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Structural Violence in Rwanda: An Alternative Explanation for Genocide?

Vinod Bal
Adhikaar Aotearoa
vinod.bal@adhikaaraotearoa.co.nz

Abstract

This article outlines the contribution of structural violence to the gradual outbreak of genocide in Rwanda. It examines how such violence, albeit indirect, provided permissive grounds for the egregious events that took place. Doing so challenges the popular notion that this genocide was primarily caused by ethnic hatred. Such a characterisation oversimplifies this tragic incidence of violence. Referring to theories of political opportunity and scapegoating allows an interpretation that the manipulation of the masses by political actors caused the 1994 genocide. By negating the role of primordial ethnicity, this article illuminates how ethnicity was used by elites to apportion blame to "othered" groups, namely the Tutsi.

Key Words: Structural Violence, Genocide, Rwanda, Manipulation, Elites

Introduction

"Few tragedies can be more extensive than the stunting of life, few injustices deeper than the denial of an opportunity to strive or even to hope..." (Gould, 1981, p. 29). Gould's conception of injustice and tragedy offers itself, quite harmonisingly, to the Rwandan Genocide of 1994. In 100 days of violence, an estimated 800,000 to one million people died, mostly the Tutsi ethnic minority, at the hands of extremist Hutus. This genocide has no equivalence; it is the most intensive ethnic slaughter in modern history. While much commentary has suggested that pure ethnic hatred is to blame for the outbreak of genocide, this article contends otherwise. The Rwandan Genocide did not stem from differences in ethnicity that were benign for centuries before the entry of colonisers. The Genocide stemmed from what has been popularly coined

as “structural violence.” This type of violence is not physical, but it is not to be reified; it is an abstraction that explains how the structure and institutions of society limit opportunity for specific groups within it. It manifests through poverty, exclusion and favouritism.

This article illuminates how structural violence was a factor that caused the Rwandan Genocide. In doing so, the article does not disregard other elements that contributed to this malevolent outbreak of violence. It simply intends to show how structural violence is more salient than commonly thought. In the words of Peter Uvin, Rwandan Genocide scholar, "[s]implistic, monocausal explanations are useless here..." (Uvin, 1998, p. 3).

Lastly, the article will explain how structural violence itself is not enough to fruit genocide; political manipulation by elites must occur. This manipulation, in the case of pre-genocide Rwanda, was motivated by a desire to retain power in the face of the Arusha-accorded democratisation. Elites used ethnicity to apportion blame against the Tutsi for the poverty and exclusion that the everyday Hutu felt. These same elites transformed this Hutu indignation into a motivation for genocide.

Theories of structural violence

Structural violence refers to how the structure and institutions of society cause indirect and avoidable harm to persons (Lee, 2016). It is violence that occurs on a social level; it is to be juxtaposed with direct personal violence. Due to the fact these harms are perpetrated by the structure and institutions of society, are human-made “and because it is correctable and preventable through human agency,” there is an increasing will to call them “violence” (Lee, 2016, p. 110). In this way, structural violence is ascribed the highest levels of moral guilt. In the words of violence scholar, Bandy Lee, “[t]he harm is structural because it is a product of the way we have organized our social world; it is violent because it causes injury and death” (Lee, 2016, p. 110).

Johan Galtung first coined the concept of structural violence in his seminal 1969 article, Violence, Peace and Peace Research (Galtung, 1969). In this article, he broadly defined structural violence as “that which increases the distance between the potential and the actual, and that which impedes the decrease of this distance” (Galtung, 1969, p. 169). Galtung uses an actual-potential dichotomy to explain that structural violence is any factor that impedes the limiting of the distance between the two.

Hence, using his conception, poverty, injustice and malnutrition count as forms of structural violence. To allow further analytic clarity, Galtung does provide limitations. He suggests that forms of structural violence ought to be avoidable through human agency. Using analogy, Galtung proposes that using structural violence in a contemporary discourse about earthquakes is illogical, but "tomorrow, when earthquakes may become avoidable, such deaths may be seen as the result of violence" (Galtung, 1969, p. 169). Hence, a key element of Galtung's conception is the idea that harms of structural violence must be avoidable.

Structural violence manifests itself in many ways, from unequal access to resources, political power, education, health care and/or legal standing. Galtung, in a later work, proposes that structural violence can manifest through the human emotions and actions of misery, repression and exploitation (Galtung, 1980). As can be seen, structural violence shows itself varyingly. However, commentators suggest the manifestation of structural violence is always linked to social injustice and mechanisms of oppression (Farmer, 2004). Furthermore, a key characteristic of structural violence is the insidiousness it possesses. As this type of violence is societal and indirect, it is not easily identifiable and typically occurs subtly. As Winter and Leighton (2001:1) stipulate, "structural violence produces suffering and death as often as direct violence does, though the damage is slower, more subtle, more common, and more difficult to repair".

This type of violence is a persistent issue because it is embedded in "ubiquitous social structures [and is] normalized by stable institutions and regular experience" (Winter and Leighton, 2001, p. 1). The regular experience that the scholars cite would not be problematic for the issues of "ethnic" conflict at hand if they did not produce resentment, deprivation and oppression. However, they do. Christie (1997) proposes that structural violence causes economic deprivation and when this occurs "the need for well-being is not satisfied, resulting in deficits in human growth and development" (p. 315). Such deficits arouse the human tendency to feel indignation. In a well-known piece of political literature, *Why Men Rebel*, Ted Robert Gurr proposes that it is this indignation (as a result of deprivation), that is a key generator of conflict (Gurr, 1970). Winter and Leighton (2001) eloquently support this idea when they stipulate that structural violence "is… dangerous because it frequently leads to direct violence; the chronically oppressed are often, for logical

reasons, those who resort to direct violence" (p. 2). This is an apt idea in the case of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide.

Theories of ethnicity

Ethnicity

Ethnicity, even more so than the concept of structural violence, has long raised academic debate about the meaning of the idea. Hence, the idea is subject to many developed and conflicting theories that each delineate their own version of the concept.

Max Weber stipulates that ethnicity refers to "those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both" (Weber, 1968, p. 368). Weber's definition portrays ethnicity as a collectivised identity that relies, primarily, upon the belief of commonality. Another scholar, Anthony Smith, posits that ethnicities have six main elements: a collective name, a myth of common ancestry, shared historical memories, differentiating elements of a common culture, an association with a homeland and a sense of solidarity for those persons similar (Smith, 1991, p. 21). Smith's typology is protean in the sense that all six elements can be changed; this will be discussed below. Abner Cohen, takes a different view of ethnicity when he states that ethnicity is "fundamentally a political phenomenon… It is a type of informal interest grouping" (Cohen, 1969, p. 4). As can be seen, Cohen takes the view that ethnicity is a way to organise for resource extraction. These conceptions mainly feed into two main theories of ethnicity: primordialism and instrumentalism.

Here we utilise the definition of Paul Brass who stipulates that ethnicity is an affinity with a particular group due to perceived commonality (Brass, 1996). The article uses this particular definition due to its inference that ethnicity is a fluid concept and relies upon a sense of shared common descent, as opposed to an immutable fact of commonality. Both of these premises are proven to be the case in Rwanda.

Primordialism

Primordialism is one of the two main theoretical foundations of ethnicity. The theory postulates that ethnicity is a characteristic that is rigid, fixed and immutable. Further, its proponents argue that ethnic conflict results from the innate differences among ethnicities. Primordialism "constitutes the layperson's view of nations and nationalism" (Ozkirimli, 2010, p. 51). In simplistic terms, primordialism

suggests "man is seen as a leopard who cannot change his ethnic spots" (McKay, 1982, p. 398).

In their seminal article, The Poverty of Primordialism, Eller and Coughlan (1993), propose three key tenets of primordialism: apriorism – ethnicity is an identity that is a given; ineffability – ethnicity is an identity that is extremely strong and overpowering; and affectivity – ethnicity is an identity that is emotional and hence is different to other identities. The main inference that can be drawn from these tenets is the notion that ethnicity is an overarching, biologically defined and hence exclusive type of identity. It differs from identities of nationality and gender, which are highly fluid and malleable concepts.

Clifford Geertz, one of the main proponents of this school of thought, laid the theoretical framework upon which primordialism was developed. He stipulates his conception of the theory: one is

> bound to one's kinsman, one's neighbour, one's fellow believer, ipso facto; as the result not merely of personal affection, practical necessity, common interest, or incurred obligation, but at least in great part by virtue of some unaccountable absolute import attributed to the very tie itself (Geertz, 1963, p. 42).

For Geertz, the primordial nature of ethnicity is explained without reference to the extrinsic factors of necessity and interest. Ethnicity goes beyond an aggregation for political mobilisation; it is, simply, a biological connection. Geertz's explains that the process of modernisation heightens ethnic self-awareness; "during the disorienting process of modernization… unintegrated citizens… will grab hold of an increasingly anachronistic ethnic identity" (Geertz, 1998, p. 14). It is this deep-rooted nature of ethnicity that gives it the propensity to spark violence. As Sambanis (2001) posits, primordial ethnic conflict "is rooted in old sources of enmity and memories of past atrocities that make violence hard to avoid" (p. 263).

Instrumentalism

Instrumentalism offers itself to a more recent conception of ethnicity. It stipulates that ethnicity is used as a tool by political elites. Hence, in this theory, ethnicity is a characteristic that is fluid, can be manipulated and is based upon a sense of commonality one person has with another.

Anthony Smith's typology of ethnicity, summarised above, is an instrumentalist one. As noted, the elements that Smith proposes are easily altered and manipulable. The ancestral myths that Smith references can "be revised, reinterpreted, or abandoned. Historical memory, language, culinary taste, forms of artistic expression – all are highly mutable" (Jones, 2010, p. 293). Hence, prima facie, it is not hard to see the malleable nature of ethnic characteristics. This is especially the case when there is a strong reasoning behind the elite manipulation of ethnicity. As Ted Robert Gurr proposes, ethnicity is not more salient than other identities unless "entrepreneurial political leaders" need it to be so (Gurr, 1994, p. 348).

While primordialism has three key tenets, it is arguable that instrumentalism has one: the ability of ethnicity to be manipulated by elites. It is apt to note that ethnicity can disappear from the public narrative when it is no longer expedient to political elites (Joireman, 2004). This ability lends itself towards the notion that the manipulation of ethnicity can occur and stop when desired. Horowitz proposes that it is "organizations, often tied to ethnically based political parties, [which] reflect and reinforce interethnic hostility through propaganda, ritual, and force" (Horowitz, 2001, p. 243). This sentiment explains the ascriptive power that elites have when it comes to defining ethnicity and the saliency of this ethnicity to a person or particular group (Nagel, 1986). It is the premise of instrumentalism to suggest that "ethnic" conflicts themselves "are typically not really "ethnic" at all… [they] are motivated by economic or criminal disputes but are later reinterpreted as having been ethnically motivated for political purposes" (Brass, 1997, p. 93).

The prelude to genocide

As a United Nations official quipped, "[e]very "serious" study of Rwanda ... begins by giving the ethnic composition of the population (84 per cent Hutu, 15 per cent Tutsi and 1 per cent Twa)" (Rahnema, 1962, p. 4). Many contemporary discussions of Rwanda exclude the most consequential ethnic group in Rwanda preceding the genocide: the Umuzungu ("the White person"). This is important to note, as it was this ethnic group that constituted the apex elites in pre-genocide Rwanda and made the political distinctions among ethnic groups more pronounced.

Ethnicity in Rwanda proves to be an interesting case of social fluidity. Commentators suggest that it "is hard even to describe them as distinct ethnicities, since they share the same language, territory and

religion" (Jones, 2010, p. 4). Typically, in regard to ethnicity, there is some cleaving factor such as those suggested in the previous section. However, the absence of such factors makes Rwanda an interesting case of instrumentalist thought. Uvin (1998) suggests that occupation determined the social entrance to the groups that would eventually constitute these ethnicities: "whoever acquired a sizable herd of cattle was called Tutsi and was highly considered, farmers were Hutu, and hunters and artisans were Twa" (p. 13). Hence, there is a basis in malleable human agency (due to occupation) as opposed to biological and non-protean links that formulate these ethnic groups. This runs in the face of primordialism. This is further proved to be the case considering the non-rigid nature of ethnicity in Rwanda. Mamdani (2001: 51) stipulates:

> [t]he rare Hutu who was able to accumulate cattle and rise through the socioeconomic hierarchy could *kwihutura* – shed Hutuness – and achieve the political status of a Tutsi. Conversely, the loss of property could also lead to the loss of status, summed up in the Kinyarwanda word *gucupira*.

The presence of such channels of social and "ethnic" mobility again, negate the propositions that ethnicity is an a priori identity and is fixed for life. This article proposes that ethnicity in Rwanda served the function of being a grouping which was "was gradually transformed into a racial distinction that shaped ethnic identity" (Jones, 2010, p 235).

While academic opinion seems to provide the qualification for stating ethnicity in Rwanda was malleable, what provides political consequences on the ground is the perception of the populace of Rwanda. There was the view that ethnicity was built upon primordial grounds, in pre-genocide Rwanda. Maquet (1961) claims, when asking if a Hutu boy brought up with Tutsis could develop Tutsi characteristics, that both Hutu and Tutsi "informants answer that such a training could change the boy to some extent, but not completely; the differences pertain to nature" (p. 164). Such a view of ethnicity is primordial. Popular discourse about ethnicity in pre-genocide Rwanda proposed that "Tutsi were said to be intelligent… capable of command, refined, courageous, and cruel; Hutu, hardworking, not very clever, extrovert, irascible, unmannerly, obedient" (Maquet, 1961, p. 146-7, 164). With such a perception, promulgated by elites, within the populace, it is not hard to see how "ethnic" differentiation resulted.

Manifestations of structural violence in pre-genocide Rwanda

Structural violence manifested itself numerous ways in pre-genocide Rwanda. Oxfam (1996) notes that "poverty, the politics of exclusion, the denial of basic rights and economic exclusion are all facets of a problem that has frequently erupted into bloody conflict" (p. 5). This typifies much of what caused the Rwandan genocide. Khan (1978) notes four typologies of violence: (a) classical, or direct, violence; (b) poverty—deprivation of basic material needs; (c) repression—deprivation of human rights; (d) alienation— deprivation of higher needs. All four of these elements were present in pre-genocide Rwanda, with the last three being structural in nature. The latter two constituted the main variations of structural violence in pre-genocide Rwanda.

Agrarianism, and the issues associated with it, were a form of structural violence perpetrated against the Rwandan people. A United Nations report suggested that 26% of the population was landless due to elites buying up all available land (United Nations, 1991). These elites consisted of military officers and party officials of the National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development (MRND), which "prompt[ed] many to speak of Rwanda's elite as a 'military-merchant' class" (Taylor, 1999, p. 47). Such economic exclusion targeted mainly the rural Hutu as many Tutsi, not all, were urbanised. Lemarchand (1970) explains that the Hutu were in an "exceedingly circumscribed position" whereby the word "Hutu" "tended to become almost interchangeable with 'peasantry'" (pp. 95, 93). These Hutu found themselves in highly dyadic relationships with the land-owning elites, typically owing to them free labour for shelter on their land. As could be expected, many Rwandans were "extremely unhappy with the accumulation of land by the privileged of the regime and the constitution of large pastoral domains" (Erny, 1994, p. 80). However, for those Rwandans lucky enough to own land, this land was woefully inadequate to provide for them and their families; "Rwandan farms are quite small, just a little over two acres on average, whereas the typical Rwandan household consists of about nine people" (Taylor, 1999, p. 35). Due to elites aggregating land and hence lessening the amount available for the population at large, 43% of the population lacked the minimum land needed for survival and lived in chronic undernutrition (United Nations, 1991, p. 29).

An obvious impact, as alluded to above, of the agrarian system in Rwanda, is the malnutrition that the everyday Rwandan felt. Kimonyo (2015) finds that between "1964 and 1966, Rwandans on average received only 73 percent of the minimum required calories" (p. 37). However, closer to the outbreak of genocide, due to Habyarimana's self-sufficiency-orientated policies, malnutrition increased. Uvin (1998) shows that "over the period 1984–1991, kcal. produced by Rwandan farmers dropped from 2,055 per person per day to 1,509" (p. 54). When such calories are divided among a family, the provision assigned is pitiful. This was much the case preceding the genocide, whereby an estimated 50% of the population was considered malnourished (Brasseur, Govens & Vis, 1994). Furthermore, the lack of economic diversification in Rwanda rendered the population more susceptible to issues associated with excessive rainfall, failure of crops and high exports. The impact of the 1988 harvest failures preceding the genocide was particularly severe, as "authorities had banned all food imports that year; 1988 being Rwanda's "Année de l'Autosuffisance"" (Pottier, 1993, pp. 6 & 15). The lack of economic opportunities and the exacerbation of these issues of malnutrition are forms of structural violence as they result from governmental desires of self-sufficiency promoted through the structure and institutions of society.

Considering that 95% of the population gained livelihood through agriculture, any economic changes in regard to the international fluctuation of coffee prices (coffee being the main export crop), would be dire (Taylor, 1999). This is exactly what occurred in the years preceding the genocide, when coffee prices decreased internationally. This decrease led to the Rwandan Franc being devalued by 40% during the late 80s and the early 90s (Christian, 1997, p. 466). Mass economic upheaval that left the elites unscathed, but the majority of the populace in dire straits, resulted. Rwanda's economy could have been more diversified and provided a greater breadth of economic opportunities to its people, but there was an ideological focus on agrarianism. Verwimp (2013) proposes Rwanda "was a Peasant-State in which Habyarimana, the Father of the Nation, assumed the task of government in order for the peasants to devote themselves completely to food cultivation" (p.8). He had an anti-intellectual and anti-urban bias which he utilised to make the breadth of economic opportunities in Rwanda reductive. Herein lies a key characteristic of structural violence: lack of opportunity.

While in the aforementioned cases, lack of opportunity fruited from governmental policy, the same can result from corruption. In an empirical study of pre-genocide Rwandan elites, Reyntjens (1994) found that more than a third "of the eighty-five most important government positions… [and] functions in the army and the security apparatus, were held by people… [from] the president's native province" (p. 33). This clear example of nepotism alienates people from attaining a high living standard for themselves. Again, this is a key element of structural violence. Corruption did not solely affect employment opportunities, however. The akazu (the informal elite body of Rwanda) were involved in "standard manipulation of access to assets that could be distributed by the state as well as a highly effective harvesting of international aid flows" (Cramer, 2003, p. 407). Hence, money accorded to social services by the international community, was misappropriated for personal use. This is another example of the organs of the state perpetrating structural violence against its populace.

Forms of governance can also constitute structural violence. It is obvious that the preferential treatment that the Belgians accorded the Tutsi was structurally violent. However, this was only the beginning of such violence. Under the Tutsi monarch Mwami Kigeri Rwabugiri, obligations of corvée (unpaid hard labour) was placed solely on Hutu, "thereby polarizing the social difference between Hutu and Tutsi" (Mamdani, 2001, p. 66). Further obligations of corvée were placed upon poor families which could not pay for land rent. Hence, "two out of every five days, a family had to provide manual labour on the lands owned by the chiefs" (Kimonyo, 2015, p. 15). As such, many ruralised persons were caught in a trap of bonded labour whereby their "debt" would not be paid off, even after generations of free labour in conjunction with compulsory government mandated corvée. To extend this, while the populace had to provide manual labour, they also had a high tax burden they needed to overcome. Taxes were applied to coffee sales/exports, cattle, heath services, schooling, water and the compulsory MRND fee (Verwimp, 2013, p. 70). There was no discrimination on who had to pay these fees – both Hutu and Tutsi alike had to. Furthermore, for those persons engaged in subsistence agriculture and who seasonally produced excess, there was an extra burden to selling this off. Person to person trade was highly regulated; travel permits and trading licences were required "even for those wishing to sell a basket of vegetables" (World Bank, 1994, viii). Hence, even when there was an opportunity to make extra income for a

family, the populace of Rwanda, was structurally precluded from doing so.

Structural violence manifested itself through poverty and economic inequality, also. According the Rwandan Government figures, in 1986, the lowest paid 49% of all salaried people earned 7.6% of total salary mass while the best-paid 1.1% earned 27.8% of total salary mass (Ministry of Planning, 1988). Such a disparity is not due to consequence, but due to governmental design and hence, is structurally violent. In the years preceding the genocide, the "incidence of poverty in Rwanda greatly increased, from 40 percent in 1985 to 53 percent in 1992" (World Bank, 1994, p. 10). Being in a situation of poverty has many results; a lack of education, a lack of job opportunities and the development of hopelessness. Rwandans wanted to attain a higher standard of living but were structurally excluded from doing so. Development agencies and policies did not seem to help either. Observers have noted how development in Rwanda infantilised impoverished persons, depriving them of their self-respect and agency (Hancock, 1989). Uvin (1998:137) sums up the position of pre-genocide Rwandans eloquently:

> [f]or most of us, it is hard to imagine how tense and frustration-ridden a society must be when every day the large majority of the population is shown the lifestyle of the "developed" and exhorted to achieve it but is at the same time structurally excluded from this "good life," with very little chance of achieving it.

Theories of manipulation: scapegoat and economic/political opportunity

It is evident that the Rwandan Genocide was caused by the manipulation of ethnicity, not ethnicity itself. Uvin (1998) stipulates that at the time of the genocide, 80% of the population had been born after independence, and hence before Tutsi rule. What follows is that majority of the population had personally never known Tutsi rule. It was a symbiosis of propaganda, elite-directed hatred and scapegoating that lead to the violence that fruited via genocide.

Scapegoat theory is one that explains how and why manipulation of an ethnic identity occurs to deflect the blame for governmental shortcomings and challenges to popular sovereignty. For scapegoating to occur, Kuper (1981) proposes that three elements are important: identifiability, vulnerability and an ability to defend oneself and exact

reprisals. As aforementioned, while ethnicity was a highly fluid concept, everyday Hutus used socio-economic positions, their knowledge of ethnic enclaves and pseudoscientific evidence to "identify" the Tutsi. The Tutsi, devoid of all political, social and economic power, were in an extremely compromising and vulnerable position in pre-genocide Rwanda. Due to the Tutsis' bases of military force being based outside Rwanda, there was a low ability to exact reprisals (although the RPF eventually did) and defend themselves. Hence, using Kuper's conception of scapegoating, the Tutsi were highly likely to be put into such a position by Hutu political elites. This is especially so, when considering the political challenges towards Hutu governmental power in the wake of the Arusha Accords.

As alluded to above, a main element of scapegoating is its elite-directed nature. Horowitz (1976) proposes that when "ruling elites decide that their continuation in power transcends all other economic and social values, at that point does the possibility, if not the necessity, for genocide increase qualitatively" (pp. 38-39). For Rwanda, political power was at stake from many sides and hence, the akazu elites had strong motivation to scapegoat. Firstly, the Arusha Peace Accords promised democratisation of the country with elections (which would include the RPF) being undertaken. The accords also outlined the RPF would have a total of five seats out of 21 in the cabinet and 11 seats out of 70 in the transitional national assembly which would essentially put it on par with the ruling MNRD party. Further to this, 40% of the troops of the Rwandan Army and 50% of the officer corps were to be constituted of RPF elements (Lemarchand, 1995, p. 9). Hence, there was a large scope of change to be enacted should the Accords be imposed and possibly later, the RPF voted into power. Preceding the genocide, coffee prices had dropped, and this caused large scale economic and social crises, considering it was the cash crop of choice (Hintjens, 1999). Famine, poverty and aggression where all exacerbated and anger at the government increased. As Jones (2010) posits, genocide against the Tutsi "would simultaneously eliminate the perceived constituency for the RPF; resolve the economic crisis through distribution of Tutsi land, wealth, and jobs; and bind the Hutu majority in genocidal complicity" (p. 237). Elites used existing channels of prejudice based upon ethnicity, via propaganda, popular discontent and scaremongering, to scapegoat a particular group. As Mueller (2000) notes, ethnicity is seldom a motivating factor of genocide, but "an ordering device or principle [upon which politicians organise their campaigns]" (p. 42).

The effectiveness of scapegoating refers to the fact that it benefits those elites who perpetrate it, along with the circumscribed masses who were looking for a group to blame for their circumstances. Uvin (1998) suggests, for many people, "hatred of 'the other' served to combat the low self-esteem caused by chronic unemployment and squelched aspirations (p. 137). For the everyday Hutu, a lack of opportunity and generational poverty had led to historical trauma and belief in the defect of oneself. Scapegoating and prejudice limit the impact of these effects. Simpson and Yinger (1953) suggest "a person who is brought up in a culture that is rich with traditions of prejudice... and who is insecure or frustrated will have a high probability for prejudice" (p. 51). The everyday Hutu, distraught at the situation they found themselves in, angry and devoid of any undertaking to put their efforts towards, had a high propensity to prejudice. However, while prejudice has its behavioural benefits, the same can be said for scapegoating. Staub (1990) proposes that scapegoating allows for "renewed comprehension of the world, hope, and feelings of purpose" (p. 137). Hence, it is not surprising why such a political strategy was well received by the population. The population was actively seeking out coping strategies that eventually manifested via scapegoating.

Scapegoating as a strategy for the political elite in pre-genocide Rwanda was supposed to be a successful one. However, Kuper's last element - of an ability to exact reprisals - became more salient as the RPF invaded and took control of the country. Hence, losing control of the country was an unexpected result for the Hutu extremists. In the past when they employed the strategy, "mass anti-Tutsi campaigns were orchestrated," and popular sovereignty restored (Uvin, 1997, p. 101).

Scapegoating did not stand alone in genocidal Rwanda. It provided the conditions for the political and economic opportunity theories to fruit. Fanon (1963: 61) unknowing forwards this theory when he suggests that the peasants

> alone are revolutionary, for they have nothing to lose and everything to gain. The starving peasant, outside the class system, is the first among the exploited to discover that only violence pays. For him there is no compromise, no coming to terms.

Such a theory posits that genocide is viewed as such: "potential rebels evaluate their expected gains from war, given their grievances, and compare these… gains with the expected losses, which include… the cost of forgoing productive economic and political activity" (Sambanis, 2001, p. 264). For the majority of Hutu, being in control of political power did not produce any efficacious outcomes for them. Furthermore, many, if not most, Hutu were unemployed or undertook subsistence agriculture. Hence, the cost of forgoing this employment activity was negligible for them.

The conditions of structural violence that the everyday Rwandan found themselves in only exacerbated the violence of the genocide. Straus (2006) suggests that "many Rwandans had few life chances. There were land shortages. Many young people faced a future with little prospect for employment, so Hutus lashed out" (p. 37). While many Hutu people were reluctant to join the genocide at first, many were allured by incentives and the large-scale looting of Tutsi resources (des Forges, 1999). This was only the case as the genocide was a dispossessive one; a genocide "which, by design or by consequence, have the effect of stripping large groups of people of their possessions, their homes or their way of life" (Valentino, 2000, p. 30). The nature of this genocide allowed for Hutu to be attracted into the killing as food, land and money were promised to them.

Of the perpetrators of the genocide, 77.6% were farmers with little hope after the coffee price drop (Straus, 2006). The other perpetrators were generally peasants, drifters or the unemployed, motivated by the economic gains the genocide could offer (Mueller, 2000). Friedman (2010) found that participation in the genocide was "associated with greater education among Hutu, and lower employment among Hutu" (p. 3). As is typically the case, more education equates to more expectations and hence, in the absence of opportunity, it likely to lead to violence. Such a proposition is supported by the notion that those Rwandans (either Hutu or Tutsi) who were educated and urbanised (and thus likely to have employment) were more likely to die in the genocide than any other sub-grouping (Walque & Verwimp, 2010). Prunier (1997: 231-32) sums the ethos of this section up nicely:

> For these [genocide perpetrators] the genocide was the best thing that could ever happen to them. They had the blessings of a form of authority to take revenge on socially powerful

> people as long as these [victims] were on the wrong side of the political fence. They could steal, they could kill with minimum justification, they could rape and they could get drunk for free. This was wonderful.

Conclusion

The Rwandan Genocide of 1994 is often known as an "ethnic frenzy". The layman believes it resulted purely from ancient hatreds between immutable ethnicities. This article proposes such a view is an oversimplification of this conflict and that it is, indeed, wrong.

The article negates the underlying ethos of primordialism; conflict results purely due to ethnic differences. There are many reasons to suggest why this is not true. Some 80% of the pre-genocide population had never lived under Tutsi rule and hence, only ever knew of their oppression by Tutsi, due to Hutu political extremists. There were tales of Hutu persons paying the ultimate price in solidarity for their Tutsi relatives, neighbours and friends; "[t]here are many, many cases of Hutus who died to protect Tutsis" (African Rights, 1995, p. 590). If ethnicity is primordial in the sense it is ineffable and overpowering, such actions would not have occurred.

Scapegoating and the resulting opportunism had been used as a strategy in the past when political power was challenged; "in crisis times, it did provide a tool that could be activated to discriminate against Tutsi" (Uvin, 1997, p. 101). The notion of "ethnic conflict" only erupting at times of challenge to popular elite sovereignty should speak to the curated and instrumental nature of ethnicity in Rwanda. It was the years of structural violence that was perpetrated against the Rwandan people that led to the elite-need to scapegoat and resultantly, cause a genocide. Hence, this article is unequivocal in the proposition that this genocide was a calculated political opportunity, not an ethnic frenzy.

Genocide is a crime marked by its viciousness and extent. The Rwandan Genocide proves to be the most apt case in point. Structural violence is not atypical. The vicious and pernicious nature of such violence rears its ugly head across countries globally. Thus, there needs to be a concerted effort to confront the often tough realities that produce this violence. It is a moral indignity not to do so. Development, on the terms of the people who it affects, is the only answer to the systematic and seemingly perennial *problematique* of "ethnic" conflict. However, such action will only occur if history records the correct formulation of

sparking of genocide. As Hintjens (1999: 241) notes, "[l]etting their [victims] deaths go unrecorded… distorted by propaganda, or misunderstood through simple cliché's, would in fact bring the last touch to the killers' work…".

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