialism to deconstruct the causes of the genocide and, in the following pages, analyse contemporary Rwanda.

We will continue with a narrative of Rwanda's (pre)colonial history in which we will demonstrate that the seeds of genocide are to be found in the age of European imperialism in Africa. Further we will discuss the political developments from Rwanda's formal independence in 1962 until 1994. We will try to get a thorough understanding of the nature of the Rwandan state since 1962. The international political economy is also of importance when studying the causes. Just as Hintjens (1999, pp. 257-259) we consider that economic woes also form part of the causes of genocide. A combination of falling commodity prices and the Structural Adjustment Programmes[3] (SAPs) imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in the early 90s has had an important impact on the country's ethnic instability (Andersen, 2000). Lastly, we will explore the international political field at the time of genocide and how a climate of neo-colonialism and international neglect may also have contributed to the catastrophic events in 1994.

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[3] Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) were economic policies for developing countries that have been promoted by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) since the early 1980s by the provision of loans conditional on the adoption of such policies. SAP policies reflected the neo-liberal ideology that drives globalization. They aimed to achieve economic growth in poorer countries by restructuring the economy and reducing government intervention. Policies included currency devaluation, spending cuts/budget deficit cuts, reducing tax on high earners, reducing inflation, wage suppression, privatisation of state-owned industries, lower tariffs on imports and tighter monetary policy, increased free trade, cuts in social spending, and business deregulation (World Health Organisation, 2015).

At the outset of this thesis, we assume that the only way Rwanda could avoid future genocide; it must progress from its state of postcoloniality that made the genocide possible. This means that it must extricate itself from the cultural and materialistic influences of colonialism that made the 1994 genocide possible. Rwanda is developing in a very specific way, focusing mainly on economic progress in order to obtain political unity. However, this model has come under scrutiny in the past few years in terms of its effectiveness. We will investigate if these claims are correct or not.

The epicentre of this thesis will challenge our hypothesis. In this part we will try to analyse the drivers that led up to the crisis in 1994 and apply these to current Rwanda. In doing so, we will try to answer the question whether a new genocide could recur in the country. We delve into Rwanda's post-genocidal political development and where it stands today. First of all we will compare the internal political situation today to that of the years preceding the genocide. The focus is on the attempts undertaken by government and Rwandan citizens in the process of reconciliation and unification and how this affects the political and ethnic playing field.

After this we will compare the international political economy to that of the period leading up to the genocide. In terms of GDP growth and other variables Rwanda's economic reconstruction is often called an African success story. However, is this economic development sustainable and moreover could these figures hide another reality in which large parts of the country still struggle with poverty. Furthermore, are the economic factors that may have played a role in causing the 1994 genocide completely left behind, or are these still lingering? In a third and final part we will discuss the current international environment and compare it to that of the build-up to the genocide. Evidently we will also have to look at Rwanda's current regional expansion and its alleged military activities in Eastern-Congo (Reuters, 2012)(United Nations Group of Experts, 2014).

Finally we will try to provide a definitive response to the question of whether genocide could recur in contemporary Rwanda. We will reformulate how we have come to our conclusions and what our exact findings are, following closely our post colonial framework and with a constant eye on our research question. According to the outcomes of our study we will formulate policy solutions to encourage reconciliation, with a view to avoiding any possible future genocide against social groups in Rwanda.

2. What is Genocide?

Genocide is a concept central to this paper and without a clear understanding of what this entails; we will not be able to expand on our research. British scholar Martin Shaw considers the origins and development of the concept and its relationships to other forms of political violence. Shaw gives a sociological insight into the concept of genocide. We will start this part with the UN definition, its legal history and what current political controversies regarding genocide exist. We will then discuss Shaw's critique of the legal approach; consequently we will also analyse his sociological perspective on the concept.

Shaw distinguishes himself from other sociologists in genocide studies firstly because of his generic definition of victim groups. Unlike other scholars, who sum up which specific groups can be victims, he stands by the idea that any *civilian social group* can be victim, emphasising the unarmed aspect of victims. Secondly, he also emphasis that genocide is not to be deconstructed to pure physical destruction, but it is rather a whole set of actions to destroy social groups' *ways of living*. Thirdly, he also defines genocide in the context of armed social conflict, or war, thus focusing on the fact that genocide is not as exceptional as it may occur. In any conflict that has become violent, genocide could happen, according to Shaw (2007, pp. 154-156).

2.1. The Legal Approach to Genocide

When lawyers are defining genocide they are defining a crime. So naturally, genocide as a criminal offense must be appropriate for legal prosecution and therefore it must withstand review by judges and lawyers for the accused. Social scientists, however, have different objectives. They outline the boundaries of genocide as a scientific concept. They then study several cases, analysing causes and consequences, to try to discover common elements in order to obtain a falsifiable definition (Chalk, 1994, p. 49).

The term genocide did not exist until 1944. In that year, the Polish-Jewish lawyer Raphael Lemkin sought to describe the German Nazi policies of the systematic murder of ethnic and religious minorities (Shaw, 2007, pp. 18-19). Lemkin defines it as:

> *[…]Genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life*

of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves. The objectives of such a plan would be disintegration of the political and social institutions, of culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups. Genocide is directed against the national group as an entity, and the actions involved are directed against individuals, not in their individual capacity, but as members of the national group (1944, p. 80)

His standard definition of genocide has been used as a reference in many works. Following this, Lemkin was also initiator of the *Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*. This Convention was adopted on 9 December 1948 by the General Assembly of the United Nations and after years of research, campaigning and lobbying by Lemkin himself. It incorporated the following definition in its Article II:

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:
  (a) Killing members of the group;
  (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
  (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
  (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
  (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group (United Nations, 1948)*.*

It is this international legal definition that is used up to this date to decide whether mass killings or crimes against humanity[4] can or cannot be categorised as genocide. The text of Article II of the Genocide Convention was therefore also included as a crime in Article VI of the 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

With the adoption came criticism and it can be argued that this classification is quite limited since it is the fruit of a diplomatic compromise. Chalk (1994, p. 48) states that the narrow definition of victim groups lies at the heart of it. It answered the practical needs of governments as well as the

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[4]The difference between mass killings as 'genocide' or as 'crimes against humanity' is the following: Mass killings of large numbers of *individuals* are defined as a crime against humanity. In other words, when on a systematic basis, large numbers of *individuals* are killed; this constitutes a crime against humanity. Genocidal mass killings on the other hand are aimed at the destruction of *individuals who are part of a social group*, based on for example ethnicity, religion, political conviction or gender. In legal terms this means that the charge of crimes against humanity is aimed at the protection of individuals and that of genocide is aimed at the protection of groups (Sands, 2013) (International Criminal Court, 1998, pp. 3-5).

strictures of international lawyers. As we have said above, criminal offenses must be liable for legal prosecution. But such an approach clearly limits the objectives of social scientists and during the years following the adoption of the Genocide Convention, many scholars have come forward with different interpretations or definitions.

Let us now look beyond the legal aspect of genocide, for the UN definition does not give any insight in the sociology of genocide. Such narrow method ultimately withholds us, social scientists, from developing a holistic perspective to our research question. By analysing Shaw's theory of genocide in the following paragraphs we will develop a more socio-political definition of the concept.

2.2.   The Sociology of Genocide

Ever since Lemkin's first definition the concept has been a topic of controversy; in countries such as Germany, Japan and Turkey concerning mass murders in the two world wars, in North America and Australia regarding large scale violence against indigenous people, as well as in a large number of former (European) colonies because of mass killings of colonised peoples. The classic example of the German Nazi Holocaust is easily used as the archetype of genocide, which renders the identification of contemporary mass killings as genocide very difficult. In many cases of conflict, allegations of genocide are rapidly made, and just as quickly disputed; see for example the case of the crisis in Darfur (Straus, 2005) (Prunier, 2005). Few such important concepts in international politics suffer from such a lack of general agreement amongst scholars over its exact meaning.

The legal definition has been enshrined in the Genocide Convention; it is therefore regularly used as a benchmark in academic studies. Shaw's critique is that scholarship has mostly been legal and historical, focusing too much on the 1948 definition. He proposes a sociological approach to genocide theory by taking into account the structure of conflict within which attempts to destroy populations and groups are played out (2007, pp. 3-4). He is convinced that the UN's International Criminal Tribunals for Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda were and are adjudicating sociological issues that had hardly been addressed by social scientists themselves. To him: "The legal concern with individual responsibility of perpetrators meant that legal means were an indirect way of getting at the more fundamental issues involved", thus getting in the way of political, historical or sociological analyses (2007, pp. 7-8).

His new framework is based on Raphael Lemkin's initial definition, which we recall as "[…] genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when

accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves [...]" (Lemkin, 1944, p. 80). The central word here is *destruction*: There is a significant difference in *immediate destruction* and *destruction of essential foundations*. This entails that *mass killings of the members of a nation* may be a specific part of genocide but certainly do not define genocide as such. This definition also implies that *physical* genocide -or mass killings- was only part of a comprehensive attack on all institutions of a group: social, cultural, political, economic, etc. In other words it encompassed the destruction of lives as well as the ways of living (Shaw, 2007, pp. 18-23). This is his first fundamental critique to the legal definition and its sociological derivatives: narrowing down genocide to physical destruction.

Although the 1948 legal definition maintained the core of Lemkin's framework, it emphasised physical destruction of particular -social- groups. This focus by the Convention on the physical aspect of genocide becomes clear from the list of acts constituting the crime (United Nations, 1948). Shaw notes that the physical accent is explicable because it was designed to define and apply genocide law. Killings are the most extreme form of destruction of a group and therefore the obvious focus of legal processes. He concludes in his thoughts on Lemkin's definition that "although genocide could not be defined by a specific violent method like killing, the idea of social destruction necessarily entailed generally violent methods" (2007, pp. 22-23). Some sociologists have also participated in narrowing down the concept to physical destruction. Fein (1990, p. 24) saw it as "sustained purposeful action by a perpetrator to physically destroy a collectivity [...]". Another clear example is the widely quoted definition by Chalk and Jonahsson (1990, p. 23): "Genocide is a form of mass killing in which a state or other authority intends to destroy a group, as that group and members in it are defined by the perpetrators". The latter define genocide purely as mass killing and even Fein criticised the two scholars for such a narrow view (Shaw, 2007, p. 30).

A second elementary critique to the 1948 definition is that of its limitations of victim groups, although Shaw and others universally agree on the *group* character of genocide. Since the 1948 definition includes national, ethnical, racial or religious groups. Critics will define victim groups either more broadly (by adding other types) or generically (by referring to social groups in general) (Shaw, 2007, p. 97). Scholars who are part of the former school will for example strongly argue for the inclusion of *political groups* (Ibid., pp. 69-71). Shaw, however, is part of the latter and proposes a more generic description in the likes of *civilian social groups* (Ibid., pp. 154-155).

A third and last fundamental disagreement with other definitions based on the Genocide Convention's is that of the separation of genocide from war. We follow Shaw in the understanding that, clearly, genocide is not an ordinary form of warfare and that genocide can exist outside a situation of war. However, all major instances of genocide, commonly agreed upon, in modernity (Armenia, Holocaust, Rwanda) were clearly connected with war contexts (Shaw, 2003, pp. 41-49).

Shaw (2007, p. 37) finally notices that discussions about political violence today are marked by the considerable avoidance of the word genocide. This tendency not only derives from political sensitivities but also from theoretical confusion. As we said, there exists a tendency to use the Holocaust as benchmark for all other large scale political violence, i.e. the Holocaust as the *maximum standard*. A prime exemplar is Katz (1994), whose work explicitly invokes the *uniqueness* of the Holocaust (Shaw, 2007, p. 37).

Shaw's criticism and approach eventually lead him to the following definition of genocide:

> *A form of violent social conflict, or war, between armed power organisations that aim to destroy civilian social groups and those groups and other actors who resist this destruction.*

Genocide as a form of conflict is thus defined by the nature of the actions carried out by the armed power organizations against the civilian population. Shaw therefore also defines genocidal action:

> *Action in which armed power organizations treat civilian social groups as enemies and aim to destroy their real or putative social power, by means of killing, violence and coercion against individuals whom they regard as members of the groups* (2007, p. 154)

As such, genocide becomes a type of social conflict between different sets of actors and is defined by the type of action committed by the more powerful side, i.e. the side carrying out the genocide. This definition also incorporates solutions to Shaw's criticism on previous scholarly work. Firstly, the aim of destroying social groups is not reduced to killing individual members, but it is understood as a broad action of demolishing victim groups' social power in economic, political and cultural senses. Following his second main critique, he uses the generic term of "civilian social groups" which means that the common defining factor of victim groups is not a particular social characteristic (race, class, ethnicity, religion, political conviction, etc.) but the fact that they are largely unarmed. All sorts of social groups can thus be victim of genocidal actions. Thirdly, by including the terms "violent conflict" and "war", he breaks with the idea that genocide is extremely

exceptional and outside the scope of other social phenomena; it is in his view linked to one another. He specifies that "genocide, as an organised, violent conflict, constitutes war: even genocide in *peacetime* is a form of war against social groups" (Shaw, 2007, pp. 154-155).

2.3.   Precursors to Genocide

It is true that the causes of genocide are heterogeneous and it is very difficult to distillate commonalities from the individual explanations of different genocides. However, Shaw's framework makes it possible to identify some general causes. This is important for us, since we will later argue that the events which took place in Rwanda in 1994 constitute postcolonial genocide. This means we will define a variation of genocide based on one underlying cause. This is new in the field of genocide studies, since never before this has been considered. Indeed, classifications have been made before based on which victim groups could be identified, types of societies in which genocides occurred, perpetrators, results, motives, scope, context, etc (Shaw, 2007, pp. 63-78) (Chalk & Jonahsson, 1990, p. 29) (Charney, 1994, pp. 76-77). In the following pages we will defend our argument that the 1994 genocide was in such defining way influenced by the continued cultural and political ramifications of imperialist colonialism in Rwanda that we ultimately consider it to be the root cause of the genocide; which therefore makes the adjective *postcolonial* absolutely indispensable.

For now let us see which causes Shaw identifies in his framework. According to him, when interaction between the following causes occurs, genocide could take place: culture and psychology, economy, politics and warfare. The latter, he argues, is fundamental for genocide to take place and he states that "the most common direct causal context is not simply political conflict but conflict that has already become violent", i.e. war (Shaw, 2007, p. 147). The need for interaction between causes becomes clear when we look at the first: culture and psychology. Genocide will never take place among rivalling, equal ethnic groups. When supported by enough historic enmities, ethnicity may facilitate genocidal actions (Ibid., p. 138).

Likewise for economic causes, they will never directly cause genocide as a singular explanation. This does not mean that the socio-economic aspect of killings should be ignored. The question here remains in how far economic pressure may account for why groups engage in genocidal acts. For Shaw, they key to genocide is the political-military context in which a society finds itself.

The main explanatory locus of genocide is the interaction between political and military power. Although political and cultural-ideological processes are central processes are central to defining

populations as 'enemies' and to setting up genocidal conflict, once the aim of destruction begins to be implemented, there is an essentially military process of violent power projection. This makes him conclude, as we said earlier, that the most common direct causal context is not just political conflict, but conflict that has already become violent (Shaw, 2007, p. 147).

So indeed, just as Shaw, we are convinced that a combination of interacting causes leads to genocide, albeit he does not mention postcoloniality. However, we are convinced that in the case of the 1994 genocide, the different precursors have one aspect in common: the postcolonial nature of it. Let us elaborate on the specific case of the 1994 genocide and corroborate our assumptions.

3. Defining Postcolonialism

Now that we have developed a more sociological understanding of the notion of genocide, we will outline the essentials of postcolonial studies. As we pointed out, we will argue in the following pages that the 1994 genocide was postcolonial. To support our argument we must clearly lay out the framework of postcolonialism, which has its fundamentals in the works of scholar-activists such as Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon and Edward Said. A definition of this concept and status questionis of the field is therefore in place. We will use our understanding of this framework as a tool for the following section, on the origins of the 1994 genocide.

3.1.   Essentials of Postcolonial Studies

Postcolonialism deals with the influence and (in)direct effects of colonialism on cultures and societies. The term was first used in the historical sense to designate the period directly following the independence of a number of states in Africa and Asia after the Second World War. Such a chronological interpretation did not last very long and from the 1970s onwards the term was used by literary critics to discuss the various cultural effects of colonialism. However in those early cultural studies the notion 'postcolonial' was not yet used (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2007, p. 168). When, for example, studying the structures of colonial power and discourse in his ground breaking work *Orientalism*, Edward Said (2003) did not make use of the actual term postcolonial. Although this study of colonial representation was central to the work of scholars such as Said and Spivak (1990), the term itself was first used to signify the cultural interactions within colonial societies in literary circles. Subsequently, the term has been used to explain or analyse the political, cultural and linguistic experiences of formerly colonised societies (Ashcroft et al., 2007, p. 168). In more recent accounts, postcolonial scholars' primary concern is to examine the process and effects of European colonialism on every social institution of society up to and including practices of neo-colonialism of the present day (ibid.).

As we said before, the origins of postcolonialism can be found in the theory and practice of anti-colonialism, ranging from activists in the European colonising countries (Enlightenment, Liberalism, Marxism) to early colonial liberationists such as C.L.R. James, Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, Kwame Nkrumah, and many more (Ashcroft et al., 2007, p. 12). Quite paradoxically, this discourse of anti-colonial nationalism actually incorporated a Eurocentric notion of the nation and the nation state. Therefore, anti-colonialism was most influential to contemporary postcolonial studies when activist-

scholars started articulating their objections in terms of a radical Marxist discourse of imperial oppression and liberation of the colonial proletariat; which also implies a much more internationalist perspective. Lenin's *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (2008), for example, has therefore been crucial for the development of the analysis of the influence of colonialism in the field of postcolonial studies.

This anti-colonial Marxism also incorporated the ideas of the need for an educated revolutionary cadre to lead the proletariat in their struggle for liberation. The leading anti-colonial bourgeois elite would in turn, after decolonisation, eliminate itself in the ultimate proletarian revolution (Ashcroft et al., 2007, pp. 12-13). It is no coincidence that Frantz Fanon (2002) entitled his seminal work on the trauma of colonialism *Les damnés de la terre* after the first words of the socialist *Internationale* anthem. Although his explicit engagement with Marxism is limited, he is influenced by it to the extent that much of his work is within the framework of Marxist analysis of the exploitation of the Third World by capitalism and colonialism. Within this framework, for example, he is one of the first authors to condemn the United States as being a new imperial *monster* (Young, 2001, p. 280).

In his adaptation of mainstream Marxism, Fanon argues that the class division in the European context becomes one of race in the colonies. According to Fanon, the classical formulations of Marxism should therefore be modified to fit the colonial context. This is what Young (2001, pp. 4-5; 278) defines as *Tricontinental Marxism* and this is the political theory that many anti- and postcolonial theorists have adopted since. It is distinguished from orthodox European Marxism by combining the critique of objective material conditions of colonialism with comprehensive studies of its subjective effects. For example, what started as an economic system of exploitation created a whole set of inferiority complexes within the colonised societies, as was effectively analysed by Fanon in his book *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952, pp. 90-116).

After the World War II and the wave of decolonisation and independence in Africa and Asia, the focus indeed shifted from Marxist anti-colonialism to the study of the continued influence of former colonising states on the formerly subjected societies. Scholars from then on paid more attention to different forms of neo-colonialism[5] and the cultural aspects of colonialism. It is Edward Said, in his book *Orientalism* (2003), who introduced the idea that colonialism not only operated as a politico-

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[5]Neo-colonialism is best described as colonialism without colonies. After the political independence of colonies in Asia, Africa and Latin America, these countries remain dependent on the former colonizing states through economic, financial and social structures. Developing countries remain exploited and subject to indirect political control (Burnell, 2009). Kwame Nkrumah was the first person to coin the term in his book *Neo-colonialism: The Last stage of Imperialism* (1965).

military and economic system, but also as a historical discourse of cultural domination of the West. In short, the physical control of colonialism was explained and justified through Western science and knowledge systems. According to Young (2001, pp. 383-384) he was the first to combine the works of the political anti-colonial movement and that of other theoretical critiques, in particular that of critical theory. The question of consolidation of dominance through language, and to a broader extent through discourse and knowledge, is central in his writings.

Now what exactly do we understand by *Orientalism*? It refers to the processes by which the *Orient* was, and continues to be, constructed in European thinking. *Orientalists* (may it be novelists, poets, journalists, scholars or politicians) through their discourse, claim to possess absolute knowledge over the *Orient*; the distant place that is in any sense completely distinct from our *Occident* (Said, 2003, p. 2). They will then argue that this construct is an objective representation of this *Orient*. As such it becomes the corporate institution for dealing with the *Orient*. In other words, it becomes a Western style of dominance, restructuring and authority over the *Orient* (Ibid.).

However, the *Orient*, as perceived by those *Orientalists*, is all but an inert fact of nature. It is a phenomenon constructed from a purely Eurocentric perspective and based on the rationalisation of broad assumptions, prejudices and stereotypes. The significance of Said's work is that this construction of an idea of the *other*, once established as fact, is used to directly impose authority over that other (Young, 2001, p. 383). The relationship between the *Occident* and the *Orient* thus became one of hierarchy, power and dominance. This means that orientalist -or colonial - discourse became an instrument of power, rather than a pure discourse of knowledge (Ashcroft et al., 2007, p. 168). It was Said's argument of academic knowledge moving beyond its objectivity and autonomy, thus becoming part of the Western apparatus of power, that makes his contribution significant. Colonialism, as he argued, became not only a physical act but was accompanied by a process of colonisation of the minds of both those who colonised and those who were colonised (Ibid., p.65). His ideas have not only been applied to the representation of the *Orient* but also that of Africa (and Latin America).

Drawing on the ground breaking writings of people such as Fanon and Said, contemporary postcolonial critique departs from the colonial era in its analyses of the international configurations and power structures of the present. It argues that long after political decolonisation took place, there is still a persistent tendency of the West to dominate global institutions and international relations. Postcolonialism not only focuses on those material conditions of colonialism (political, economic and military dominance of the historic West), but also on the discourse that persists to this

day. The result is that postcolonial critique, attempts to develop an *alternative* contemporary history of international relations. It argues that this history is defined by the classic Western centres of knowledge, thus reflecting the location of power in relationships between the West and *the rest* (Long & Mills, 2008, p. 393). It therefore ultimately "tries to shift the dominant ways in which the relations between western and non-western people and their world are viewed" (Young, 2003, p. 3). In other words, postcolonial critique also becomes a form of political activism in the struggle for the 'decolonisation of the mind'. Its objective is the pursuit of full liberation, in all social fields, after the achievement of political independence.

Current postcolonial studies also remain loyal to their origins of anti-colonialism and Marxism. Firstly, as a legacy of the anti-colonial movement, because postcolonialism considers that much of the world still lives in, or is at least severely affected by, the brutal interferences during and following colonialism. History has determined the still existing power structures. It celebrates the political decolonisation of the global south and ultimately attempts to topple persistent neo-colonial structures in international relations. Secondly, the historical role of Marxism also remains paramount as the fundamental framework of postcolonial thinking, for "[its] assumption is that many of the wrongs, if not crimes, against humanity are a product of the economic dominance of the north over the south" (Young, 2001, p. 6). Through much of the 20th century it was Marxism alone that focused on the effects of an imperialist system of domination and oppression by the -capitalist- West. As a theoretical alternative to capitalism it also laid out the blueprints for a future free from domination and exploitation (Ibid.).

3.2.   Controversies in Postcolonial Studies

Since the term postcolonialism has been widely used to signify the economic, political, linguistic and cultural experiences of societies that are former European colonies, it has been subject of disciplinary debate.

One source of vigorous debates amongst its critics is the prefix *post*. In a strict chronological sense meaning *after* colonialism, the term is not used correctly. Not all colonialism is over: France still possesses its *Domaines et Territoires d'Outre-Mer*, the British Commonwealth as a political and economic entity still exist, there is the question of the USA and native Americans, etc. Moreover, it is not only the West that has a history of colonisation. Ahmad (1995, p. 9) states for example that if the term colonialism can be extended to the practices of the Incas and the very recent Indonesian occupation of East-Timor, it becomes a "transhistorical thing, always present and always in process

of dissolution in one part of the world or another." The use of historical periods such as 'pre-colonial', 'colonial' and 'post-independence' cultures thus implies an ideological choice. Critics such as Ahmad therefore ask what limits, if any, should be set (Ashcroft et al., 2007, p. 169). As an answer to this criticism, we agree with Ashcroft that postcolonialism focuses on the processes and the effects, and reactions to, European colonialism from the sixteenth century onwards, including the neo-colonial practices of the present day (Ibid.).

Ahmad's objections to the term postcolonial go even further. In an extensive critique on Said's *Orientalism* he states that the word over-emphasises the significance of the impact of colonialism on the societies that were subjected to European rule (Ahmad, 1992, pp. 172-173) (Young, 2001, p. 60). It is unarguably so that especially for Africa the period of physical occupation of many countries was rather short. Looking at Rwanda for example, the country was officially colonised from 1885 to 1962, which, after all, is a remarkably short period. Consequently, it is, as European authors, perhaps *idle* to suggest that a 78-years period constitutes the defining era of Rwanda's history, which dates back hundreds, if not thousands, of years.

So while we certainly agree with Ahmad, we do insist that western imperialism, even years after political decolonisation took place, still persists within global institutions, structures and relations. In the case of Rwanda for example we will try to prove that it were the practices of colonialism that lie at the very basis of the 1994 genocide. All causes that will be discussed have in common that they were heavily influenced, or defined, by the colonial era or the subsequent neo-colonial practices and various power instruments of the West.

Further criticism to postcolonial studies has focused on *location*. That is, every colonial encounter or *contact zone* is different, each with its own specific history, features and other particularities. Critics debate the potentially homogenising effects of the term postcolonial. In which way, critics may ask themselves, is it justified to compare colonial situations in North America to those in South America or Sub-Sahara Africa? They argue that the effect of describing the (post)colonial experience of multiple cultures by this one term is a neglect of crucial differences between these situations. "However", as Ashcroft counter argues, "there is no inherent or inevitable reason for this [neglect] to occur. The materiality and locality of various kinds of postcolonial experiences are precisely what provide the richest potential for the field, and they enable the specific analysis of the various effects of colonial discourse" (Ashcroft et al., 2007, p. 171). Postcolonialism does not have a singular methodology; there is however a set of concepts that draws on common perspectives. As a varied academic field, it studies a wide variety of subjects and places.

A last, fundamental point of discussion concerns the difference between materialists and discourse theorists. The former group of postcolonial thinkers emphasises the importance of historic conditions of colonialism and its material consequences: economic, political and military dominance of the former colonisers. The latter base their work on the ideas of Said and his colonial discourse theory, which he elaborated in *Orientalism*. They focus on the knowledge and belief systems by which colonising states constituted a field of knowledge, of truth, by imposing disciplines, norms and values upon the colonised societies. The knowledge that the dominant persona in this relationship possesses is imposed as absolute. As such, it becomes a system of representation of the colonised as *primitive* and the colonisers as *civilised*. Unlike materialist thinkers, these scholars will focus on the impact of linguistics and other cultural features of colonialism (Ashcroft et al., 2007, pp. 36-38).

Many critics insisted originally on the need for a distinction between the two perspectives. However, today, most postcolonial scholars agree however that a return to the over-simplified realities of the two different approaches should be avoided, and that a comprehensive approach should be favoured. Materialists now mostly recognise the existence of an effect of colonial discourses (and vice versa) (Ibid, pp. 168-173). It will become clear in the following section that we combine both perspectives of the continuum of postcolonial studies.

4. Postcolonial Genocide in Rwanda

In our analysis of the different causes of the genocide in 1994, we will frame them in a postcolonial institutional tradition. We have identified four different fields in which the causes can be found: the colonisation of Rwanda, the post-independence national politics, the international political economy and the international political environment. The outcomes of this analysis will serve as a reference to compare Rwanda's current state of affairs to that of the early 1990s in our overall attempt to answer the research question.

Furthermore, at the end of every sub section, we will refer to the attachments at the end of the thesis to offer the reader a comprehensive graphic representation of the causes of the genocide. This will help to better understand what we will explain in the following pages. This visual work method is based on that of Homer-Dixon and Percival (1996). Although the contents of their graphs are different from ours, we did rely on their method and use of graphics to visually simplify the explanations of the 1994 genocide.

4.1.   Rwanda's Colonial Heritage as a Prologue

Imperialist European involvement in Rwanda began in 1894. That year, German count Gustav Adolf von Götzen was received at the court of the Rwandan *mwami*. Until then the kingdom had not only been shut off from Europe but also mostly from the rest of the Africa. It was located in a mountainous region in East-Africa, not easily accessible, landlocked, very poor and heavily reliant on agriculture. It was of little interest to the outside world, mainly because there were hardly any exploitable natural resources (Melvern, 2000, p. 7).

In 1885, nine years before that first encounter with Rwanda, the European states had set out the rules of the imperial game during the Berlin Conference. Consequently, Rwanda and its wider region were allocated to the German empire. Much to the Germans' surprise, they found an organised and functioning country. There was a strict social and economic order, described as basically *feudal*, and administration was centralised (Melvern, 2000, pp. 7-9). The Germans continued this firm ruling system of hierarchical power and for the time being the *mwami* was allowed to stay in place. The history of pre-colonial Rwanda was a mystery for the Germans. The Rwandan dynasty stretched back hundreds of years and the country's history was passed on through myths and poems. These stories

told of Rwandan kings ruling the greatest kingdom on earth. The *mwami* therefore owned everything: land, cattle and people (Ibid., p. 7).

The Europeans also immediately took notice of how the population was divided in three social groups: Hutu, Tutsi and Twa –the latter being hunter-gatherers and only constituting 1% of the population. It is generally accepted that this social distinction already existed in pre-colonial Rwanda; however controversy still exists around how these concepts should be defined. It is maybe too easy to say that these terms were the invention of a Western colonial discourse for they can even be found in the foundational myths of the Rwandan kingdom. Faced with the necessity of *defining* these groups and the complexity of Rwandan culture, different meanings have been allocated to 'Hutu', 'Tutsi' and 'Twa' according to Western cultural references (Semujanga, 2003, pp. 101-102). Social scientists have designated many terms to describe the structure of pre-colonial Rwandan society: ethnic groups, race, caste, social order or tribes. None of these fully grasp the social, economic and cultural complexities that were involved in Rwanda; they are too easily used to reduce the social reality to a simple Hutu-Tutsi dichotomy (Ibid., p. 106).

These groups spoke the same language, *Kinyarwanda*, shared a religion, had a common culture and lived in the same geographic territory. Therefore, even the most fashionable of scientific concepts, that of *ethnic groups*, is inadequate when describing pre-colonial Rwanda. Two groups are of different ethnicity when they belong to a different community of language, culture, history and territory (Shyaka, 2004, p. 4). As Semujanga (2003, pp. 101-103) points out, this is not the case. If we can conclude one thing, it is that many of these attempts at categorisation in Western scientific discourse contributed to the image of a rigid division between Hutu and Tutsi. Many of these hypotheses are based on the assumption that Hutu and Tutsi have different origins.

The Hutu, the vast majority of the population, mostly lived as peasants and cultivated the land. Their physical appearance resembled that of the people living in the neighbouring countries. The Tutsi were mostly cattle-herders. They were generally considered to be taller and thinner, with sharper facial features. The word Hutu means *subject* or *servant*, while the word Tutsi signifies *those who possess wealth* –wealth being measured in terms of cattle, the standard money for society at the time (Semujanga, 2003, pp. 105-106). It was the *mwami* who was at the centre of society and he was the physical embodiment of the country (Prunier G. , 1995, p. 9). The *mwami* was Tutsi and most of the courtiers surrounding him were also Tutsi. Furthermore, the chiefs operating within the hierarchical power structure that constituted Rwanda were also mostly Tutsi. Simplifications of ruling

Tutsi and serving Hutu were thus easily made by the German colonisers. However, the reality was much more complex.

There existed a very specific system of personal dependency in pre-colonial Rwanda, called *ubuhake*. Prunier (1997, p. 24)defines it as a contract brokered between two men, a patron and a client. In the most classical form of *ubuhake*, the Tutsi patron would give cattle to a Hutu client for him to herd. Since Hutu were normally not allowed to have cattle, this not only constituted an economic gift but presented more an opportunity of upward social mobility for the Hutu client, for the cows could give birth and future calves could be shared between client and patron. The Hutu lineage[6] once it possessed cattle, and thus wealth, could be *de-hutuised* and attain the position of Tutsi in Rwandan society. Apart from these client-patron contracts there was another way for Hutu to obtain status of Tutsi. As a reward for bravery on the battlefield Hutu could also obtain cattle. A reverse phenomenon could also take place in which impoverished Tutsi became or were Hutu, in the sense that they lost cattle possibly due to a variety of reasons such as drought and war. To further complicate the matter, some members of nobility were Hutu and were part of the royal court without having to be *de-hutuised* (Ibid., pp. 24-25). The many misinterpretations of this complex, but rather flexible, social reality have led to high tensions between Hutu and Tutsi during colonisation and in post-independence Rwanda.

Late 19th century Europe was obsessively preoccupied with racial theories and the field of anthropology was the exponent of this European *Zeitgeist*. Social Darwinists were convinced that a hierarchy of races existed. It is this idea of inferior peoples that was used as a justification for colonisation. This close cooperation between *scientific* discourse and politics is what Said so meticulously uncovers in his works. Clearly, his findings not only account for the *Orient* but also for other colonised geographic areas. Africans were seen as genetically pre-determined to be ruled by the civilised White Man. Therefore the subjection of Africans was not only a matter of pure economics but also one of biological truth. These racist theories formed the scientific validation for the practices of European imperialism (Ashcroft et al., 2007, pp. 40-41).

Europeans applied this so-called knowledge to the case of Rwanda. It was impossible that backward Africans could build such a complicated society; hence the theory of the Tutsi-Hamite.

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[6]Family, or lineage, was of the utmost importance and the primary factor of identification in pre-colonial Rwanda –a in many traditional societies. In cases of great success or failure of a Rwandan *man* his lineage would share his destiny. Once the Hutu was *tutsified,* his whole lineage could profit from this newly obtained social position and become Tutsi as well (Prunier, 1997, pp. 24-25).

Since The Hamite theory states that Tutsi are basically *white men with black skins,* theories emerged concerning the *true* origins of Tutsi. (Semujanga, 2003, p. 117). They were supposedly descendants of ancient biblical, Caucasian tribes who travelled the Nile into Ethiopia and later Rwanda, bringing civilisation with them. After all, Africans could not have *assembled* civilisation by themselves. It was a region of nonhistorical peoples who remained passive while non-Africans installed order for them, i.e. the Tutsi-Hamite of European descent bringing organisation and structure to the savage Hutu. This racist colonial discourse of the innate superior intelligence and European ancestry of Tutsi and the backwardness of Hutu were institutionalised and had a massive impact on Rwandans and their society. The social position of Tutsi was strongly inflated, whereas Hutu were left behind with feelings of bitter inferiority. A combination of the subjective feelings as a result of this colonial discourse and the material consequences of the colonial administration's political and administrative decisions were slowly turning Rwanda into a social powder keg (Des Forges, 1999, p. 36)

Belgian colonialism in Rwanda started in 1916. The occupation was made possible through a League of Nations mandate. The League's principles of self-determination were apparently not envisaged to be universal but only applicable to European nations (Melvern, 2000, p. 9). A clear continuation of the racist beliefs that colonised peoples did not have the same capacity as Europeans to govern on their own. Despite the provisions of the mandate, the policy of German indirect rule changed gradually into one of direct control under the Belgian administration. The Belgian administration still considered the Tutsi as their natural allies following the established scientific knowledge. Education was introduced, which was almost exclusively accessible for Tutsi, in order to create a group of African *évolués*, a civilised black man, constructed to the image of the European. Hutu and Twa were more subject to forced labour, flagellation, livestock tax, and many more humiliations (Semujanga, 2003, p. 171).

A defining policy of that time was the institutional classification in 1933 of the whole population as Hutu, Tutsi or Twa. The height, length of noses, shape of the eyes, etc. everything was measured. Based on the results, Rwandans were classified and given an identity card. This division was not even remotely related to the Hutu-Tutsi-Twa triptych that existed in pre-colonial Rwanda (Shyaka, 2004, p. 8). This practice of racial identity cards continued after independence. During the 1994 genocide, many Rwandans were therefore killed based on what their identity card said. The killing of thousands of people was therefore postcolonial in the most literal sense that it was a direct consequence of a practice introduced by the colonial administration.

Because of this institutional favouritism towards Tutsi and the constant humiliations for the Hutu majority, the seeds of violence were planted. Not only have the material effects of colonialism become visible, but the subjective consequences of the system as well. Hutu felt ignored and humiliated and towards the end of the colonial era, these feelings would be expressed through Hutu power political parties and their ideologies (Prunier, 1997, 61-63).

By the 1950s a number of Hutu *évolués* had also published a manifesto demanding emancipation and majority rule. Supported by the Catholic Church[7] which had a monopoly on education in the colonies, they established a new party in 1957: *Parti du Mouvement de l'Emancipation Hutu* (Parmehutu). Parmehutu, which was led by Grégoire Kayibanda, based its ideology of Hutu power on the idea that pre-colonial Rwanda had been invaded by Tutsi, thus enslaving the native Hutu (Melvern, 2000, p. 13) (Des Forges, 1999, p. 39). Decades of racist colonial discourse and inversion of traditional values had been incorporated by Rwandans. This Hutu awakening follows a pattern, described by Fanon, in which the colonised, derived from their indigenous cultural origin, will try to appropriate and imitate the culture and actions of the coloniser, once they experience upward social mobility, i.e. the appropriation of the Tutsi-Hamite theory and the idea that the country belonged solely to Hutu (Fanon, 1952).

The *social revolution*, during which Hutu gradually took over the privileged position from the Tutsi started in 1957, took place in a climate of violence against Tutsi, which was, if not actively supported, at least tolerated, by the Belgian authorities (Melvern, 2000, p. 13). The elections that were organised in 1960 to appease the situation were won with a vast majority by Parmehutu. However the state of the colony kept deteriorating. During the revolution, tens of thousands of Tutsi were fleeing, pouring into neighbouring countries. A referendum was organised by the Parmehutu government through which the monarchy was abolished. The UN sent several inquiry missions to Rwanda to assess the political situation and the large-scale violence that was committed against the Tutsi minority. It was to avoid anymore UN interference that the independent republic of Rwanda was proclaimed, with Grégoire Kayibanda as its new president. The Hutu regime was now free to implement its racist ideology and pursue Tutsi as undesirable subjects throughout the country (Semujanga, 2003, pp. 172-183).

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[7]The importance of the catholic support to the Hutu case should be noted. Some scholars go as far as to explain the cooperation between the white –mostly Flemish- priests and Hutu in terms of the existing political and linguistic cleavage in Belgium between francophone Wallonia and Flanders. The Flemish also struggled with socio-economic exclusion in Belgium. They understood the Hutu demands for freedom of expression and the end of discrimination in public services (Melvern, 2000, p. 13).

Pre-colonial Rwandan society was socially and economically complex. It is true that the social division of Hutu-Tutsi-Twa already existed, but as we have proven above, the colonial authorities – German and Belgian- institutionalised and racialised this triptych, based on European *scientific* knowledge. Indigenous knowledge and tradition was denied, as the Rwandans, like any other African people were considered nonhistorical. That is, they were savages, had always been savages and could only be civilised by Europeans. In the best traditions of colonial discourse, a social reality was created from a Eurocentric perspective. No attempt was made to know and understand the *Rwandan*, for the complexity of pre-colonial Rwanda was reduced to a set of universal characteristics and prejudices, as the concentrated opposite of the European self (Long & Mills, 2008, p. 393).

Racist theories such as that of the Tutsi-Hamite were introduced and promoted among Rwandans to explain the origins of the pre-colonial social structure. This rhetoric of the so-called civilised Tutsi (i.e. being closer to the European race) and the savage Hutu, combined with the practice of Tutsi favouritism by Belgian colonial authorities in, for example, education, lie at the basis of the violence that struck Rwanda in 1994. Ultimately, as theorists argue, it is this colonial discourse within which the colonised may also come to see themselves (Ashcroft et al., 2007, p. 37). This European theory of racial dichotomy took root in the minds of the Rwandans and was later institutionalised on a large scale by Kayibanda's Parmehutu. Rwanda would not have suffered from genocide, if not for the institutionalisation of racist ideology by the successive colonial authorities. **Attachment I** (page 59) shows our preliminary outcomes on how the 1994 genocide came into being.

4.2.   Discourse and Practice of Exclusion: 1962-1994

Hintjens finds that "it is the nature of the Rwandan state that must be seen as absolutely central [to understand the 1994 genocide]" (1999, p. 244). As the genocide was planned by the Rwandan authorities and executed by its army and citizens, she is mainly correct in her analysis, although a crucial part is missing. She forgets that the nature of the Rwandan state is defined by the state of postcoloniality it found itself in.

By means of a well-equipped propaganda machine, Kayibanda's regime consistently denounced Tutsi as the *eternal enemy*, *nostalgic for power* and *plotting for revenge*. As for this last accusation, in the early 1960s Tutsi exiles started to organise in neighbouring country Uganda. In 1963, their attempted attacks against Kayibanda's regime were halted easily. Paradoxically, the Hutu extremists welcomed these attacks, for they were used in the propaganda war against the Tutsi in exile and those who still remained in the country. From then on, organised large-scale killings of Tutsi and

opponents of the Hutu government would recur every few years (1963-1964, 1973, 1990-1994) until the culmination of this history of violence in the 1994 genocide (Semujanga, 2003, pp. 184-185).

The carefully orchestrated ideology of hatred continued in the years following independence. Rwandans grew accustomed to Tutsi persecutions as Tutsi were more and more excluded from public life. The fall of the First Republic and the death of Kayibanda in 1973 did not change the faith of Rwandan Tutsi. The coup was preceded by massacres of Tutsi throughout the country (Des Forges, 1999, 40). The new regime also tightened its grip on society and a new political party was created: *Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement* (MRND). Furthermore, the regime continued the marginalisation of Tutsi through their exclusion from the public sphere. The spirit of colonial policies clearly still lingered through post-independence Rwanda, i.e. creating an ethnic dichotomy through education and social exclusion.

Thousands of Rwandans were still living in the neighbouring countries since the first pogroms against Tutsi started in the 1950s. Estimates vary between 1 and 2 million Rwandans living in exile during the Habyarimana regime (Prunier, 1997, p.87). The refugee community first organised itself in Uganda, aiming to oppose the divisive politics of Hutu nationalism. In 1987 the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) was founded. Contrary to what some observers believe, the group consisted of both Tutsi and Hutu and was dedicated to the return of the people in exile. Half political party, half paramilitary group, its aim was also to make an end to the Habyarimana dictatorship. Actively supported by the then new Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, the RPF leadership shared the belief that a return to Rwanda could only be achieved through means of war (Melvern, 2000, pp. 26-27).

On 1 October 1990, the RPF invaded Rwanda. However, the invasion turned out to be a disaster due to a counter offensive by the Rwandan army, supported by the French, Belgian and several African governments. General Paul Kagame now came in charge and the RPF retreated into the volcanic mountain range in the north-west of the country. The Rwandan army quintupled in size in the weeks after this failed RPF invasion. The army also profited from an influx of weapons coming from befriended states such as France and Egypt. Without theirl permission, money and loans that had been attributed by the World Bank and IMF within the framework of the SAPs was allocated by Habyarimana's government to purchase weapons (Melvern, 2000, pp. 28-32). It became more and more clear that the diplomatic and political-economic environment played a role in the whole conflict as well.

The attacks on Tutsi civilians in Rwanda followed swiftly. Echoing the earlier violence of the *social revolution* and that at the time of Habyarimana's coup, thousands of Tutsi were killed, incarcerated or disappeared in mysterious circumstances. Massacres were organised by local officials who told the population that the Tutsi were coming to take revenge and enslave the Hutu again. There was a rapid deterioration of the relations between Hutu and Tutsi, which can entirely be drawn back on the rhetoric of Habyarimana and his *akazu*, or close circle of family and accomplices who were in charge of the country (Des Forges, 1999, p. 13). Internal and external pressure grew on Habyarimana to end his reign. In response to the growing criticism, he announced that a multi-party system would be created, much to the dislike of the Hutu extremists within this inner circle (Melvern, 2000, pp. 35-36).

In 1991 the RPF was sufficiently recovered and resumed its sporadic attacks on Rwandan soil. The three years of civil war that followed heavily divided the country. The main achievement of the RPF was that it transformed into a legitimate participant in Rwandan politics. Despite peace negotiations, it was the aforementioned *akazu* of Habyarimana -de facto led by his wife, Agathe- that held the real political and economic power in the country. It was this group that planned the extermination of the Rwandan Tutsi population to resolve once and for all the ethnic problem and the internal Hutu opposition (Prunier, 1997, pp. 286-290). They orchestrated the propaganda, embodied by the hate network of *Radio & Télévision Libre des Mille Collines* (RTLMC). They also sponsored the media who published the infamous *Ten Hutu Commandments*. Several members of the *akazu* also participated in the training and provision of arms for the Hitlerjügend-like militia *Interahamwe*. The *Interahamwe* was appointed to execute the *Final Solution*, as it was planned by Agathe Habyarimana and her accomplices (Melvern, 2000, p. 43) (Des Forges, 1999, pp. 44-45).

The discourse and practices of the respective Hutu regimes in Rwanda of Kayibanda and Habyarimana were a blunt continuation of colonial policies. Their strategies were the same: thriving on a mythology of foreign Tutsi coming to the country, asserting power and enslaving the indigenous Hutu population. Both Parmehutu and MRND organised and justified the exclusion of Tutsi from positions of power based on an ideology of Hutu-Tutsi division that has its fundamentals in racist colonial theories. The deep alienation that rose from this rhetoric of racial segregation that supposedly existed in pre-colonial Rwanda, was not to be restored. "Western racial imagery", as Semujanga (2003, pp. 148-149) calls it, was promoted throughout the country during the successive Hutu regimes. Even in its most extreme expression of hatred, *Ten Hutu Commandments*, published in 1990 in the Rwandan daily *Kangura*, the ideas of colonial administration and education can be found (Semujanga, 2003, pp. 196-200). We are convinced that this ideology of hatred and Hutu superiority forms the basis of the genocide in 1994. As Ashcroft et al. (2007, p. 37) say: "Colonial discourse

creates a deep conflict in the consciousness of the colonised because of its clash with other knowledge about the world." The knowledge about pre-colonial Rwanda's organisation of society was lost when the colonisers imposed their knowledge and social structures.

The Rwandan state was also defined by the material conditions of colonialism. Identity cards still carried the *race* of people and Tutsi were excluded from public life. Furthermore, in contrast with popular understanding at the time within the international community, a small elite came in charge. Fanon describes this *comprador* class as a relatively privileged, wealthy and educated elite who exchanged roles with the white dominating class without engaging in any restructuring of society. They incorporated the exact same ideas on how to structure Rwandan society, based on ethnic prejudice, exclusion and persecution (Ashcroft et al., 2007, p. 91). So, indeed, we agree with Hintjens (1999, p. 244) when she says that it was the very nature of the Rwandan state that determined the 1994 genocide. However, we add to this that this organisation of Rwandan society was based on an ideology and practices that were institutionalised by colonisation.

Attachment II (p. 59) shows how the nature of the independent Rwandan state defined the events in 1994. Central is the state-led ethnic rhetoric and propaganda, which was heavily influenced by colonial discourse. The exclusion of Tutsi eventually led to the civil war, which was exploited by the regime to mobilise the Hutu citizens to attack the Tutsi population. The double arrow emphasises how civil war was exploited by the regime to mobilise Hutu. The death of President Juvénal Habyarimana was not a cause, but a trigger, hence the dotted line to highlight the distinction.

4.3.   The International Political Economy of Genocide

The explosive ethnic situation in Rwanda was worsened by the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s due to the domestic and international economic environment. Colonial discourses are not the only subjects of research for postcolonial scholars, but also the persistence of Western imperialism within global institutions and relationships long after political decolonisation has taken place (Long & Mills, 2008, p. 393). Postcolonial materialists have extensively provided evidence for Western dominance in international economic relations as a direct cause of the genocide in 1994 (Chossudovsky, 1996) (Uvin, 1998). Other scholars, although recognising the importance of the economic *malaise* in which Rwanda found itself, merely see the international political economy as a trigger of the violence (Hintjens, 1999) (Andersen, 2000).

We join Chossudovsky (1996, p. 939) in his comment that "the evolution of the postcolonial economic system played a decisive role in the development of the Rwandan crisis." And although economic diversification had taken place, this remained small-scale and the "colonial style export economy, based on coffee", which was established under Belgian rule, remained the main source of income for the country (70% of rural households cultivated coffee and it provided for 80% of the country's foreign exchange earnings). The country did have a real GDP growth of 4.9% per year in the period 1965-1989, school enrolment increased and the inflation was among the lowest in sub-Sahara Africa (Ibid.).

The country was seen as a non-communist *Entwicklungsdiktatur*, widely admired by its Western donors (Andersen, 2000, p. 443). However, this all changed at the end of the 1980s. As a consequence of pressure by the US government, backed by the large US coffee trading companies, international coffee prices dramatically fell, directly resulting in a decline of Rwandan export earnings of 50%. With incomes plummeting, famine erupted throughout the country and in the period 1987-1991 the GDP per capita declined with 5.5%. The economic despair of common Hutu was fuelled by ethnic propaganda by the extremists within the government and the *akazu* (Chossudovsky, 1996, pp. 939-940).

The international financial institutions' involvement started in 1988, with a World Bank intervention in view of putting Rwanda on the trail of sustainable economic growth. In a November 1990 agreement with the IMF and the World Bank, the Rwandan government was offered 214 million USD (and another USD 375 million in 1991) within the framework of a Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). These SAPs were "Economic reforms involving changes in pricing and trade policies, reductions in the size of government, and the regulation of production in order to integrate countries into the international free market economy. Countries are required to make such economic changes in order to receive funding" (Melvern, 2000, p. 33). Public austerities are the key to ensure that the objectives of SAPs are met. Such neoliberal policies were implemented widely throughout the Global South from the 1980s onward by the Bretton Woods institutions, created by the Western world in the wake of WWII. The consequences for Rwanda were devastating.

Not only were millions of USD in aid attributed by the Rwandan government to military spending, instead of preventing the collapse of the economy and the support of war victims, the policy outcomes of the SAPs were also terrible. The Rwandan *Franc* was devaluated within weeks after the Civil war broke out in 1990. The deep plunge of the *Franc* triggered inflation and the collapse of real earnings. Costs and fees for fuel, consumer goods, health and education rocketed. Furthermore, the

state apparatus collapsed under the austerity measures, state enterprises went bankrupt and thousands of public servants were laid off. The economic crisis, along with the political and social ones, reached its height in 1992. The poor rural population was caught in a downward economic spiral and easily manipulated by the Hutu elite's rhetoric of blaming Tutsi (Storey, 2001, p. 370).

Those millions of dollars in bilateral aid and loans were used to pay off international debts and purchase material for the government's fight against the RPF rebels. There was hardly any governmental intention to help the Rwandan population. And although the World Bank indeed attempted to pressure the government into directing the aid money to other means than the military, it is revealing to see how easily the Habyarimana regime got away with the personal enrichment and funding of genocide preparations with international aid money (Melvern, 2000, pp. 67-68). In a time of civil war, the Bretton Woods institutions' exclusion of *non-economic* variables from their analyses partially caused of the genocide. For the institutions did not take into account the possible political and social consequences of its far reaching policies (Chossudovsky, 1996, p. 941).

The colonial structure of the country's economy, which was focused on coffee export, the SAPs, the austerity measures, combined with the devaluation of the Rwandan *Franc* all contributed to the impoverishment of the Rwandan population. Along with the political and social crisis during the civil war, the economic hardship destroyed Rwandans' livelihood, gave rise to unemployment and created a situation of famine and personal despair (Chossudovsky, 1996, p. 940-941). This made the people susceptible to the propaganda machine of the Hutu extremists who were ethnicising the situation and trying to put the blame on Tutsi and the RPF rebels (Storey, 1999, pp. 51-55). The ethnic disparity, exploited by the Hutu extremists' propaganda and based on colonial discourse, was further widened by the economic downfall of the country.

This knowledge helps us better understand the political economy of the genocide from our postcolonial perspective. We learned that the national economy focused on coffee export; a relic from a colonial past (Chossudovsky, 1996, p. 939). The collapse of the coffee trade was induced by lobby work of large Western, mainly US, companies in their ruthless attempts to maximise profits. Combined with the economic downfall of the country, the international financial institutions imposed economic policies, without taking into account possible political and social consequences. The economic turmoil in which the country found itself was exploited -or ethnicised- by the regime to further demonise Tutsi and RPF rebels during the civil war.

As the explosive political and social situation was exacerbated by the postcolonial Western dominance in international economic relations in the years leading up to the genocide, we can conclude that the Rwandan government must try to avoid any such dependency in the future in order to avoid a downward spiral into large scale violence. It may not have directly ignited the genocide, but it did play a very significant role. Further we will research whether the post-genocidal government indeed succeeds in the necessary attempts to make the country less dependent on a colonial domestic economic structure and a postcolonial international economic structure. As a last cause of the 1994 genocide we will look at the international political structure in which the Rwandan state operated.

In **attachment III** (p. 60) the significance of the international political economy for the 1994 genocide becomes clear. The graphic representation of the precursors to the genocide is now almost complete.

4.4.　　The Neo-Colonial Scramble for Rwanda

The international political dimension of the 1994 genocide surely must be taken into account in our analysis. In 1992, at the height of the civil war, peace negotiations began in Arusha, Tanzania, between the RPF and the government of President Habyarimana. It took the parties 13 months, until August 1993, to negotiate an agreement. The so-called Arusha Accords comprised *inter alia* wide-ranging military reform, the organisation of multi-party elections, deployment of a neutral international force and the return of Rwandan refugees to their home country. The international community was very positive about their political intervention and in their enthusiasm; they may have lost sight of the fact that the hardliners in Habyarimana's *akazu* never wanted the Accords to work (Melvern, 2000, pp. 52-53). The process of democratisation that the Accords prescribed would prove to be the pitfall for Habyarimana. The *akazu* was never prepared to share power in the country (Andersen, 2000, pp. 449-450).

International involvement in the Rwandan civil war had started even before the brokerage of a peace agreement. As we have seen, the French government supplied the Rwandan Armed Forces (RAF) with military equipment before and after the RPF invasion in 1990. However it did not stop there. The French, and Belgians for a short period, also sent troops to fight alongside the RAF. This French interference in Rwanda dates back to the country's early post-independence years. Even though the country was a former Belgian colony, the French attempted to steer the country in their economic, political and cultural sphere of influence in Africa, along with the other countries that

comprised Françafrique[8]. The neo-colonial politics of the Elysée were embodied by the *Africa Office* of then French President François Mitterrand. This unelected group of *specialists*, headed by the President's own son, decided on France's foreign policies in Africa. Through its backroom politics, this *Africa Office* could determine the faith of Africa when they thought their own national interests were at stake; and this without any democratic checks and balances (Prunier, 1997, pp. 130-137).

In a post-Cold War logic, the invasion by the RPF was portrayed in Paris as an attack of a foreign state, i.e. Uganda, which in turn was part of a larger plot by *Anglo-Saxons*, i.e. the British and Americans, whose eyes were on French interests in Africa . Therefore, the interests of the French neo-colonial imperialists were not only materialistic, but also cultural, not in the least because they shared the same language and consequently the history of the *Grandeur de la France* (Melvern, 2000, p. 30). Henceforth, the French decided to engage in a kind of neo-colonial proxy war to secure their influence in the country and the wider region.

The French supported the Habyarimana regime until the very end through arms deals, offering strategic guidance to the government and the RAF, as well as through protection of Hutu extremists after the genocide by means of the infamous *Opération Turquoise* (Prugnaud & De Vulpian, 2012). This unilateral, French military intervention was supposedly organised to protect the Rwandan civilian population from the outbreak of ethnic violence. In practice, many *génocidaires* and *akazu* members slipped behind the French lines or succeeded in fleeing the country with the help of the French before being arrested or killed by the RPF (Des Forges, 1999,pp. 668-672).

The French justified their actions on the basis that they supported a Hutu majority against a violent, power-hungry Tutsi minority. That this majority was identified along ethnic lines did not matter; this majority rule legitimised their military and diplomatic support for the regime (Melvern, 2000, p. 30). Through this neo-colonial scramble for Africa, it can be argued, the French government bears a direct responsibility for the 1994 genocide. The Hutu Power regime could never have executed the atrocities without the protection and active support of France (Melvern, 2000, pp. 47-49).

Surprisingly enough, in March 1993, the French were the ones who first proposed a UN peace-keeping mission to Rwanda. The UK and the US were arguing that the UN was overstretched and that

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[8] France's former colonies in Africa over which the French authorities in the best neocolonial tradition tried, and continue to try, to keep control -politically, economically and culturally- after those countries' formal independence, by offering aid, setting up trade, maintaining diplomatic ties, as well as through organisations such as *La Francophonie*.

an intervention was undesirable. This was not the only reason why the US was reluctant of a peace keeping mission. The debacle in Somalia was still fresh in the government's memory. The American-led Somali operation, which started in 1992, was the first ever Western intervention in Africa on humanitarian grounds. After a disastrous mission in Mogadishu in 1993, the US immediately withdrew its troops and urged other Western countries to do the same (Long & Mills, 2008, pp. 401-402). In this context of the greatest military humiliation for the US since Vietnam, Presidential Decision Directive 25 (PDD-25) was signed by then President Bill Clinton (The White House, 1994).

PDD-25 outlined the limitations on future US involvement within the UN, unless strict conditions were met. The fundamental condition was that "UN involvement represents the best means to advance US interests" (The White House, 1994, p. 2). This meant that US participation in a UN peacekeeping mission was to depend on a utilitarian cost-benefit analysis of the worth of human lives (Long & Mills, 2008, pp. 402-403). Indeed, what were the strategic interests of the US in, at that time, one of the poorest countries of the world? There were none. With the Somali debacle just behind, the US had everything to lose and nothing to win. The public opinion would not support more losses of American lives in order to save African. In other words, we see here the postcoloniality of the US Empire in full action.

After extensive debate within the UN Security Council (UNSC), the result was a compromise. Resolution 872 was passed in October 1993, creating the UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), which was to supervise implementation of the Arusha Accords. The Canadian Roméo Dallaire was appointed force commander. The backbone of UNAMIR was a battalion of 400 troops from the old colonial power, Belgium. French involvement in UNAMIR was vetoed by the RPF (Melvern, 2000, pp. 112-114).

UNAMIR lacked in troops, material and funding as a consequence of the US reluctance to fully participate. Most of all, the mandate was not sufficient to provide the barest security for Rwandan civilians (Melvern, 2000, pp. 85-88) (Des Forges, 1999, p. 596). Despite many human rights reports and intelligence gathered by UNAMIR regarding a *Machiavellian plan* being prepared by Habyarimana, the UN failed to prevent genocide. After the shooting down of the President's air plane on 6 April 1994 and the subsequent outbreak of the genocide, the international community deliberately decided to turn its back to the Rwandan people. The killing of ten Belgian paratroopers on 7 April signalled the start of a Belgian campaign within the UN to abort UNAMIR (Melvern, 2000, pp. 95-97). Only the foreigners and their pets in the country were to be saved from then on, the

massacres UNAMIR was witnessing were of no concern to them anymore. Again, the lives of Africans were no longer worth saving when their own military was in danger.

The logic behind these decisions is understandable from our postcolonial perspective, for at the same time the UNSC was employing its full power toward resolving the conflict in Yugoslavia, Europe (Long & Mills, 2008, pp. 398-399). Resolution 912 of 21 April 1994, which resulted in the practical abandonment of Rwanda by UNAMIR, was pushed through in a brief 30-minute break during an extensive UNSC meeting on Yugoslavia. Furthermore, contrary to the clear evidence that was available, there was a clear political aversion to speak of genocide. The US hurried to frame the mass violence as *civil war*. Such discourse avoided the legal requirement of the Genocide Convention to intervene and simultaneously defined the growing number of Tutsi victims as regrettable casualties in a distant internal conflict of *tribalism* (Ibid., p. 399).

The decision-making of the UN Security Council also illustrates the postcolonial tendencies of that institution. As Long & Mills (2008, p. 400) clearly point out, Security Council Resolutions, as the outcomes of negotiated national interests, prove to be compromises to secure the five permanent members' national interests[9]. Not only can these five veto any resolution, they also have the ability to decide which resolution should be subject to unanimous (as opposed to majority) consent. Such double veto can only be interpreted as the *elite* states' succeeded attempt to subject the international community to their own national wills. With China and Russia as permanent members, it is difficult to portray the UNSC as an instrument of Western dominance in international affairs. However, "this organization can nevertheless be understood as a site where the Cold War protagonists in the *first* and *second world* have sought to exert their influence [...] to the exclusion of the developing nations, who have been historically treated as the objects of colonial interests by these great powers" (Ibid.).

The neo-colonial support of the French government to Habyarimana's regime has undoubtedly played a large role as a precursor to the genocide. The UNSC as an instrument of power of hegemonic states over the Global South also consistently failed in the prevention of the genocide. Our postcolonial framework has adequately shown that international politics were a determining factor in the genocide of 1994. When we ask ourselves in the following pages if genocide could recur in contemporary Rwanda, we must take into account the current international political environment.

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[9] The five permanent members are: the United States, Russia, the People's Republic of China, the United Kingdom and France.

The graphic presentation in **attachment IV** (p. 61) includes the neo-colonial scramble for Rwanda and finally shows how *all* the previously mentioned causes and triggers influence one another, interact and eventually culminate in the genocide of 1994. This graph, based on the work of Homer-Dixon and Percival (1996), as a visual portrayal of the events that lead up to the genocide, is a visual presentation to help understand how the events in 1994 ultimately came into being.

4.5.   Concluding Remarks

In the above section we have extensively proven the postcolonial identity of the 1994 genocide. Central to our thesis is the ethnic propaganda and manipulation of the successive Kayibanda and Habyarimana Hutu Power regimes. We noted however, that this ethnic bias of the Hutu governments did not come out of thin air, but was defined by the discourse and practice of colonial authorities, as well as the pseudo-scientific racist European theories. Further in our model, the political economy of genocide has a prominent place. Rwanda's long-standing dependence on coffee trade made the country vulnerable for economic turmoil.

The subsequent implementation of SAPs of the Western dominated IMF and World Bank only worsened the situation; which was easily exploited by the Hutu Power elite. Rwanda was not only in economic terms subject of a neo-colonial system dominated by the hegemonic West, but also politically. After its independence it moved into the African influence sphere of France. Till the bitter end the genocidal regime was supported and sponsored by the Elysée. The international community in general also failed to intervene properly, by means of the UNAMIR mission, in a genocide that at the time was labelled as 'a distant internal conflict' by international observers (Long & Mills, 2008, p. 400).

This brings us to the conclusion that in order to avoid genocidal violence in the future, Rwanda will have to move beyond the state of postcoloniality that facilitated the 1994 genocide. This is what we will focus on in the next pages when we discuss the country's post-genocidal development. When we say that the yoke of postcoloniality must be thrown off to prevent genocide from happening in the future; we mean that the legacy -the continued influence- of colonialism and imperialism on the organisation of the Rwandan state, and the structure of the international environment in which that state operates, must be brought to an end. Central is the question of constructed ethnicity, since this is what ultimately caused the genocide. If the current government succeeds in adequately addressing the issue of a violent ethnic history, the chances are that genocide will not recur.

5. Could History Repeat Itself?

The preamble of the 2003 Rwandan Constitution emphasises the need for reconciliation and unification in the country (Parliament of the Republic of Rwanda, 2003). Having looked back on the causes of the 1994 genocide, this will allow us now to investigate the question of post-genocidal development. For all the transitional justice initiatives, reconciliation tools, development measures, etc. have one objective in common: preventing new ethnic violence from breaking out in the country. Let us now examine whether Rwanda has truly moved beyond the state of postcoloniality that made the genocide possible.

5.1.   Ethnicity today in Rwanda

We recall that a central cause of the 1994 genocide was the authoritarian way in which the Hutu Republics maintained and further deepened the divisive ethnic rhetoric and practice of the colonial era. Hence, for the current government it is of the utmost importance to put an end to these two remnants of colonial control: ethnic manipulation and authoritarianism. A comprehensive analysis of Rwanda's contemporary political situation requires an in-depth study of both factors, for these two are tightly linked together.

The RPF, as the politico-military organisation that represented the Rwandan exiles who were forced out of the country under the two Hutu Republics, claimed not to be a purely Tutsi organisation (Melvern, 2000, pp. 26-27). This is true, although most of these exiles in the neighbouring countries were Tutsi. Today, the party is dominated by these Tutsi returnees who helped consolidate the RPF's power (Buckley-Zistel, 2009, pp. 37-38). In its foundational texts, the RPF pledged to bring an end to the ethnic division that defined the country. They claimed that there was no such thing as ethnicity in Rwanda and that the Hutu regime's propaganda was based on colonial constructs. This analysis coincides with our conclusion on the origins of the ethnic violence in Rwanda. Furthermore, the RPF published a document in which it proclaimed to install democracy, establish social services, and overall bring an end to a "system that generates refugees" (Melvern, 2000, p. 29). The RPF eventually defeated the government's army, brought an end to the genocide without any international aid and came to power in July 1994. Through its political branch, the RPF has been in power in Rwanda ever since and its former military leader, Paul Kagame, has been President since 2000.

The current government identifies the Rwandan conflict as neither racial nor ethnic, since it considers both Hutu and Tutsi (and Twa for that matter) of the same ethnicity. It sees the genocide merely as a product of Belgian colonialism, when the Tutsi-Hamite theory and divisionist ideologies became the *leitmotiv* of the rulers' policies (NURC, 2004, pp. 8-10). The government's line therefore paints quite an idealised picture of pre-colonial Rwanda in which Hutu, Tutsi and Twa live in harmony, without any ethnic distinction. Although the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) does state that the sense of belonging to one group or another did exist, it did not have the same significance as was attributed to it by colonial discourse (Ibid., pp. 5-6).

They reject any essentialist analysis of a rigid society that was unchangingly dominated by Tutsi elites. Rather, the NURC agrees with our perspective of a complex society in which the labels mostly refer to social status, that it certainly was not static and that social mobility was possible through various means (Buckley-Zistel, 2009, p. 34). The government concludes that Hutu and Tutsi were subject to the *mwami* and his courtiers, which made both groups equal in their inequality (NURC, 2004, pp. 5-6). This narrative of pre-colonial unity forms the cornerstone of the government's policies of post-genocidal reconciliation. It is this ideal type of a society that is the reference to which the government would like to return. On the outset, it is promising that the government made a postcolonial interpretation of the roots of the genocide. The reunification attempts can therefore clearly be interpreted as a means of moving beyond the colonial heritage and establishing a Rwanda freed from its history of postcoloniality.

The government has been criticised for its narrative of the harmonious pre-colonial Rwandan society (Reyntjens, 2004) (Buckley-Zistel, 2006, 2009) (Lemarchand, 2008). Reyntjens even goes as far as stating that the abandonment of ethnic divisionism is staged by the RPF to conceal a *tutsification* of the highest regions of power in Rwanda (2004, pp. 187). The government has indeed shown some paradoxical behaviour in its implementation of policies and legislation. Although the use of ethnic labelling is now legally prohibited, the government itself does invoke it on several occasions. The constitution of 2003 referred to the genocide in general, but after a shift in tone around 2006, it is now officially labelled as the *Genocide against the Tutsi* (Waldorf, 2009, p. 104). This could pave the way for a new, but equally divided, Manichean society; namely one in which all Tutsi are seen as *victims* and Hutu as *perpetrators*. President Kagame (2008, pp. xxiv-xxv) may defend this decision by stating that the genocide was directed at Tutsi -which is correct- but the ambivalence between discourse and actions remains; feeding criticism of the abovementioned *tutsification* of power structures.

The parliament adopted legislation to counter any attempts to revive previous ethnic bigotry. Two laws in particular play an essential role in the government's attempts: those against *divisionism* and *genocide ideology*. The criminalisation of the use of the terms Hutu and Tutsi is arranged through the 2001 law on divisionism. The law defines divisionism as "any speech, written statement or action that causes conflict that causes an uprising that may degenerate into strife among people" (Waldorf, 2009, p. 108). Unlike divisionism, genocide ideology is more precise and implies a more immediate threat of the return of genocidal violence.

The law on genocide ideology was voted in 2008. It is defined as "the aggregate of thoughts characterised by conduct, speeches, documents and other acts aiming at exterminating or inciting others to exterminate people basing on a wide variety of characteristics or features" (Parliament of the Republic of Rwanda, 2008). As Waldorf notices, the government's definition heavily relies on the 1948 Genocide Convention definition. However, the article identifying the characteristics of genocide is a lot more vague and "the provision, therefore, dangerously conflates criminal defamation (and a host of lesser offences) with incitement to genocide" (Waldorf, 2009, pp. 111-112). Again, this law may become an instrument of those in power and accusations of divisionism and genocide ideology have been made against political opponents of the RPF, both Hutu and Tutsi.

Both laws are written in broad terms and therefore easily exploitable for political purposes. They have therefore been subject of extensive criticism by NGOs and scholars (Human Rights Watch, 2008) (Waldorf, 2011). According to these critics, the government clearly missed a legitimate opportunity to fight *ethnification* of the public space and instead created an instrument to silence political dissidents, critical media, NGOs and others that might oppose the official governmental line (Waldorf, 2011, pp. 52-55). However, we should encourage the development of legislation countering genocide denial, hate speech and incitement to ethnic violence. After all, the Rwandan authorities also make a good point when they react to European criticism in stating that the EU adopted equally vague laws against 'discrimination' and 'sectarianism' (Ibid., pp. 53-54).

Nevertheless, critical monitoring is important and the Rwandan government should be closely monitored with regards to the implementation of the laws on genocide ideology and divisionism. With regards to avoiding genocidal violence, such laws are important measures to avoid any incitement for new ethnic aggression. Yet the laws could reinforce ethnic dichotomy again. Again, we must agree with Waldorf (2009, p. 104) since we also note that there is an "inherent tension" between the forward-looking reconciliation attempts of the government and the backward-looking interpretation of the genocide in terms of Tutsi victimisation and Hutu perpetrators. Both narratives

collide on the issue of ethnicity: the former clearly tries to eradicate it, the latter inevitably emphasises it.

In its attempts to tackle the issues of unity, reconciliation and ethnicity in post-genocidal Rwanda, Kagame's government has started several home-grown initiatives, mostly inspired by Rwandan culture. The following are important examples:

- *Ingando*: solidarity camps, organised by the government, that aim at organising the smooth integration in society and the civic education of former refugees (both Hutu and Tutsi), released prisoners, students and local leaders (Purdeková, 2011, pp. 5-7)
- *Gacaca*: Meaning *grass* in *Kinyarwanda*. These are courts in which, on the grassroots level, communities decide collectively on the guilt or innocence of genocide victims. Trials are held in public and everyone in the community is expected to participate. The aims are both to convict *génocidaires* and to reinforce reconciliation among the population (Clark, 2008, pp. 302-303).
- *Girinka*: This literally translates as *one-cow-per-poor family*. The programme was created to counter the extreme malnutrition that plagued the poorest Rwandans prior to 2006. *Girinka* is based on the traditional economic and social value that is attributed to cow ownership, dating back to pre-colonial Rwandan practices (Ezeanya, 2014).
- *Ndi Umunyarwanda*: Or *I am Rwandan*. The most recent programme, adopted in 2013. It aims at uniting Rwandan students by offering an educational scheme based on four pillars: History, Testimonies, Forgiveness and Healing. However, the programme is under scrutiny for the fact that Hutu are encouraged to apologise to Tutsi for the genocide, in the name of their entire ethnic group (The East African, 2013).

What unites all these programmes is that they make use of so-called indigenous knowledge. UNESCO (2015) describes this as "the understandings, skills and philosophies developed by societies with long histories of interaction with their natural surroundings. For rural and indigenous peoples, local knowledge informs decision-making about fundamental aspects of day-to-day life." Some critics (Purdeková, 2011, pp. 9-15) say that the abovementioned programmes are not at all comparable to what they meant in pre-colonial practice, however this not necessarily problematic. As Ezeanya (2014, p. 243) teaches us, this knowledge is not static. It is innovative, since it has been adapted over time in response to cultural, social and environmental changes. Indigenous knowledge therefore differs from globally accepted knowledge, as it provides specific tools to address societal issues.

Universities and research institutes have generated most of this generally accepted knowledge, which is then adopted by global media and transmitted through international political bodies. As it is, this knowledge can mostly be traced back to dominant centres. A good example is that of the organisation of transitional justice. The response of the UN was to establish the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), for the prosecution of suspects of genocide. However, this type of tribunal is based on the Nuremberg tribunal that followed World War II for the prosecution of Nazi war criminals, and lacks an inherent eye for cultural sensitivities. The Rwandan government decided to tackle the multiple issues that were not addressed by the ICTR regarding the genocide through the indigenous knowledge-based *Gacaca* initiative.

These initiatives can be interpreted as a postcolonial critique of the current dominance of existing knowledge systems on the organisation of post-conflict societies. They engage in an *indigenous* approach. For Young (2001, p. 66), cultures that try to extricate themselves from the history of imperial dominance will utilise, strengthen and develop resources of their own histories and political and intellectual traditions. For Rwanda this not only meant breaking with the ethnic dichotomy that was created during colonial times, but also using home-grown, Rwandan tools for reconciliation.

The current government surely implemented some daring programmes to address the issue of ethnicity in post-genocidal Rwanda. Although this is aimed at the annihilation of ethnic differences and the creation of one Rwandan identity, it remains uncertain for now if they really succeeded in obtaining that goal. Moreover, several governmental decisions, such as amending the constitution and the *Ndi Umunyarwanda* initiative, could be a source of concern. This is a mistake, since the population needs a *decolonisation of the mind* to avoid future ethnic violence (Young, 2001, p. 65). Further, we already briefly mentioned the supposedly authoritarian character of the *regime* and the so-called manipulation of ethnicity to consolidate the power of the RPF and Tutsi elites. In the following section we will investigate the process of democratisation in contemporary Rwanda and the influence this could have on possible future genocidal violence.

5.2.   Democratisation: Pillar of Stability?

In the first decade following the genocide Rwanda was often hailed for its development and reconstruction of a collapsed state. However, in these past few years Kagame's government has come under scrutiny in terms of human rights, political pluralism, etc. and is now often called 'authoritarian' or even 'dictatorial' (Reyntjens, 2004). The latest in the list of political controversies

regards the possible change in the Rwandan constitution to allow the sitting President to run for a -now still prohibited- third term (BBC, 2015).

Could it be that the current authorities are indeed falling in the same postcolonial trap of authoritarianism, just as the Hutu Republics did? And is there a new Tutsi elite taking over the country, as Reyntjens suggested (2004, pp. 187-190)? We identified the *state-led* ethnic propaganda and manipulation as another root cause for genocide. This emphasises the coercive character of the notion of ethnicity. It was imposed top-down by the very controlling Hutu governments in post-independence Rwanda (Semujanga, 2003, p. 172). This implies that the state's authoritarian character played a significant role in the run-up to the genocide. A small Hutu elite profited from the ethnic dichotomy that they reinforced themselves through the state apparatus and their propaganda. The *akazu* succeeded in institutionalising a climate of fear and hate. The state was truly authoritarian and the Hutu went along with the imposed ethnicised narratives of the extremists.

After coming to power, the RPF began the important task of democratising Rwanda: liberalise media, introduce political pluralism, advocate for human rights, support women's rights, fight corruption etc. Today, commentators are much divided. Whilst some aid agencies, governments and other international actors see the country as a *donor darling*, others, among which many foreign scholars, dismiss the authoritarian political character of the government and even point out striking similarities with the previous genocidal regimes (Reyntjens, 2015, p. 31).

The government of national unity that came to power after the genocide included all political parties that were active in the 1990s in Rwanda, except for the Extremist Hutu parties MRND and CDR, both directly involved in the genocide. The RPF was the leading actor and gained control over all government ministries, either behind the scenes or on the *bühne* (Longman, 2011, p. 32). From 1995 onwards, internal dissent grew steadily and an ever-longer list of government officials, politicians and public servants were put on a sidetrack, resigned and even left or fled the country. Reyntjens (2004, 2011, 2015) has described how the RPF has suppressed independent political activity, not only within the party but also in Rwanda in general. During the run-up to the first national elections since the genocide, in 2003, opposing parties and individuals were accused of divisionism and sectarianism. The RPF eventually won the elections in a campaign "marred by arrests, disappearances and intimidation" (Reyntjens, 2015, p. 22). The EU observer mission to the elections came to the negative conclusion that "political pluralism [was] more limited than during the transition period [directly after the genocide]" (Mission d'Observation Electorale de l'Union Européenne , 2003, p. 4).

Also in 2003, a referendum was organised for the adoption of a new constitution; one that primarily focused on the abolition of "ethnic, regional and any other forms of divisionism" (Parliament of the Republic of Rwanda, 2003). And although multi-partyism was the constitutionally enshrined form of governance in Rwanda, scholars argue that the elections of 2008 and 2010 were also staged. Furthermore, they say, the RPF continues to persecute political dissidents and opponents on a large scale. Some even accuse the RPF of assassinating members of the opposition abroad (Longman, 2011, p. 34).

In a report, Human Rights Watch (HRW) explains that in the period 2007-2008, Rwandan courts initiated 1,304 cases involving genocide ideology and an additional 243 people were charged with negationism and revisionism. At the time of writing of the report, eight persons were sentenced to life in prison, two persons sentenced to more than 20 years , 36 others were sentenced to between 10 and 20 years in prison, 96 sentenced to between 5 and 10 years and 91 were sentenced to less than 5 years. 132 persons were acquitted, which means an acquittal rate of just under 50% (Human Rights Watch, 2008, p. 40). Several prosecutors and judges also exclaimed their refusal to pursue some cases, saying they "lack substance" (Ibid.). There are two ways of interpreting these figures. Either one can say that a 50% acquittal rate proves that progress is being made towards an independent and well-functioning legal system, or, one can understand this figure as being very high. In terms of the latter, critical, interpretation, public accusations and long pre-trial detentions alone may also be enough to cause a *chilling effect*, to silence a population and to impose a form of self-censorship on citizens.

The rule of law is generally guaranteed in Rwanda; since more efforts have been made, and the country is now the 55th least corrupt country in the world and the fifth least corrupt in Africa, according to Transparency International (2015). The 2013 parliamentary elections were also deemed an important step in the country's process of democratisation, although certainly further adjustments to the electoral process are necessary (The Commonwealth, 2013) (African Union Commission, 2013). Surprisingly enough, long-time virulent RPF critics such as Reyntjens never commented on the process and outcomes of the 2013 elections. There are now 11 political parties registered in Rwanda, of which three are represented in the parliament: RPF, PSD (Social Democratic Party) and PL (Liberal Party). A platform has been created in which all parties come together to discuss inter-party disputes in a climate of unity and neutrality, as according to the 2003 constitution (African Union Commission, 2013, pp. 10-11).

The latest controversy is that of the possibility of scrapping term limits for the Presidency. For this, the constitution would have to be amended for a sitting President to be able to run more than twice. Recently, the Parliament voted almost unanimously to amend the constitution, and now a referendum must be organised for the Rwandan people to decide (The East African, 2015). Contrary to what some observers may insinuate, this cannot be compared to the recent unilateral decision of the President of Burundi to scrap the term limits and present himself as a candidate for the elections in his country, which in no way, can be considered a democratic process. Whereas in Rwanda, amending the constitution's Article 101 on term limits requires both parliamentary and popular agreement (De Morgen, 2015).

Despite the progress, we note that the question of political pluralism is not yet resolved and there is space for improvement in the field of human rights (Human Rights Watch, 2008, p. 44). Longman (2011, pp. 34-38) rightly displays the many questionable governmental interferences and restrictions in terms of freedom of speech and press freedoms, as well as liberties of civil society. In the RPF's logic these strict controls are necessary to prevent the re-emergence of ethnic, regional or religious bigotry. In the past, the Hutu extremists used media -with RTLMC and *Kangura* as the exponents of this policy- as their preferred instrument of ethnic indoctrination.

Reporters Without Borders (2015) does rank Rwanda among the 20 lowest countries in the world in its 2015 World Press Freedom Index. Rwanda has a self-regulatory Media Commission, but the government has successively attempted to bring it under its supervision and control. When the Commission criticised the government for suspending the BBC's service in *Kinyarwanda* after a controversial BBC documentary aired in the UK in October 2014, the President of the Commission was forced to resign and fled the country (Radio France Internationale, 2015). And although the documentary lacked fundamental evidence and was grotesque in its accusations, the BBC *Kinyarwanda* service was not involved in this and should therefore not have become a victim of silencing, same for the Media Commission (Committee to Protect Journalists, 2015). It is the fundamental *Angst* of the RPF for divisionism and genocide trivialisation is too high to allow any dissident voices.

The role of the military branch of the RPF and its behaviour during and after the genocide has been contested as well. There is substantial evidence that the RPF has killed several thousand Rwandan civilians in the wake of the 1994 genocide and has been militarily active in the DRC. In 1994, the RPF did commit revenge killing and estimates ranges between 25,000 and 100,000 of Hutu civilians killed by the RPF inside Rwanda. Many members of the militias and RAF had mixed with the

Hutu population fleeing the RPF advancements and had installed in the refugee camps in Zaire, thus continuing their reign of terror over the ordinary Hutu refugees. Back then, there were genuine concerns for the new Rwandan government that the RAF and Hutu militias planned to return and "finish off the job" of the genocide (Hintjens, 2008, p. 83).

In 1996, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees expressed concerns about the return of refugee Hutu to Rwanda, but also added that it was safe for them to go back to the country. An estimated 200,000 Rwandan Hutu were eventually killed or disappeared during armed conflicts in the Zairian camps between the RPF and remaining militias until 1997 (Hintjens, 2008, p. 83). Interference in what is now called the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has not stopped since. First, Rwanda actively supported the rise to power of Laurent Kabila in 1996. Several years later, Rwanda endorsed a military campaign against the same person they brought to power. The Great African War was an indirect consequence of this interference (Reyntjens, 2009).

Today, Rwanda is still under scrutiny for directly supporting rebel groups in Eastern Congo which have committed crimes against humanity and war crimes, namely the CNDP of Laurent Nkunda and the M23, lead by Bosco Ntaganda (Stearns, 2012). The UN Group of experts has repeatedly denounced Rwanda's presence in the region through military and economic support to these rebel groups (United Nations Security Council, 2014, pp. 11-12). Now that the M23 has been defeated, Rwandan military involvement in its neighbouring country has significantly diminished (United Nations Security Council, 2015).

As we have noted, it was the tight control over Rwandan society that made it possible for Habyarimana's *akazu* to mobilise the Hutu masses into killing their neighbours. The RPF therefore had two opportunities: either break completely with the dictatorial style of ruling that had dominated Rwanda since pre-colonial times, or continue the known type of strict control of the government. The RPF opted for the latter. There are clear concerns about the state of political pluralism and civil society, freedom of speech, press freedoms, and violations of human rights. Responding to these allegations, President Kagame notes that Rwanda has no lessons to learn from the West and that the RPF is introducing a type of "Rwandan Democracy" (International Business Times, 2015). He insists that they have chosen to go off the beaten political path of Western style democracy (Ibid.).

Of course, such decisions and this practical implementation of postcolonial critique to Western-centred knowledge systems is a legitimate choice. However, our postcolonial criticism remains

necessary, for a decision is not *de facto* right, only because it is taken by a decolonial government. Furthermore, excluding Rwandans of the most basic freedoms and human rights could imply the adverse of what postcolonial critique entails. For in such a case one enters the realm of colonial discourse, since it implies that Rwandans are basically not *ready* for a true democracy, be it *Rwandan* or not.

The RPF legitimises the strict control as being of the complete opposite objective of that of previous regimes. It is structured to *prevent* ethnic divisionism from happening and not, as some imply to reinforce it (Reyntjens, 2004, p. 187). The 2003 constitution, for which the people of Rwanda voted, is built on the ideas of unity and avoiding any future violence. In the first years after the genocide, the fundamental *Angst* of the RPF for the return of divisive forces was a fundamental factor in all its policies: from its involvement in Eastern Congo to the substantial control it exercises over media and civil society. Despite diminishing internal threats and opposition, the RPF is certainly still struggling to construct a specific form of successful postcolonial democracy and close monitoring is necessary to prevent the government's autocratic inclinations from developing ethnic proportions.

5.3.   Economic Progress as a Pathway to Peace

Few remnants of colonialism are as strong as that of economic dominance of Western countries over its former colonies in the Global South. Rwanda's dependence on a neo-colonial economic structure of coffee export and reliance on the IMF and World Bank's lifelines exacerbated the state of the country prior to the 1994 genocide. An economically wrecked Hutu population was easily manipulated by the Hutu elite's narrative (Chossudovsky, 1996). For the RPF the issue of economic development thus became essential in its efforts to reconstruct the country; in other words, economic prosperity as a means to obtain political prosperity. President Kagame identified Singapore under Lee Kuan Yew's leadership as his primary example of how to organise economic progress (International Business Times, 2015). Yet the question remains if the economy is no longer postcolonial and, moreover, to what degree the economic hardship that led to the genocide has been overcome.

Post-conflict economic reconstruction has been quite impressive. The state was rebuilt at a high speed and now provides in education, health and infrastructure. Rwanda has performed as one of the top African countries with regards to the UN's Millennium Development Goals (Reyntjens, 2015, p. 19). Average annual GDP growth has been very robust and grew from 4.7% in 2013 to 7.0% in 2014; and it is projected to rise to 7.5% in the upcoming years. This growth also resulted in the

reduction of the poverty headcount ratio from over 60% in 2000 to 44.9% in 2011 (Batte Sennoga & Byamukama, 2014, p. 10). The overall objective of the government is to transform Rwanda from a Low Income Country into a Middle Income Country[10] by the year 2020 (Government of Rwanda, 2000, p. 9).

The idea is that this objective should not only be obtained by the classic policy implementations of attracting foreign investors, opening markets and privatisations. The government also provides several home-grown initiatives, such as *Girinka*, aimed at a pulling a large share of the population out of poverty and the social isolation that comes with it (Ezeanya, 2014). Through such programmes, the RPF not only wants to rely on the usual economic development recipes, laid out by the dominant theories of Western economic schools. The country's reduction in aid dependency is based on the same idea of diminishing dependence on Western ideas and material influence. In 2013, 30% of the national budget was comprised of foreign grants, compared to 48% in 2000, and this figure is foreseen to continue to lower (Batte Sennoga & Byamukama, 2014, p. 6).

Some authors note that the economic growth is not as sustainable as it might occur. And looking more in-depth at some parameters, there is indeed good reason to raise some concern. In percentage terms poverty may have decreased but in absolute terms it has increased; an evolution that took place mostly in rural areas (Ansoms & Rostagno, 2012, p. 430). Furthermore, inequality has increased as well, and again the rural population is the victim. The Gini coefficient, the economic indicator which measures this inequality, was at the problematic level of 0.51, coming from 0.29 in the 1980s[11]. The coefficient rose to 0.52 in 2006, which implicated that Rwanda had become highly unequal. Recent data show that the figure dropped to 0.49 in 2011; which is, despite the decrease, still alarmingly high (Ibid.). Critics of the RPF also say that the government uses the positive figures to divert the attention from its growing authoritarianism (Longman, 2011, p. 41). A certain degree of precaution is therefore indeed necessary when portraying Rwanda as a developmental state, along the lines of the *Asian Tigers*. And this is not only because of the tight limitations to political freedoms in the name of economic prosperity. For our postcolonial perspective also gives us valuable insights in the vulnerability of the current Rwandan economy.

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[10] The World Bank (2015) defines Middle Income Countries (MICs) as having a per capita gross national income of USD 1,026 to USD 12,475. In their Vision 2020 programme, the Rwandan government foresaw a necessary significant growth in per capita income, a poverty rate of 30% (60% in 2000) and an average life expectancy of 55 years (49 in 2000) (Government of Rwanda, 2000, p. 9).

[11]. A Gini coefficient of 0 means that the country's income is perfectly equally divided amongst its population. With a coefficient of 1, the country's income distribution is perfectly unequal. 0.4 is considered as the *alarm boundary* by the United Nations Development Programme (World Bank, 2014)

Smallholder farms are still the majority of the population and they suffer from continued problems. They are still highly dependent on their small output of coffee and tea (Batte Sennoga & Byamukama, 2014, p. 3). They are also forced into agricultural modernisation programmes (monocropping, regional crop specialisation, market orientation) and mostly do not have the means for this. Financial restrictions are another source of concern for rural populations, for many investments are required by the government. Furthermore, the concentration of power and wealth in the agricultural sector may create a class of landless labourers, ready to be exploited. The focus on large-scale investment and maximum growth could be an indicator that neoliberal policies and foreign investment dependencies become permanent (Ansoms & Rostagno, 2012, pp. 441-442).

The issue at stake in Rwanda is that the economy is still not fully decolonial and it is likely that this will remain so in the following years. We have seen that the colonial structure of Rwanda's economy and the neoliberal, Western imposed policy measures of the IMF and the World Bank acted as important precursors to the genocide. The Postcolony will always act in international economic structures and knowledge systems that are dictated through dominant powers, hence the government's attempts to transform the country from an agrarian to a knowledge-based economy (Government of Rwanda, 2000, p. 9). It remains uncertain whether Rwanda has been successful in its attempts to progress from this state of economic postcoloniality.

The economic programmes, based on indigenous knowledge, are arguably the most important steps a country as Rwanda can take in its attempts to achieve economic progress and independence. Despite several worrying figures, the outcomes can mostly be seen as positive (Ezeanya, 2014). The problem of poverty rise in absolute terms and the increase of inequality can however be interpreted from our postcolonial perspective. Both imply that urban elites of returned exiles have developed and have profited most from the economic reforms. There is a possibility that this new, relatively privileged, wealthy and educated elite comes to identify itself more with Western economic monopolists than with its less well-off own population (Ashcroft et al., 2007, p. 146). However, unlike the previous Hutu *comprador* elites, who thrived on postcolonial economic structures, without engaging in any reforms, several home-grown programmes today attempt to diversify the economy and reorganise its structures, so the whole population can profit from the current economic progress (Ansoms & Rostagno, 2012, pp. 431-440).

It remains difficult to develop an independent economic identity under the pressures of globalisation for countries in the Global South (Ashcroft et al., 2007, p.146). In that sense it is good

that the state has a strong control over the economic development of the country and has not -yet-succumbed to the "theory and practice of unfettered liberalisation of market forces" (Ibid., p. 148). However, since there is hardly any manoeuvring space for economic alternatives within the global economic structure, Rwanda is also opening the economy and investing substantially in private sector development, although it happens through relatively strict economic planning of the Vision 2020 programme and the Economic Development and Poverty reduction Strategy (EDPRS) (Government of Rwanda, 2000) (MINECOFIN, 2013). The RPF sees economic development, more than political pluralism and democratisation, as the most important pillar for reconciliation and peace (Kagame, 2008).

Kagame likes to take the *Asian Tigers* as prime models. However, these countries have suffered from enormous economic backlashes as a consequence of international financial-economic investments and, inevitably, speculations (Sachs & Radelet, 1998). The Rwandan government should therefore constantly be aware of the possible consequences of international economic overstretch. As we have seen, the ultimate consequence of economic turmoil could be an outburst of new ethnic violence in a country with fragile ethnic identities. Successful alternatives to the established and Western dominated international economic structures could be initiatives such as the East African Community (EAC); the regional, intergovernmental integration organisation that unites five countries of the Great Lakes region[12]. Other regional economic solutions, such as the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Economic Community for the Countries of the Great Lakes (CEPGL), have also been founded to unite African countries as an alternative to the established financial organisations, for which these countries remain largely peripheral (Batte Sennoga & Byamukama, 2014, p. 7).

5.4.   Contemporary Rwanda in International Politics

In 1994 France's unlimited support for the Hutu Power regimes was decisive, for without the material and ideological support from the *Elysée*, the events would not have taken place. The French political and economic elite found themselves in a perceived post-Cold War conflict against the *Anglo-Saxons* of the RPF. The political, economic and cultural control over *Françafrique,* France's sphere of influence of former African colonies had to be protected by any means (Melvern, 2000, p. 30). Furthermore, we identified the failure of the international community to understand the ethnic powder keg of early 1990s Rwanda, as the second important international political precursor to the genocide. The international community, embodied by the UNSC, did not sufficiently address the

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[12]The members are: Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania. The EAC has its headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania.

situation. This resulted in the UNAMIR peacekeeping mission of 1994, which was doomed to fail from the very outset (Long & Mills, 2008).

Several issues were therefore at stake for both Rwanda and the international community with regards to Rwanda's integration in the international political structure. First, the question of the influence of former colonial powers in the country and the Great Lakes region is important. The relationship between France and the post-genocidal government has been far from perfect in the past years. Despite the overwhelming evidence, the French always have been reluctant to disclose full information on their involvement in the genocide and its aftermath (Prugnaud & De Vulpian, 2012) (Des Forges, 1999, pp. 654-691). Between 2006 and 2009 the diplomatic relations between both countries were temporarily suspended due to the report of a French investigative judge on the shooting of former President Habyarimana's plane. The relations were normalised again in 2011 (France Diplomatie, 2015). However, in 2014, during the commemoration ceremonies of the genocide, a new diplomatic incident worsened the situation again (Radio France Internationale, 2014).

Such examples are symptomatic for any formerly colonised country. Finding an equilibrium in their international relations on the remnants of colonialism is not easy. The RPF not only clipped France's political wings in the region, but also its economic and cultural ones. As we have seen, the RPF consisted largely of English speaking Tutsi and a large majority of them have returned to the country since 1994. As relations soured between French and Rwandan authorities, Rwanda decided to shift its language politics. This had always been an instrument of power for France through the international organisation of French speaking nations: *La Francophonie*. The first language of the country is still *Kinyarwanda*, but now English has overtaken French as the second. Furthermore, in 2009 the country entered the Commonwealth of Nations, the international union of mostly English-speaking former British colonies (The Economist, 2012). Although it may seem absurd to shift from one postcolonial political-economic structure to another, the strategy is simple and calculated: Rwanda does no longer want to be an instrument in France's attempts to remain a neo-colonial power in Africa. Also, the economic advantages of the Commonwealth are too important not to pursue, for Rwanda sees economic growth as cornerstone for its post-genocidal development.

Fanon compellingly analysed the influence of language on the psychology of the colonised subjects. The Hutu elites, *évolués* in the eyes of the neo-colonial French masters, adapted the discourse and practice of Europeans. What better way, Fanon asks, is there than to adopt the masters' language in order to identify oneself with them and become them (1952, pp. 15-34). The

RPF came to the same conclusion as Fanon. Hence, moving beyond the Postcolony also implies the decolonisation of the language, in order to obtain a decolonisation of *the mind*.

Another manner in which the RPF-led government tries to progress from the state of postcoloniality, is its attempt to diminish its dependency on foreign aid. The relative dependency of the government's budget on foreign aid dropped from 85% in 2000 to 45% in 2010, and this number continues to decrease (Ansoms & Rostagno, 2012, p. 429). The reason is that fluctuations in aid make the country vulnerable. In 2012 for example there was a sharp drop in aid contributions following a UN report on Rwanda's involvement in Eastern Congo (Ibid.). In December 2014, the Belgian government announced not to pay out 40 million euro in development aid that had been earmarked for Rwanda. This was because "Rwanda continued to fail any progress in the areas of press freedom and good governance" (Deredactie, 2014). Aid allocations come with significant political leverage for donating countries and it is such possible interference in its domestic politics that the Rwandan government wishes to avoid.

The influence of the former colonial powers in the region, France and Belgium, has thus decreased. However, as Rwanda entered the Commonwealth and resolutely decided to focus on the *anglosphere*, the presence of UK and US investments and development aid has become all the more remarkable. The two countries have become Rwanda's largest bilateral donor. As discussions soar amongst scholars on the neo-colonial superpower of the US, the question also rises if they have taken over the role of France in pre-genocide Rwanda and would continue to support the regime at any cost. However, we do not believe this would be the case. US diplomats insist that the support is not unconditional, since their interests are not directly linked to the survival the RPF (unlike relationship between the *Elysée* and Habyarimana at the time) (Zorbas, 2011, pp. 109-110). Rwanda, in general, is strategically, economically and culturally not of the same significance for the US as it was for France in its attempts to cling to its neo-colonial Utopia of *Françafrique*.

Zorbas (2011, p. 104) is convinced that there are three main reasons for the continued international, and mostly English and American, support for the government. Firstly, she identifies the concept of *genocide guilt.* Secondly, there is the RPF's donor friendly *language* in terms of allocations of the aid packages, i.e. private sector development, cheap export, etc. Thirdly, she sees the desire for *African success stories* as determining for continued support. Zorbas (Ibid., pp.109-110) further notes that the absence of strategic and commercial interests in the country has meant that development cooperation programmes have become the main strategic interest for big donors, such

as the US. The Rwandan has so far been criticised by the US for its involvement in the DRC (Ibid. p. 111).

The role of the UN is also remains of significant interest. Although attempts have been made to limit the decision-making powers of the five permanent members of the Security Council and the development of a concept such as the 'Responsibility to Protect' (R2P), it remains highly questionable if they will be successful. In 2005, The UN organised a World Summit to discuss the future of the organisation. In the outcome document, the General Assembly expressed its support for "early reform of the Security Council [...] in order to make it more broadly representative, efficient and transparent" (United Nations General Assembly, 2005, p. 32). This was a clear message to the permanent members that the hegemonic power of these five states within the UN could no longer be accepted. Despite this, and several other attempts undertaken in recent years, nothing has changed and the Security Council reflect the desperate attempts of hegemons to cling to a bygone era in which the bipolar world was subject to their decisions (Global Policy Forum, 2005).

During the 2005 World Summit, the 'Responsibility to Protect' initiative was discussed as well. This concept affirms that states not only have the right to sovereignty, but also a responsibility to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. If not, the international community must take action to uphold the responsibility (Global Policy Forum & Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, 2014, p. 3). In a report the Global Policy Forum and the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung denounce the concept and state that it "does not provide a satisfying answer to the key question it's supposed to address: How best to prevent and, if prevention fails, respond to large-scale human rights violations" (Ibid., p. 6). Its main criticism is that it relies too much on military intervention as a last resort and does not focus on how to achieve real progress through other means, such as conflict prevention and diplomatic solutions (Ibid, p. 47). It remains therefore unclear if initiatives like R2P can proof useful in the future for conflict resolution.

The international political environment in which the Post-Genocidal Rwandan government has to act and interact is thus still largely dominated by -mostly Western- hegemons. The UNSC has not been reformed since 1994 and new concepts like R2P have not yet proven to be adequate instruments to address mass violence when the state fails. Moreover, some see it as a tool for Western powers for foreign interventions whenever their interests are at stake (Chimini, 2013). Unfortunately, the Postcoloniality of international politics is a fact that Rwanda cannot alter by itself. The UNSC requires reform from the inside.

However, with regards to neo-colonial influence in Rwanda by former colonisers, Rwanda has taken many steps forwards. France is no longer the main international political, economic and cultural player in the country and Belgium may be still regarded as an important partner, but nothing more than that. The RPF is determined to set out an independent course on the international level, advocating for its exceptional development model and based on its principles of 'Rwandan Democracy'. Despite its adherence to the anglosphere, the country does everything in its power not to allow foreign interests to grow as influential as in the years before the 1994 genocide through keeping strict control over the country's economic development. Economic programmes such as Vision 2020 and the state-led poverty reduction programmes (Government of Rwanda, 2000, pp. 8-9). We can conclude that the Rwandan government itself has quite successfully progressed from the neo-colonial scramble for the country that partially caused the genocide. Now the responsibility lies with the global powers to address the issues of international institutional reform and change of practice and discourse with regards to former colonies.

6. General Conclusion

Our conceptualisation of the 1994 genocide and Rwanda's development to emphasise the problematic -political, economic and cultural- conditions in which postcolonial states operate, require a moment of critical self-reflection at the outset of this conclusion. For indeed, as Western scholars, we should ask ourselves: "Who are we to speak on behalf of the Rwandan people?" There is the risk that we too perpetuate the structures of colonialism by essentialising Rwandan society, for we are basing our information on indirect sources, have never been in Rwanda, privilege non-Rwandan scholarly voices and are limited by our own ideological and theoretical perspective.

Therefore, we have tried offer a balanced view on the issues we addressed, but we remain well aware of the limitations of our work. Our conclusion remains thus preliminary. We are convinced that our research outcomes require an additional qualitative approach. Rwandan citizens would be central in any such continued research and it is their voices that should be heard. It is up to them to decide whether the country has progressed in sufficient manner so that future violence is impossible. Due to practical limitations we have not had the opportunity to conduct interviews, but we are confident that we have used sufficient data, representing a balanced group of voices.

This work is also in a sense, a long invitation to other scholars to re-examine our outcomes. The explanatory model that we have developed can certainly be discussed and adjusted. It certainly remains an ideal type. Not only in the field of genocide studies but also in that of post-conflict studies, can our research be useful for further other academic researchers. Comparative research between the ethno-politics of post-genocidal societies and governments is one of the examples we can think of in terms of the use of our model and interpretations.

To answer our research question, we started from the idea that genocide is more than a strictly legal term and that a politico-sociological approach is required. This meant that we had to deconstruct the concept and that we had to investigate the causality of it. In the case of the 1994 genocide we analysed this causality within framework of postcolonialism. During our research we found that there are policy measures that can either reinforce these causes or inhibit them. This is the primordial to understanding Rwanda's post-genocidal development.

The key to Rwanda's future of reconciliation and peace lies in its past. Rwanda can only unite if it addresses the issues that lay at the very basis of the events of 1994. Through our framework of

postcolonial critique we have identified the rigid ethnic dichotomy between Hutu and Tutsi that was created during the colonial era, as the central driver of the genocide. For after independence, this was exploited by an authoritarian regime in order to guard its politico-economic privileges. Supported by a neo-colonial regime in France and not restricted by an international community that regarded Africa as a *lost continent*, the Hutu regimes were free to institutionalise their ethnic bigotry. Following an economic crackdown in the early 1990s and a civil war that was never addressed in a holistic manner by the fighting parties and international observers, the genocide was all but inevitable.

The Rwandan government has tried through a top-down approach to reinstate the non-ethnic, national identity that existed in pre-colonial Rwanda. The RPF-led government tries to accomplish the country's unity through a tight control over the political space and has difficulties leaving room for dissident voices. The fear of voices promoting divisionism and genocide ideology and instigating violence again, is very present. Some scholars see this as an attempt to seize permanent control over the country, but we do not fully agree with this view. For when the scholars say that a better way of addressing the issue is through 'multi-ethnic dialogue', they lack knowledge on the subject. Ethnicity in Rwanda is a construct of colonial discourse. The government therefore attempts to reunite and educate the people on this matter. When scholars insist on inter-ethnic dialogue, they engage in the same rhetoric as colonial authorities at the time. They must understand that Rwanda can only exist if the construct of ethnicity is extracted from society. Therefore, it could indeed become problematic to insist on the responsibility of Hutu in the 1994 genocide and, at the same time, reiterate the necessity of a unified future, one in which the distinction Hutu-Tutsi does not exist.

We agree that the Rwandan society is still divided, however it is unclear whether this is lesser to an ethnic than an economic extent. Although focusing heavily on economic development in order to reconcile the country, there is growing inequality that should be addressed imminently. The poorer rural population must connect again with the urban elite in Kigali in terms of material wellbeing. Due to practical limitations, we were not able to investigate the links between socio-economic exclusion and ethnic identification. In other words, to which extent are the less well-off, mostly rural, populations identifying along ethnic lines remains an important question. For now, the rhetoric of the government is that all Rwandans, equally deserve a safe economic future. It remains to be seen whether they succeed in their attempts. If the government would actually succeed in becoming a middle income country and providing a safer economic future for poorer groups, this would mark a great step in its economic progress.

Furthermore, democratisation is not something that can only be obtained after economic development, they come hand in hand. Contrary to the previous Hutu regimes, tight RPF control is not directed towards ethnic divisionism but rather towards the complete exclusion of it. In the end, we must agree with Ingelaere and Verpoorten (2014) that quite paradoxically, the key to political unification for the RPF lies in the same authoritarianism of previous regimes it so virulently attacked. Only now, indeed, it is directed towards suppressing divisionism and not enforcing it. Again, the question remains whether this means if future violence will not be directed to certain *civilian* groups as a violent outburst of economic, political or economic discontent.

The country has also been successful in its attempts to progress from a position where it was an instrument for foreign powers and their struggle to retain control over geographical areas. Rwanda makes its own political choices now and no longer has any foreign government whispering in its ears what -not- to do. Although the question of the functioning of international political institutions remains pending, this is something that goes beyond Rwanda's reach.

For now, genocidal violence in Rwanda is highly unlikely. The main factor of the postcolonial genocide of 1994, namely violent ethnic divisionism, is consistently being erased from the Rwandan society. If the economic growth of the countries is combined with an opening in the political landscape and true democratisation, it is safe to say that Rwanda will not suffer from any form of ethnic violence in the short to mid-term. The need to overcome postcoloniality remains in several fields, especially in the international political level, but this is something that goes beyond Rwanda's own capabilities. Rwanda, as a unified nation, will eventually completely overcome its postcoloniality through the establishment of a single Rwandan identity in the political field, through economic progress for the whole population and by means of true independence on the international political playing field. If this happens there will come an end to the country's sacrifice on the altar of its colonial past.

7. Attachments

Attachment I: Genocide explained through Rwanda's Colonial Heritage

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┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐
│  Precolonial │─────▶│   Colonial   │─────▶│  GENOCIDE    │
│Rwandan Society│      │ Discourse &  │      │              │
│              │      │   Practice   │      │              │
└──────────────┘      └──────────────┘      └──────────────┘
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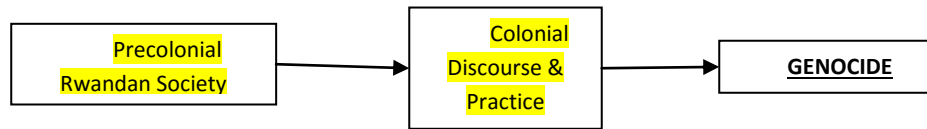
Attachment II: The Nature of the Rwandan State: 1962 - 1994

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┌──────────────┐   ┌──────────────┐   ┌─────────────────┐        ┌──────────────┐
│  Precolonial │──▶│   Colonial   │──▶│ State-led ethnic│───────▶│  Civil War   │
│Rwandan Society│   │ Discourse &  │   │  propaganda &   │        │              │
│              │   │   Practice   │   │  manipulation   │        └──────────────┘
└──────────────┘   └──────────────┘   └─────────────────┘              │  ▲
                                              │                         │  │       ┌───────────────────────┐
                                              │                         ▼  │       ┆  Trigger: Death of     ┆
                                              ▼              ┌──────────────┐      ┆ President Habyarimana  ┆
                                              │              │    Mass      │      └───────────────────────┘
                                                             │ Mobilisation │                  │
                                                             └──────────────┘                  │
                                                                     │                         ▼
                                                                     │              ┌──────────────┐
                                                                     └─────────────▶│  GENOCIDE    │
                                                                                    └──────────────┘
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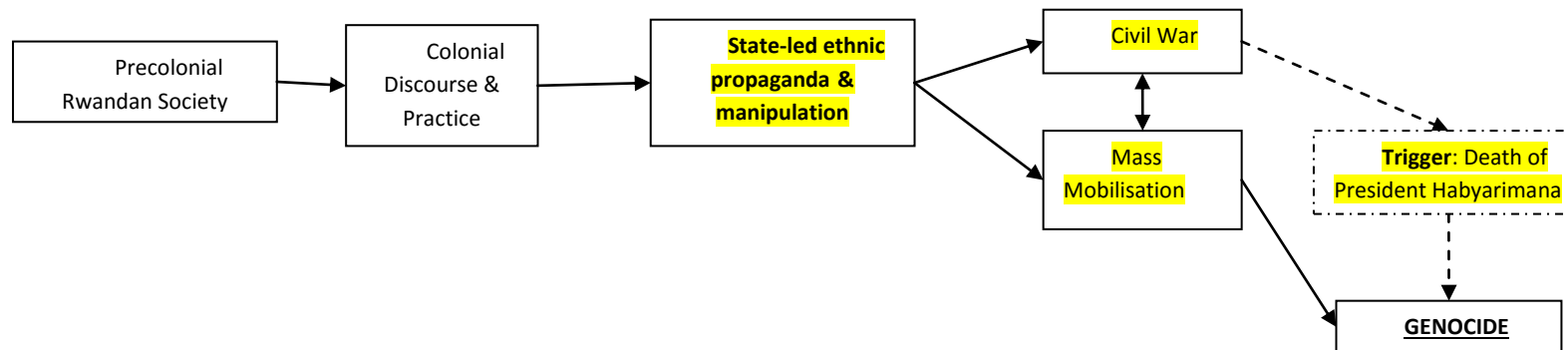
Attachment III: International Political Economy of Genocide

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┌─────────────┐     ┌─────────────┐     ┌─────────────┐        ┌─────────────┐
│ Precolonial │     │  Colonial   │     │State-led    │───────→│  Civil War  │
│  Rwandan    │───→ │ Discourse & │───→ │ethnic       │        └─────────────┘
│  Society    │     │  Practice   │     │propaganda & │              ↕      ╲
└─────────────┘     └─────────────┘     │manipulation │        ┌─────────────┐  ╲
                                        └─────────────┘        │    Mass     │   ┌──────────────────┐
                                               ↑               │Mobilisation │   │ Trigger: Death of│
                                        ┌─────────────┐        └─────────────┘   │President Habyarimana│
                                        │  Domestic   │              ╲           └──────────────────┘
                                        │Economic     │               ╲                  ╎
                                        │Hardship     │                ╲           ┌─────────────┐
                                        └─────────────┘                 ╲──────────│  GENOCIDE   │
                                          ↑        ↑                                └─────────────┘
                              ┌────────────┐  ┌────────────┐
                              │ Colonial   │  │ Structural │
                              │Economic    │  │Adjustment  │
                              │Structure   │  │Programmes  │
                              └────────────┘  └────────────┘
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60
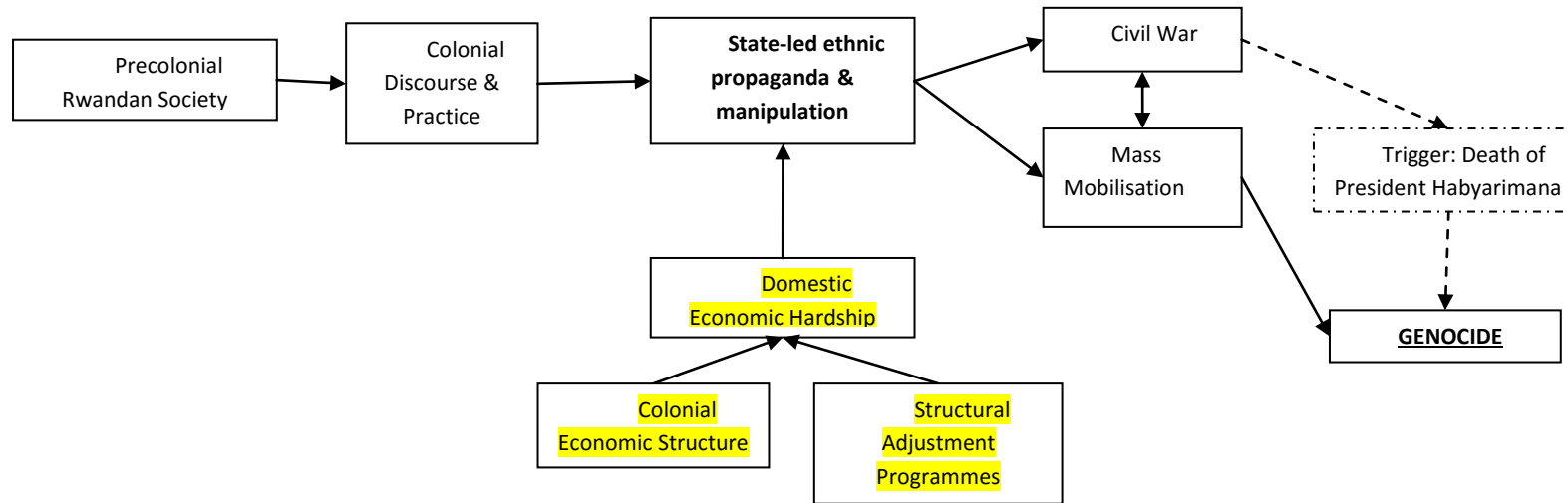
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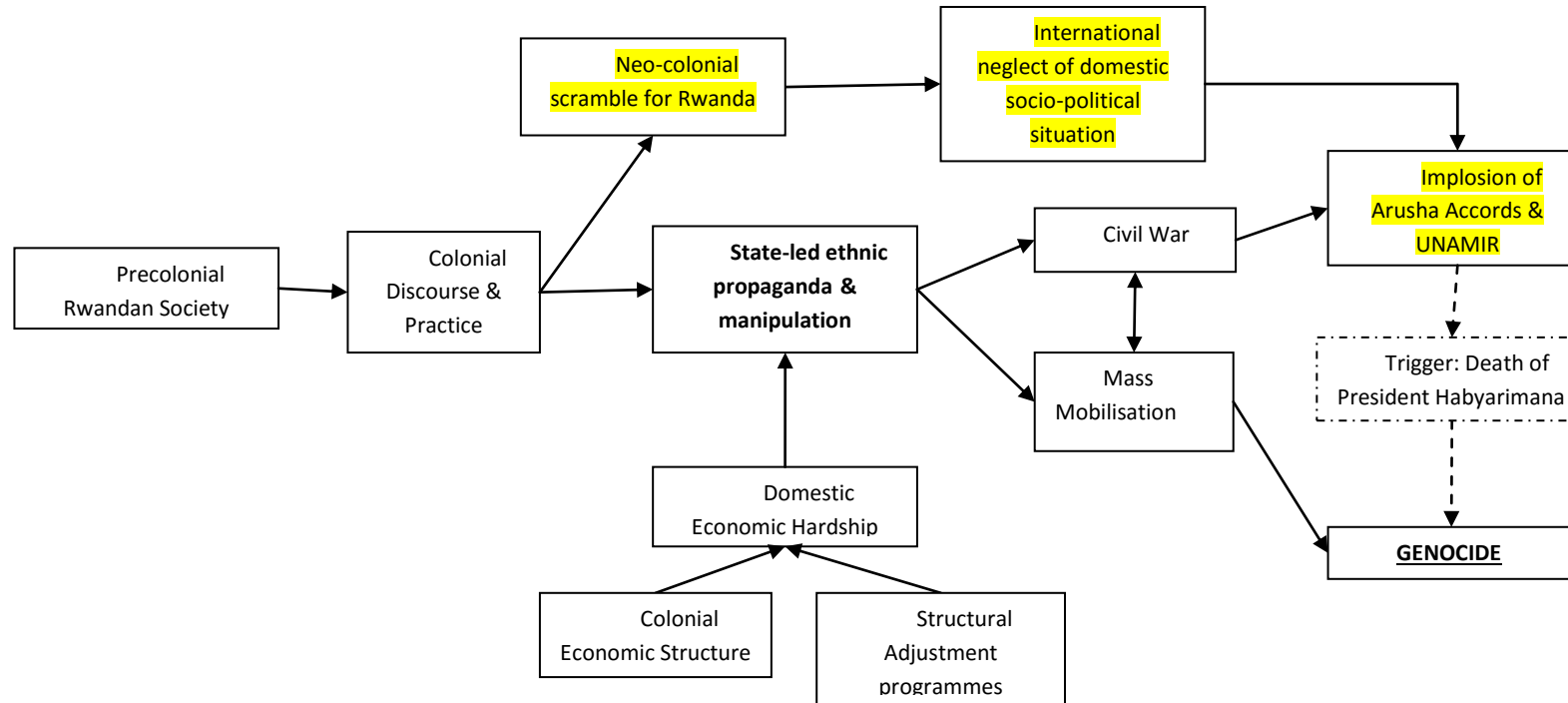
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