

## **The Rwandan 1959 social revolution and its antecedents: The beginning of the genocide against Tutsi?**

**Evariste Erwin Sebahutu**✉; Ballsbridge University, Common Wealth of Dominica

**Abstract:** The integrated-blame game theory of ethnicity explains how the current Rwandan ethnoscape evolves regardless of the so called de-ethnicization policy adopted by the current regime. Ethnocentrism blamed on the Hutu from the 1950s when they claimed their civic rights, has been the founding philosophy of the Tutsi Nyiginya dynasty and continues to be the corner stone for the current Tutsi dominated regime. Speeches and writings of contemporary political elites such as the one of Dr Jean Damascène Bizimana are part of the plan of politicization of biased history as a tool of legitimization of political exclusion currently practiced. Events that took place in 1957 and subsequent years did not happen in vacuum, their origins are traced back to the creation and expansion of the Tutsi Nyiginya dynasty and its power abuse records. While these events are part of steps taken mutually by both ethnic groups from oppressive kingship towards bloody revolution, after independence interethnic violence, war and genocide against the Tutsi, and subsequent massacres of Hutu civilians both in Rwanda and Congo and happened when both ethnic groups failed to compromise on their rivalries in the first place; they fulfill all the requirements both by definitions and theories to be called a “social revolution”.

**Keywords:** Ethnicity, interethnic violence, jacquerie, revolution, social revolution, kingship, colonizers, nepotism.

✉ [erwin.ndaruhutse@gmail.com](mailto:erwin.ndaruhutse@gmail.com)

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## INTRODUCTION

“...We argue that the killings and hatred of Tutsi begin on the 24th March 1957 when a document that many of you know or heard about called Hutu manifesto was released. We have to take it as the beginning of these disasters and problems since it was the first time in history of the country that the people supposed to be educated, intellectuals wrote that the problem of Rwanda was a problem caused by Tutsi and that to be solved they have to be put aside and/or killed. Even though it was signed by those nine people, according to researchers and history commentators, they are not the ones who wrote it. It was written by three whites: Eugène Ernotte, Monsignor Arthur Dejemeppe and Monsignor André Perraudin. They wrote it and gave it to these men who signed it and called themselves the owners. One of the signatories, Murindahabi Caliope at that time was Monsignor Perraudin's personal secretary, so it is clear that this history has a beginning that we have to trace it where it took place. If this document never existed, I believe that the problems that Rwanda had to pass through would have never happened...”

This is my translation of an extract of the speech in Kinyarwanda by Dr Bizimana Jean Damascène, the president of the *Commission Nationale de Lutte contre le Génocide* (CNLG), the national organ in charge of the fight against the genocide, that he delivered at Kabgayi on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2018 at the occasion of the 24<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the commemoration of the 1994 genocide against Tutsi. Here, he emphasizes on the position of the government that the beginning of the genocide is the events prior to the 1959 social revolution for some and jacquerie for others including the current government. He denounces the document nicknamed Hutu manifesto as the starting point for subsequent interethnic violence that led to the genocide against Tutsi and

insinuate about the involvement of white fathers.

It is now over 65 years later that the official narratives confirm the origins of the evil to be the document nicknamed Hutu manifesto and the followed social revolution. The official narratives also emphasize on the creation of ethnicity based political parties such as PARMEHUTU that prepared and executed genocide as a specialty of Hutu while deleting pages written by their fellow Tutsi from history records. Any argument contrary to the position of the current regime is considered to be a PARMEHUTU ideology and the beholder accused of genocide ideology and this is how the politicization of history (Jessee & Watkins, 2014) led to dictatorship and ethnocracy (Reyntjens, 2021; Vandeginste, 2014). While the Rwandan sociopolitical space is occupied mainly by two ethnic groups Hutu and Tutsi from precolonial era, the revised and re-written history and speeches by officials mainly Tutsi accuse Hutu to be responsible of the evils of Rwanda; and on the other side Hutu accuse Tutsi of denying their part in the game hence the continued creation of two blocks: angels and victims Tutsi and devils and perpetrators Hutu and this is considered a step toward the repetition of history by some academics.

This article aims at debunking the disguised hate speeches by current government officials in an attempt to mislead the mass especially young Rwandans and manipulate international opinion in the context of the continued game of politicization of biased history. We will answer four questions: Are events dating from 1957 to 1962 a jacquerie or a social revolution? What is the origin of the so called “Hutu Manifesto”? What was the intent of publishing this document? Can it be considered the beginning of hatred and killing of Tutsi by Hutu hence the beginning of genocide? The comprehensive literature review and

the conceptualization through the lenses of contemporary theories of revolutions will be undertaken in order to give our verdict over the above questions.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

All begin with the disputed anthropologic origins and settlement of three Rwandan ethnicities Hutu Twa and Tutsi that was followed by the creation and expansion of the oppressive and authoritarian Tutsi Nyiginya dynasty from the 16th century CE mainly by conquests of Hutu chiefdoms and kingdoms. According to (Buckley-Zistel, 2009; Carney, 2014; Magnarella, 2005; Shaw, 2012; Vansina, 2004); while the terms Hutu Twa and Tutsi initially used to design one's socio-economic positions, they were instrumentalized and politicized and became distinct rigid identities that evolved to be distinct ethnic groups. Exploitative instruments such as ubuhake (cow contracts), uburetwa (forced labor) enforced only on Hutu by fellow Tutsi increased the tensions between the two groups that resulted into a number of revolts that mark the beginning of the Hutu-Tutsi conflict (Vansina, 2004).

When colonizers arrived in the 1890s, they based their indirect rule on divisive ethnological sentiments and favored and increased preferential treatments for Tutsi mainly based on the Speke's Hamitic hypothesis. They increased the exploitation of Hutu using Tutsi and peasants seeing Tutsi on the field not white colonizers and the fact that Tutsi never refused this form of discrimination mainly as a way to secure their privileges, Hutu increased the resentment for Tutsi. The introduction of mandatory identity cards bearing the ethnicity of the beholder in the 1930s made these ethnic divisions even harder and none could escape the fate of his/her membership.

According to Gatwa (2000), ethnicity or any group membership may

not considered a negative thing per se but a godly manifestation in the diversity of human beings. He argue that currently ethnicity has lost its prime meaning and due to egocentrism, it is frequently used in political mobilization and sectarianism by political elites who want to preserve their monopoly of power by violence and equate their own ethnic group's struggle with patriotism and nationalism which exclude others hence recourse to hegemony for legitimization of social divides and inequality.

It is in this context that according to him, during the monarchical, colonial-monarchical and subsequent military regimes; for each dominant group to maintain power have attempted to promote the birthright ideology, the concept of a divine ruler, the rebirth of the state hence the father and founder of the nation, and the genius leader whose ideas the country must be built upon. This has the effect on the popular mass of being blind followers and not questioning any decision by such a ruler.

While German and Belgian colonizers were preoccupied by strengthening the political system of Tutsi through education and military, on the other side the white father missionaries entered the scene with their contribution to the writing of Rwandan history. It is in this context that colonizers created the so called *Conseil Supérieur du Pays* (CSP) an advisory board to the King and on the other side the white fathers created *Travail-Fidélité-Progrès* (Work, Loyalty, Progress), TRAFIPRO for peasants Hutu.

According to Rollinson (2020), when White Fathers arrived in Rwanda and wanted to establish their missionary posts, the King Musinga gave greenlight for their evangelization only to peasants Hutu. On the side of the church, Hutu became important actors regardless of their social subjugation at the time since where only Hutu were allowed to study is in the seminary schools before their allowance to enter

the public schools in 1955. Besides seminary schools, White Fathers also created the farmers' cooperative called Travail-Fidélité-Progrès (Work, Loyalty, Progress), TRAFIPRO in short through which they received trainings on modern farming practices and other elements of civilizations. These two ways especially the former produced the so called Hutu *évolués* that later played their part on the political scene.

With Hutu consciousness of domination and exploitation, a number of revolts started throughout the country (Vansina, 2004; Nsengimana, 2019). According to Nsengimana (2019) these revolts included events like in 1901 when Rukara presented himself as a descendent of Kimenyi, the King of Gisaka, refused the authority of King Musinga and proclaimed the independence of Gisaka that was subsequently annexed by King Rwabugiri. Another incident is the one in the north in 1910 by the one Ndungutse and his allied Rukara and Basebya that necessitated the colonizers fighting alongside King Musinga and annihilate them in 1912. Others included the so called the prophetic movement of Nyiraburumbuke in 1926, the 1927-1928 revolt of Semaraso against colonizers and Tutsi chiefs in the north of the country in Rukiga and Ndorwa, the 1930 revolt called the revolt of Bumbogo. These revolts according to Vansina (2004) are indicators of primitive interethnic tensions in Rwanda.

In the same context in the 1950s, the claims of Hutu *évolués* were not well received by fellow Tutsi elites and according to Gatwa (2000), the absence of mutual understanding, political reconciliation, or any political solution to the crisis added to cumulative factors led to a number of the tragic events including 1994 genocide and the followed ordeal of the Rwandan Hutu refugees in the jungle of Democratic Republic of the Congo were the end result. Uvin (1998) argues that by

reserving education and jobs in the administration and the army almost only for Tutsi by colonizers and their military backing of Tutsi; the old (pre-colonial) and new (colonial) Tutsi power holders saw their power greatly increased and acted as rapacious quasi-warlords. Hence accordingly, the ideology founded on the Tutsi distinctness, meritocracy and superiority as an ethnic group was strengthened and implemented during many years and in all spheres of public policy.

While the official visit of United Nations Visiting Mission to Rwanda and Burundi the then Ruanda-Urundi, in its supervision mandate had consequences of abolishing the uburetwa practices (forced labor) imposed on Hutu in 1949 and ubuhake (cow based form of clientele) in 1954 (Mayersen, 2010; Rollinson, 2020); in 1952 Belgian colonizers declared that they plan for independence of Ruanda and Urundi within a decade (Rollinson, 2020). According to her, the following years were going to be marked by preparative activities hence the 1953 call for democratic elections and such elections for the then Rwandan geo-political regions called sub-chiefdoms (*sous-chefferies*) in 1956. This was one year before the advisory visit scheduled in 1957 by the UN Trusteeship Council.

In February 1957 four months before the UN mission visit, according to Rollinson (2020), the *Conseil Supérieur du Pays* (CSP) with the intention of influencing or manipulating political dialogue, published the famous document called "*Mise au Point*", containing their statements on current and future directions of Rwandan politics. In their document four main problems were discussed: education, political participation, socio-economic policy, and the reduction of what they called color prejudices. She argues that the CSP tailored their writing in such a way that clearly shows how they self-identified, identified others, and

addressed to them. Their writing shows that they viewed themselves as besides being Rwandans, being superior to the mass of common peasants hence projecting themselves as future leaders of Rwanda who need to be prepared for that task awaiting them.

According to her, the *Mise au Point* pointed to the need for Rwandan independence, but in a progressive way with deliberate training of Tutsi elites (the capable) and steady action. The CSP analyzed the white versus black (Tutsi elite) relations as unequal and while individuals recognizing the social inequality among Rwandans (Hutu and Tutsi) prevalent at the time, there was no group motivation to impart the balance of power. According to her, this is not surprising since besides the CSP being nearly completely Tutsi, the Nyiginya Dynasty was also Tutsi that had ruled Rwanda for over 300 years. However, according to her, they seemed to be profoundly worried about these social relations and have uncertainty about the role that they may play in the future of Rwanda.

In response to the *Mise au Point*, and showing their dissatisfaction of how the status quo was presented by the CSP, in March 1957 Hutu elites published the famous document called "*Note sur l'aspect sociale du problème racial indigène au Ruanda*" (Notes on the Social Aspect of the Racial Native Problem in Rwanda) that was further baptized "Hutu Manifesto" (Nsengimana, 2019; Rollinson, 2020). In this document they explain the problems to be political, economic and social monopoly of Tutsi. Eltringham (2006) reproduced the extract of the manifesto as found in Nkundabagenzi (1961: 24-29): "What does the indigenous racial problem consist of? . . . It is a problem of a political monopoly of one race, the mututsi... We must abandon the belief that Rwandan élites can only be found among the ranks of the hamites... a system systematically favoring the political and economic progress of the

hamite... action [should be taken] for the economic and political emancipation of the Muhutu from the traditional tow [of the] hamite..."

Another extract found in Nsengimana (2019) reproduced from Nkundabagenzi (1962: 22-23) states that (my translation from a French text): "The problem is first of all a problem of political monopoly bestowed to Mututsi; political monopoly which, given all the current structures becomes an economic and social monopoly; political, economic and social monopoly which, given the de facto selections in education, manages to be a cultural monopoly, to the great despair of the Bahutu who see themselves condemned to remain eternal subordinate maneuvers, and worse still, after a possible independence that they will have helped to conquer without knowing what they are doing. The *ubuhake* is no doubt suppressed, but it was replaced by that total monopoly which, in large part, causes the abuses of which people complain..."

Some Tutsi elites recognized the substance of Hutu claims; they include the chief Alexis Karekezi of Buliza whose statement is reproduced in Nsengimana (2019) that my translation of the French text is as follows: "I remember our Tutsi selfishness spawned the publication of the *Mise au Point* by the CSP requesting the Belgians to leave us in full control of the future of the country, while the Hutu still remained enslaved despite the European presence. This meant the liberation of the already free Tutsi and the enslavement of the Hutu slaves already sufficiently enslaved so that we enslave them even more. The tutelage was aiming at the abolition of slavery and slave labor hence we were targeting the removal of the tutelage before the abolition of this slavery and slave labor beforehand ...I remember the manifesto of the Hutu published in 1957. It was practically destined to the Belgian administration for it to know that if it continued to leave to the Tutsis alone

the monopoly of the administration of the country until the moment of the lifting of the tutelage which seemed imminent, the self-determination envisaged would be a decoy. It would put the Hutu group in an impasse..."

According to Rollinson (2020), while Hutu wanted open dialogue over what they perceived as major problems of public concerns, the King Mutara denied the request for the dialogue. The king continued to delay and ignore the proposal and the time passed, the UN Trusteeship Council visited in September 1957, and finally the King allowed the meetings to begin in March of 1958. A group of ten Tutsi and Ten Hutu met and formed the Hutu-Tutsi Study Commission that practically failed to do anything to solve the social problem. These Hutu according to her; fearing being accused of being traitors, haters and enemy of Rwanda and enemies of the king; crimes that were punishable by death; the event went poorly for them and eventually the Commission finished the task and concluded that there were some forms of Hutu-Tutsi tensions. It is time now to present their results to the CSP and the president of the CSP (the King) who recommended the CSP to reject all of the committee's observations and conclusions.

Even while the dialogue was still ongoing, the "12 *abagaragu b'ibwami bakuru*" (12 Great Servants of the Royal Court) on the 17 May 1958 wrote a letter recalling the Kigwa myth whose extract found in Nkundabagenzi (1961: 35-36) and reproduced in Eltringham (2006): "The ancestor of Banyiginya [who founded the Tutsi Nyiginya dynasty] is Kigwa. ...The relations between the subjects of Kabeja [the Bazigaba] and the Kigwa family were so strong that the latter abandoned their first master [Kabeja] and became servants of Kigwa [Therefore] how can the Bahutu now claim their right to share the common inheritance . . . the relations between us (Batutsi) and them

(Bahutu) have always been until now based on serfdom; therefore between them and us there is no basis of fraternity . . . Kigwa found the Bahutu in Rwanda . . . History says that [our] kings killed the Bahinza [Bahutu kinglets] and have conquered the Bahutu lands of which the Bahinza were kings. . . . Since our kings conquered the countries of the Bahutu and killed their kinglets, how can they now claim to be our brothers."

On the 18th May 1958, another letter was written and addressed to the King Rudahigwa and the members of the CSP, the extract found in Nkundabagenzi (1962: 36-37) as reproduced in Nsengimana (2019) and here is my translation of a French text: "...For which reason do you currently want to share *ibikingi* and *amasambu* between the Banyarwanda while there are uninhabited places still available under your control? The *amasambu* and the *ibikingi* are already insufficient because of the large number of inhabitants and livestock: if now you want to share it between all the inhabitants, there will be revolts throughout the country and you will make people die either those who have it and those who do not have it, so that those who will have capabilities will necessarily be forced to emigrate to British countries... We are surrounded by other countries: Urundi, Belgian Congo, Uganda, Ankore, and Toro. All these countries enjoy perfect peace and tranquility. All their ancestral customs have not undergone any change; we are obviously not talking about the evil customs of paganism. These governments are not like ours? Our civilizers-educators are not like those found elsewhere? Members of the Superior Council of the Country (CSP), you are responsible for the Country: this is why you have been elected. We ask you to seek out people who continually cause so much revolutionary unrest in the country. We ask you to find them for us..."

These two documents heightened the Hutu Tutsi tension and worse the

King Rudahigwa ended up declaring that there is no problem between Hutu and Tutsi. Henceforth the bridge between these two camps was broken. On the other side Governor Harroy admitted that the *Mise au Point* and the Hutu Manifesto duality regarding Rwandan socio-economic-political climate was not only problematic but also a deep social issue (Rollinson, 2020).

We are now at the beginning of a new year, on 30th January 1959, an observer Munyangaju summed the atmosphere as quoted in Bhattacharyya (1967) and reproduced in Mayersen (2012): “The situation is very tense between Bahutu and Batutsi. A small quarrel would be enough for starting off a ranged battle. The Batutsi realize that after this, everything is finished for them and are preparing for the last chance. The Bahutu also see that a trial of strength is in the making and do not wish to give up”.

The death of King Mutara Rudahigwa on 25th July 1959 also contributed to the social divide. While the colonial administration and the CSP envisaged the regency instead of successor, the courtiers fearing of decisions that may be taken in this period decided on the new King and this was Jean Baptiste Ndahindurwa. On the other side Hutu elites met in Ruhengeri to decide on their proposal of the new political formula and according to Reyntjens they may have written a note requesting this as an opportunity to immediately establish a republic regime in Ruanda (Carney, 2011; Nsengimana, 2019).

During this same year, another event of major importance was the formation of ethnicity based political parties (Carney, 2011; Kamunanwire, 1995; Magnarella, 2000; Mayersen, 2012; Nsengimana, 2019). Contrary to the official narratives that only talk about pro-Hutu parties, both Hutu and Tutsi created ethnic-based political parties. According to Nsengimana (2019), on the 15th February 1959 the

former Association pour la Promotion Sociale de la Masse (APROSOMA) became Parti Social Hutu with Joseph Habyarimana Gitera as president. Mayersen (2010) argues that the main purpose of the party was “to unite Hutu and Tutsi poor against Tutsi privilege”.

In 1958, Tutsi formed the *Association des Eleveurs Ruandais* (Association of Rwandan Cattle Breeders) that became UNAPAR : *Union Nationale des Patriotes Radicaux* before becoming UNAR: *Union Nationale Rwandaise* and declared a political party on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1959 (Carney, 2011; Nsengimana, 2019). Mayersen (2012) reproduced the extract from the UNAR founding charter as found in Nkundabagenzi (1961) and translated in Bhattacharyya (1967): “Although the Ruandan society is composed of individuals of highly unequal value, and it is not equitable to accord the same value to the vulgar thoughts of the ordinary man as to the perspicacious judgment of the capable ... Although universal suffrage will infallibly end in the enslavement of the educated minority by an uncultivated majority ... It is nevertheless impossible to refuse universal suffrage to the Bahutu. An open opposition will provide one more argument to the colonists whose civilization ... [and] loyalty is now known”. However the party promised the establishment of constitutional monarchy establishing a representative parliamentary system in which both Hutu and Tutsi would be treated equally, being subjects of the same rights and responsibilities and to emphasize their pan-ethnic orientation, UNAR named François Rukeba, a half-Congolese Hutu, as the party spokesman (Carney, 2011).

According to him, in response to UNAR’s manifesto, the APROSOMA party of Joseph Gitera abandoned any pan-ethnic spirit it had adopted in early 1959 and its September 27 press release was titled the “date of Hutu liberation from the secular slavery of the Batutsi” and described the Tutsi ethnic group as

“exploiters by nature, xenophobic by instinct, and communist by need”, as they consider to manifest in the UNAR party’s manifesto. Also according to him, in order to counter the UNAR partisans chanting “Long live Rwanda! Long live the *Mwami* [king]! Long live independence! Down with the whites, the missionaries, the dividers of the people! APROSOMA’s song become “Long live the liberation of the Hutu! Down with Tutsi slavery! The cohabitation of Tutsi with Hutu is a gnawing wound, a leech in the body, and a cancer in the stomach. Hutu, from now on believe and hope in God and in each other, never in the Tutsi!”

On the other side, the former Grégoire Kayibanda’s Mouvement Social Muhutu (MSM) on 18th October 1959, became a political party and named Mouvement Démocratique Rwandais / Parti du Mouvement et de l’Emancipation Hutu (MDR-PARMEHUTU) and announced in its Manifeste-Programme that its goal is “a true union of all the Rwandan people without any race dominating another as is the case today” (Carney, 2011; Mayersen, 2012; Nsengimana, 2019). As found in Carney (2011), PARMEHUTU’s manifesto depicted Rwanda as an ethnically-stratified state in which the unity is only possible with the end of what they called Tutsi colonialism and their aristocracy and recognizing injustices that Hutu and poor Tutsi had been suffered in the hands of Tutsi elites.

On the 14th September 1959 another political party was created. This is a mainly Tutsi RADER (*Rassemblement Démocratique Rwandais*) led by Prosper Bwanakweri and Lazare Ndazaro. Contrary to UNAR, RADER was composed mainly of moderate Tutsi and in its manifesto of the 1<sup>st</sup> October 1959, the party expressed its support for a universal right to vote, the embrace of democracy in all Rwandan institutions, the privatization of property, the promotion

of economic cooperatives and foreign investment and stressed on its stand on the fundamental unity of Rwandan society and proclaimed that it would be a big mistake to think that the good of one ethnic group to be achieved by crushing other ethnic groups (Carney, 2011; Nsengimana, 2019).

According to Nsengimana (2019) other less important and mainly ethnicity based parties were also created including *Association pour le Relèvement Démocratique des Batwa* (AREDETWA) of Laurent Munyankuge ; *Association du parti démocrate-chrétien* (APADEC) of Aloys Rugiramasasu ; *Association des Bahutu Évoluants pour la Suppression des Castes* (ABESCA) ; *Mouvement Monarchiste Rwandais* (MOMOR) ; *Mouvement pour l’Union Rwandaise* (MUR) ; *Union des Aborozi Africains du Ruanda* (UAARU) ; *Alliance des Abakiga* (ABAKI) ; and *Union des Intérêts communaux du Kinyaga* (UNINTERCOKI).

Prior to the revolution, according to Nsengimana (2019), different so called terrorist acts have been documented and attributed to UNAR (Tutsi elites and youth) in different parts of Rwanda. They include the document entitled the “*Grave Situation Politique Au Rwanda*” [Dangerous political situation in Rwanda] written by RADER leaders denouncing written circular by the president of UNAR that list the so called anti-royalist and different individuals to target. The letter by Abbé Stanislas Bushayija to the Resident Adjunct of Kigali in which he express his view of the situation after the death of the King, in this letter he denounce the plan of Tutsi elite that consist of overriding the current Hutu Tutsi social and administrative question and politicize this death saying that it is the colonizers doing hence turn Hutu against the colonial administration. In his confidential note titled “*Terrorisme au Rwanda*” [Terrorism in Rwanda] Ndazaro, the leader of RADER denounced the acts of UNAR and his



journal Rwandanziza of being incendiary.

The immediate cause of the revolution has been the planned attack, according to Nsengimana (2019), against the Hutu sub-chief of Ndiza. According to Mayersen (2010), a quarrel in which a group of UNAR's young militants attacked a PARMEHUTU leader [Dominique Mbonyumutwa] led to a Hutu revenge that broke out into a revolution. Henceforth, Hutu violence against Tutsi and the burning of Tutsi huts started and rapidly spread. Before escalation of violence, a group of Hutu people of Ndiza went to the office of the Chief to ask about the attempted murder of Mbonyumutwa when at the Chiefdom, the Sub-chief Nkusi insulted them saying "Gahutu who want to rise himself against Mututsi" and wounded one of them at the head. This generated a generalized fury that made him run and hide in the house of the chief. Refusing to come out together with other people they accused of plotting against Hutu, they enforced in and the fight started, the sub-chief Katarabirwa and ex-sub-chief Matsibo were killed and many people injured. From now on, Hutu violence against Tutsi and the burning of Tutsi huts rapidly spread in all Ndiza and other regions after.

Mayersen (2010) reproduces an extract of the UN Mission report: "The operations were generally carried out by a fairly similar process. Incendiaries would set off in bands of some tens of persons. Armed with matches and paraffin, which the indigenous inhabitants used in large quantities for their lamps, they pillaged the Tutsi houses they passed on their way and set fire to them. On their way they would enlist other incendiaries to follow in the procession while the first recruits, too exhausted to continue, would give up and return home. Thus day after day fires spread from hill to hill. Generally speaking the incendiaries, who were often unarmed, did not attack the

inhabitants of the huts and were content with pillaging and setting fire to them."

According to her, even though there were little human loss associated with these attacks, serious damage was done as thousands of Tutsi huts were pillaged and burned, plantations plundered and many livestock killed. Kamunanwire (1995) argue that the 1959-1962 uprisings claimed lives of approximately 20,000 Tutsi and led hundreds of thousands to flee to neighbouring Burundi, Congo, Tanzania, and mainly Uganda. Since Tutsi could not stand watching, their reaction to the uprising according to Mayersen (2010) was well crafted and far more organised than the Hutu incendiarism considered being unorganized and spontaneous. She argues that UNAR leaders from the King's palace organized commando units and send them to either arrest or kill specific selected Hutu leaders. She reproduces the extract again from the UN Mission report that "Each commando party amounted to some hundreds of persons or more and included a majority of Hutu, but the leaders were generally Tutsi or Twa. The group would set off on its mission with very definite instructions ... in some cases emissaries were sent out from Nyanza (the palace) with verbal orders instructing them to bring back or kill certain persons ... It seems to be an established fact, moreover, that in many cases a commando group set out with orders only to arrest a person, but in effect killed him, either because he resisted arrest or because some attackers had the instinct to kill." According to her a significant number of prominent Hutu were killed in this way including two leaders of APROSOMA. She argues that UNAR seemed to be trying to eliminate the Hutu leadership and thus its present and future opposition (see also Nsengimana, 2019).

Things cooled down and quiet was fully restored on 14<sup>th</sup> November and a new policy was released requesting the creation of communes whose councilors

would be elected through a universal male suffrage and for them to elect a mayor and a new State Council that will be progressively granted legislative powers and autonomy and finally the King's role becoming that of a figurehead. The result of the revolts was the change in the Belgians attitude towards Hutu and Tutsi since henceforth previous policies of the Tutsi minority favoritism were replaced by an approach much more egalitarian whether, in authors terminology, by necessity or calculation (Mayersen, 2010). According to her, hundreds of Tutsi aristocrats had fled the country during the revolts, killed, forced to resign due to Hutu opposition, or arrested or removed from office due to their involvement in the Tutsi counter-attacks. Hence, Belgian Administration re-filled these vacant positions mainly with Hutu so that by the 1<sup>st</sup> March, 1960 the number of Hutu chiefs significantly increased from 0 to 22 out of a total number of 45 chiefdoms while the number of Hutu sub-chiefs increased from 10 to 297 out of a total number of 531 sub-chiefdoms.

After the revolution, sporadic outbreaks and violence continued to occur based on ethnic divides in 1960 and this led to a growing numbers of Tutsi refugees. UNAR politicized the refugees' problems while PARMEHUTU intensified the politicization of the ethnic cleavages. The hamitic hypothesis resurfaced and was reinterpreted. The UN Mission of March 1960 did nothing else than advocating pardon for all events happened during the social revolution that Belgians found not politically neutral since Tutsi had committed atrocities in scope far beyond Hutu. Belgians kept the scheduled June communal elections regardless of the ongoing intermittent inter-ethnic violence and PARMEHUTU won the elections at 75 per cent and within only five months the alliance of opposition parties including UNAR formed a common front to protest what

they called the dictatorial regime of PARMEHUTU in addition to repeated incursions by groups of Tutsi refugees called *Inyenzi* in the Rwandan border areas close to Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo the then Zaïre (Mayersen, 2010).

She also argue that in response to the repeatedly petition by the King and UNAR, the UN General Assembly on the 20th December 1960 recommended a number reforms that included the postponement of the legislative elections planned for 15 January 1961 to a date to be determined by a UN Commission that would visit the then Ruanda and Urundi in late January. PARMEHUTU and its head Grégoire Kayibanda being furious due to those considered unnecessary changes chose the day of the UN Visiting Mission's arrival as perfect for a coup d'état. When the UN Mission arrived was infuriated since the Belgian Administration promptly legitimated the newly auto-declared government. Henceforth effectively PARMEHUTU took full control and run the country with the support of Belgian Administration. Then the legislative elections in Rwanda and a referendum on the future of the monarchy were planned by the Belgians.

According to her, unsatisfied with how things turned out, the UN mission report in March 1961 stated that: "A racial dictatorship of one party has been set up in Rwanda, and the developments of the last eighteen months have consisted in the transition from one type of repressive regime to another." It is important to note that as the elections that were rescheduled in September 1961 approached interethnic conflict and tension erupted into violence and there were sporadic outbreaks of violence, incendiarism and again a large number of refugees fled the country. The UN report stated: "Serious disturbances took place in several regions of the country, including the districts of Nyanza, Astrida, Gitarama, and Kibungo and some communes in Kigali and

Kibuye. As a result of the incidents there, tens of thousands of new disaster victims and refugees had to leave their homes and seek refuge.” However she argues that both Hutu and Tutsi initiated and participated equally in the violence even though there were conflicting opinions as to those to consider prime responsible.

The elections took place and PARMEHUTU won with 77.7 per cent of the votes, UNAR gained 16.8 per cent, APROSOMA 3.5 per cent of votes and RADER less than 1 per cent and this led to a PARMEHUTU majority in the Legislative Assembly with 35 out of 44 seats while UNAR received 7 seats and APROSOMA 2 seats. This was equivalent to 84% Hutu and 16% Tutsi, figures closely related to the proportion of Hutu and of Tutsi of the Rwandan population and more than 80% voted for the abolition of the monarchy. On the first of July 1962, the Republic of Rwanda fully achieved independence while still carrying the burden of ethnic polarization and Tutsi refugees.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR JACQUERIE AND REVOLUTION**

### **Jacquerie**

De Vericour (1872) described the events experienced by France in the 1350s where the French peasants lived years of extortion, exploitation and were overwhelmed by tithes, *corvées*, duties and taxes of many kinds. These years of mental and physical pain generated among them a concentrated fury and hatred that once exploded they committed fearful revenges and assaults, considered expressions of burdens which have long weighed heavily and unjustly on their memory. The peasants who were merely armed with traditional tools such as pikes, sticks and ploughs’ fragments rushed on their former masters, killed their families and burnt down their castles. This three weeks warlike ardour said to be organized and executed by a certain

mythical Jacques ended up collapsing since these peasants thought of nothing else but the right on their harvest and all wished to return to work in their fields. Accordingly, the Jacquerie is defined as a bloodthirsty, iniquitous and groundless revolt of a mass of peasantry or savages. Henceforth, any form of agitation or troubled period that takes place and caused by the humbler or lower classes, however slight and legitimate it may be, is considered by higher privileged and wealthy classes of that society as a threat of jacquerie. The jacquerie is also defined in Coccia (2018) as a spontaneous uprising of a mass of peasantry, usually carried out in the name of traditional authorities with the limited intention to overthrow the local or national elites.

### **Revolution**

In an attempt to define what a revolution is, Coccia (2018) reproduces the definition of a philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel who suggested the revolution to be equated with the unstoppable forces for change in human’s spirit with an ever increasing quest for self-fulfillment. Karl Marx on the other side argues that a revolution is a product of historical events or forces considered irresistible that culminate in a struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat while Arendt interprets the revolution as a restorative event in which insurgents attempt to restore liberties and privileges which were lost because of political systems’ temporary lapse into despotism. Another definition was proposed by de Tocqueville who defined a revolution as an overthrow of the established legal political system which initiates a period of intense social, political, and economic changes. Ellwood (1905) defines a revolution as those convulsive movements in the history of societies in which the existing form of government, leadership or the type of the industrial and social order is suddenly changed resulting in the shift of the center of socio-political control

from one class to another. His definition excludes the concepts of sudden political or social change that result from coups d'état or palace revolutions and reversions in fashions and industrial changes due to great invention. According to him, the inwardly revolutions result in the change in leading ideas, beliefs and sentiments that make the social order fabric while outwardly, such driving forces for change are characterized by bloody struggles between the privileged and the underprivileged social classes.

Through their comprehensive typological study, Grinin et al. (2022), found nine main types of revolutions. First, democratic revolutions have main goal the transformation of the political system with sub types including anti-monarchic revolutions and anti-dictatorial revolutions. However some revolutions may start as democratic and change their character during their course. Second, social revolutions are those revolutions with primary intent to address social injustices mainly in relation to land use, income distribution, labour rights, etc., with democratic, political, legal and other transformations being only tools to achieve this goal. Third, we have communist revolutions which are directed by a communist doctrine. Fourth, anti-communist revolutions which are revolutions considered at certain extent to be democratic but since they tend to solve a number of complicated issues including the restoration of private property, economic freedom among others, the author argues that it is reasonable to consider them as a special type of events. Fifth, we have power-modernist revolutions which support the rise or restoration of the power of states. During its course, since revolutionaries are aware of the shortcomings of their state, they try to use revolution as a mean of accelerating modernization. Sixth, we have national and national-liberation revolutions. National

revolutions have for prime objective the creation of a national state while national-liberation revolutions aim at gaining independence or autonomy. Seventh, we have national-socialist or the so-called right-wing revolutions with the ideology of etatism, socialism and national spirit mainly based on masses and anti-elite sentiments. Eighth, we have religious revolutions and finally other types of revolutions that may be considered special cases in which the front line is not based on ideological markers but on confessional, ethnic or ethno-religious ones.

Among the types of revolutions stated, we intend to emphasize on the commonly spoken in public realm, the social revolution. According to Tiruneh (2014), there is no consensual definition of social revolution. A number of definitions were proposed and among them the author reproduced the Huntington definition of a social revolution as “a rapid, fundamental and violent domestic changes in the dominant values and myths of a society in its political institutions, social structures, leadership, and government activities and policies”. Skocpol on the other hand define it as “rapid, basic transformation of a society’s state and class structures, that are accompanied and in part carried through by class based revolts from below” while Arjomand defined it as “the collapse of political order and its replacement with a new one”. According to Tiruneh (2014) himself, a social revolution is a popular uprising that changes the already established socioeconomic and political order. Here the words “rapid” and “violent” not included in the definition because some social revolutions may be either rapid or slow and either violent or peaceful.

The causes of revolutions have been studied intensively. A large number of them were explained for example in Gebil (1990) and Tiruneh (2017). Among them we have economic development where with modern life

resulting from economic growth, people tend to be more educated and the awareness of their political, social, and economic conditions increases and consequently, values held by the society for many years start to change and people may start to question the legitimacy of traditional regimes and their respective bureaucracies. As more people get educated and become wealthy, they tend to claim their political rights including the right to vote and run for office. The type of regime also has impact the onset or not of social revolutions since they are more likely to take place in autocratic regimes than in democratic ones. State inefficiency is also an important cause and may occur when an autocratic or authoritarian leadership mismanages state's economy or fails to come up and implement appropriate and efficient socioeconomic and political policies and reforms that would benefit the majority especially underprivileged. Legitimacy also has a place among the causes; here the economic development may lead to dissatisfied and frustrated citizenry that in turn may struggle for political rights and civil liberties achievements. For example here, the peasantry, those in a state of economic hardship and hopelessness may demand for changes in their economic conditions and this may lead to the loss of legitimacy in the political system or regime. Triggering factors may ignite a long resentment that seems to have accumulated and boiling in the heads of the people and may include war defeat, fiscal crisis, and the rising of prices.

Besides causes, Coccia (2018), reproduced the Hopper (1950)'s four phases or stages of revolution: the first phase of a revolution is characterized by indiscriminate, uncoordinated mass unrest and dissatisfaction while in the second phase or stage this unease begins to merge into organized opposition with defined goals. The third phase is the beginning of the revolution per se where motives and objectives are

clarified, an organization built and a statesman leader emerges and next conflicts between the left and the right sides of the revolutionary struggle become acute. The final stage is the legalization of revolution characterized by the administrators' instatement, establishment of strong central government, and the society is rebuilt on a structure that embodies elements of the old system.

Tiruneh (2014) went further and characterized two main patterns of revolution namely spontaneous revolutions which are ignited without any significant organized effort and planned revolutions which involve significant effort and planned actions. Accordingly, the onset of a revolution is defined as the initial popular uprisings while the success of a revolution is the final transformation or modification of the old political and economic order.

Different theories were formulated in order to understand the mechanism of revolutions and among them we have the psychological theory of revolutions pioneered by Ellwood according to which revolutions are considered to be disruptions in the social order happening due to the sudden breakdown of social habits under conditions which make the reconstruction of those habits very difficult such as the formation of a new social order (Ellwood, 1905). The sociopsychological theory of revolutions was pioneered by Davies and Gurr. According to it, the revolution occurs when the long-term socio-economic development is followed by short-term and sharp economic setbacks. The economic growth goes hand in hand with people's needs and expectations to the point where the economic reversals come and create a gap between what people obtain and what they believe they should obtaining and turns into a crisis of rising expectations hence unhappy, unsatisfied, and frustrated individuals do nothing other than resort to political violence.

The J-curve theory of revolution emphasizes on despotism, corruption, lack of political freedom and issues of political participation which may be high in the minds of the underprivileged and middle classes or urban dwellers before and during the revolution struggle. The Gurr's theory of relative deprivation refers to the individuals' perceived discrepancy between the standard of living they attained and the one that they believe to deserve. When the felt deprivation is intense, anger, frustration and political violence will follow.

Other important theories include the theory of equilibrium that argues that people's value-coordinated behavior in a given society leads to political stability and that revolutions takes place only when disequilibrium in value congruence emerges. Modernization theory assesses that modernization, mainly social mobilization and economic development will lead to political awareness hence educated and urbanized people eager for greater political participation and representation. If political institutions do not allow, facilitate or establish mechanisms for the incorporation of the new mobilized elites, political violence, including revolution is highly possible. The political-conflict model on the other side relies on political variables such as the pursuit of power among groups in a given society to explain collective action in general and revolution in particular. It assesses the major reason for the promotion and recourse to revolutions and collective violence as the elites' concentration of power in national states. The structural theory is based on the fact that international position and power of a state, internal structural construct and power distribution and the nature of the state's relationship with the dominant classes and the class struggle among groups in society play major roles in triggering social revolutions.

## THE VERDICT

Following many years of social discrimination, oppression and exploitation; some Rwandan Hutu managed to get educated and became what has been termed "Hutu *évolués*". After their assessments and own experiences, these Hutu in multiple accounts expressed their dissatisfaction of the status quo and called for social and political changes to embrace inclusiveness. Their diplomatic requests were rejects at multiple accounts hence their recourse to political struggle using violence. This struggle that was initiated by these counter-elites targeted changes in social and political processes and this exclude the term jacquerie which is used for groundless and unstructured revolts of a mass of savages or peasants.

Events that took place from 1957 through 1959 and ended in 1962 with independence and abolition of monarchy in their qualities make a social revolution. It is a social revolution because its objective was the resolution of social injustices and the restoration of liberties and privileges lost to nepotism according to the Arendt's definition. It is in accord also with the de Toqueville's definition that a revolution targets an overthrow of the legally constituted elite that initiate the change in political and social order. All the Hopper's four phases were identified in Rwandan struggle: phase one characterized by dissatisfaction in the status quo, phase two characterized by creation of opposition groups and defined goals as was the case of publication of the Hutu manifesto, phase three characterized by conflicts and violence between the right and the left, and the fourth phase characterized by regime change and taking over the administration as was the case when the monarchy was abolished in Rwanda.

By looking at the immediate cause, one may think of a spontaneous revolution, however in Rwanda the immediate cause happened and violence

broke after many years of proposals of diplomatic talks to resolve social and political problems pacifically using dialogue, the approaches that Tutsi elites rejected at multiple accounts and even went further denying the existence of such issues. Accordingly I argue that what happened was a planned and calculated revolution where the course was dictated and changed according to external influences.

The J-curve theory of revolution that emphasizes on despotism, corruption, lack of political freedom, and issues of political participation; and the Gurr's theory of relative deprivation that refers to individuals' perceptions of the discrepancy between the standard of living that they achieved and the ones they believe to be deserving are applicable and fully explain the Rwandan case. Hutu elites, in their struggle, complained about a number of issues including political underrepresentation and barriers to entrance due to ethnicity and economic monopoly. With respect to the success and failure of the revolution, I argue that the political and social changes that resulted from it (abolition of the monarchy) are indicators of a successful social revolution.

Can the Hutu manifesto and its date of publication be taken as the beginning of killing Tutsi and genocide? Absolutely not! This is part of the politicization of history by the current regime. I argue that it is a conspiracy grounded on ethnocentrism. Under pre-colonial and colonial period only Hutu went through slavery that inflicted on them physical and mental pain and when they expressed their concerns, their fellow countrymen refused their rights; when violence started both sides participated with Tutsi being more trained, more strategic, well organized and well equipped. Both Hutu and Tutsi died so that according to Belgians at place at the time, Tutsi went far beyond the Hutu in the scope of their crimes. The current Rwandan ethnoscape is well

characterized by the integrated-blame game theory, that link the (Yang, 2000)'s integrated theory of ethnicity and the blame game concept where both players Hutu and Tutsi mutually accuse of wrongdoings as an excuse to continue political exclusion practices.

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