
Peasant Ideology and Genocide in Rwanda Under Habyarimana

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“Some societies have, in the past, opposed manual and intellectual labor with the latter giving in general more prestige to its performer. Such a concept not only seems outdated but also unacceptable because it is not realistic. In fact, manual labor, especially agricultural labor is the basis of our economy. We want to repeat that agriculture will stay the essential base of our economic system for the years to come.

In order to attract the attention of the Rwandan population for this reality, We have named the year 1974 the national year for agriculture and manual labor. We take this opportunity to thank and to encourage everyone who understood Our attitude and who supported our action by practicing one day of manual labor themselves every week.

Remember that this is the way we want to fight this form of intellectual bourgeoisie and give all kinds of physical labor its value back. And we think that in all programs, the brightest, must be the example for their countrymen. Action is thus called for.”

Message of the Head of State, Major-General Juvenal Habyarimana, May 1, 1974.

‘Umurimo ni uguhinga, ibindi ni amahirwe’

(“Our job is to cultivate, all the rest is good luck” – popular Rwandan expression)

1. Introduction

Two of the most intriguing books written on the genocide in Rwanda are Allison Des Forges’ *Leave None to Tell the Story* (1999) and Peter Uvin’s *Aiding Violence: the Development Enterprise in Rwanda* (1998). The first book offers a very detailed and very rich account of the implementation of genocidal policies in Rwanda from 1990 to 1994. It is the best book on the genocide available to the world community. The main thesis of the author is that the political elite in Rwanda chose genocide as a political strategy to remain in power. The second

book is a well-researched analysis of the impact of the development business in Rwanda. It is a harsh critique of the way the Rwandan state, the NGO's and the international donor community organized development projects in Rwanda before the genocide. Uvin's thesis is that the developmental process in Rwanda humiliated, frustrated and infantilized the Rwandan peasant. He offers interesting insights and reflections on the relationship between this developmental process and participation in the genocide by the peasants.

The arguments that I will develop in this chapter do not question the analysis of the above-mentioned authors, but focus on a neglected characteristic of the genocide, namely the underlying peasant ideology. Des Forges stresses the intentions of the political elite but does not talk (or not much) about the economic conditions of the country. This is a shortcoming of her book since Habyarimana himself often spoke on the economy and especially the economic-demographic equilibrium. The economic conditions are emphasized by Uvin, but he did not take a look at Habyarimana's speeches either.

In this chapter, I take a closer look at the ideology of the Habyarimana regime (1973-1994) as it is represented in his speeches. All speeches by and interviews with Habyarimana were published during his reign by his office and the Office of Information of Rwanda (ORINFOR). These speeches are the primary source of information regarding Habyarimana's political thought. His speeches from the years 1973, 1974, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1986, 1987 and 1988 were analyzed to determine Habyarimana's ideology.¹ The focus is on the speeches he gave on the many occasions of celebration in Rwanda. These speeches, contrary to those he made abroad, are directed at the Rwandan population and, as such, reveal the way the dictator saw his country, its population and his own task as leader. These speeches should not be considered mere rhetoric. I will show that Habyarimana actually implemented the policies that he advocated in his speeches. I focus my analysis of the ideology of Habyarimana on the politics and economics of his regime. It will be demonstrated that his ideology served as a legitimation for the policies he advocated and especially for his personal hold onto power.

Did Habyarimana write his speeches all by himself? This question remains open, but he probably did not. According to my informants, at least three people helped him: Ferdinand Nahimana, professor of history and leading intellectual of the regime; Jeanne Charles, a Swiss professor and consultant to the president; and C. Mfusi, a Rwandan journalist who later became a critic of the regime.

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The following conclusion, which can serve as a hypothesis for future research, will be reached at the end of this study: Habyarimana wanted Rwanda to be an agricultural society. He glorified the peasantry and pictured himself as a peasant. In his ideology of rural romanticism, only the Hutu were the real peasants of Rwanda; the Tutsi were the feudal class closely associated with colonialist occupation. According to this Hutu ideology, the Tutsi refused to till the land and were considered petty bourgeois. When dictatorial political power is legitimized with a peasant ideology, genocide becomes a political option because a peasant society does not tolerate the existence of non-peasants, in the same way as a communist society does not tolerate the existence of a capitalist class. The latter group is labeled “enemies of the revolution.” The particular combination of peasant ideology and racism is also found in other genocidal regimes such as the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia and the Nazis in Germany. When only one particular group of people has the right to exist, namely, that group defined as ‘the real peasants,’ all other groups are targeted for extermination.

Realising very well that the process that leads to genocide is highly complex and all but mono-causal, I argue that the peasant rhetoric of the Habyarimana regime was fertile land for genocidal ideology to develop. The revolutionary Hutu ideology pictured the Hutu peasantry as a subordinated and exploited class that has to rise against its Tutsi masters (and indeed against all Tutsi in general) to attain liberation. When revolutionary leaders espouse a mono-ethnic peasant ideology to legitimize their power and want to hold on power at all cost, genocide may become their ultimate strategy.

Most scholars writing about the Rwandan genocide are convinced that the plan to commit genocide was developed in the period between November 1991 and August 1992. Although it is not easy to highlight dates on which specific decisions were made, numerous sources reveal evidence of the importance of this period. One example is a document transmitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by the Belgian Ambassador in Rwanda in March 1992 that refers to *“a secret military staff charged with the extermination of the Tutsi of Rwanda in order to solve forever, in their way, the ethnic problem in Rwanda and to destroy the domestic Hutu opposition.”*²

I agree on the importance of the civil war and the 1991-1992 period for the development of the genocidal plan, but the research I present in this chapter shows that the civil war was not the *cause* of the genocidal plan. The origins of the genocide are rather to be found in the regime’s peasant ideology, existing

long before 1990. The civil war offered the context and the occasion to execute the final solution. War allows a regime to hide preparations for mass murder from the media, from its own population, and from political opponents. And, very important, war allows the spreading of a message of ethnic hatred among the population. In a context of war, a regime can blame the other army for the massacres, as Habyarimana did in Rwanda.

I refer to Uvin's book for a discussion on the regime's development policies and how they were misjudged by the donor community. The question of whether or not Habyarimana developed his country depends to a large extent on the definition of development one is using.³ In order to understand the actions of dictatorial regimes, one should not only look at their 'developmental' outcomes, but also at the intentions of the regime. What particular kind of development did they want to achieve for their country? In order to discover the intentions of the regime, 'development' in Rwanda is studied in part two as an ideology with particular emphasis on agriculture and on the restrictions of movement imposed by the regime. In part three, I turn to some of the specific policies of the regime in order to show how the so-called peasant-friendly rhetoric was actually translated into anti-peasant policies. Population policy and forced labor policy are discussed. In part four, I relate the regime's development and peasant ideology to the implementation of genocide as a 'final solution.' Part five discusses the first massacres (1990-1991) and part six concludes the argument.

2. The Dictatorial Perspective: Development as an Ideology

It is possible to view economic development of a regime through the lens of what could be called the 'dictatorial' approach. The Canadian political economist Wintrobe (1998), for example, argues that dictators like economic growth. Growth, as measured by GNP, gives them more resources to satisfy the elite's desire for consumption, to employ more people in the state's administration, and to satisfy basic needs, thereby increasing the dictator's power. A brief look at the political economy of dictatorship makes this clear: in order to stay in power, a dictator needs three things: first, a budget; second the loyalty of at least a part of the population; and, third, a repressive apparatus to control the unsatisfied part of the population. These three are inter-linked as an increase in his budget increases the dictator's power and allows him to reward supporters and repress opponents.

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One observer, the German pastor Herbert Keiner, called the Habyarimana regime a development dictatorship.⁴ In the next sections, the dictatorial approach to economic development will be used to interpret Habyarimana's rhetoric and policies. The key issue in the political economy of development is that policies detrimental to the economy (and to the population) are nevertheless carried out when they are beneficial to the country's elite and/or to the political power of the dictator. It will become clear that what Habyarimana meant by the word 'development' is very different from the meaning of that word in the development economics literature. In fact, Habyarimana's 'development' is exactly the opposite of economic and human development.

2.1. Agriculture

Habyarimana was convinced that the Rwandan economy should be agriculturally self-sufficient, making importation of food unnecessary. In all of his speeches, which can be considered official statements, he stresses that the development of Rwanda is the foremost goal of his economic policy, and that auto-development and food self-reliance were the methods to be used to meet that goal.

*"If it is true that the first objective of a national economy is to be able to feed the country at the service of the ones it works for and is organized for, and if it is true that the priority of priorities of Rwanda is just to build the national economy around this major imperative, meaning to give it a solid base to allow it to respond to this fundamental demand, one must absolutely be able to identify clearly the key factors our economy needs in order to attain the objective of a well understood food self-reliance."*⁵

And

*"Auto-development is not a slogan for us, it is not an effort to theorize, it is not a vain aspiration to embrace a doctrine or a school of thought. No, for us, auto-development is our conviction that progress needs to come from our own forces, that we cannot live beyond our means and that the solutions of our problems need to come from us."*⁶

In his speeches, Habyarimana often stated that the increase in the income of the peasant and the development of the rural areas were priorities for his government. When viewed in terms of his ideology, this is perfectly compatible with food self-reliance since increased food production benefits the peasants directly. Indeed, if the government had actually considered the food situation and the income of the Rwandan farmer to be of prime importance, this would have been, other things being equal, a government that cared for the well-being of the peasant population. After reviewing his speeches, one infers that Habyarimana wants agricultural production to increase. In fact, he presents increased agricultural production as the one and only solution to overcome the problems of the Rwandan economy.

*“In the coming twenty years, the population of Rwanda will be doubled. We thus have to make sure that we have enough food. Our food strategy gives absolute priority to our peasants and to the production of food crops that are most important to solve our food crisis. The establishment of a policy of increased production demands a profound internal transformation and a continuous effort for a long period.”*⁷

More specifically, however, Habyarimana is interested in increased production of export crops, the foremost of which is coffee:

*“In his policy of promotion and management of the export industries, the government always takes care of the peasant families, being the essential productive forces of our country, by delivering a guaranteed and certain income in order to improve their standard of life regularly.”*⁸

This indicates the first inconsistency in the implementation of policies according to the ideology: if food-self reliance is the primary goal, then why strongly promote the cultivation of coffee and tea for export? Taxation is the most probable answer to this. Coffee provided the main source of tax-income for the regime. The production of export crops is only beneficial to food security when the earnings from these crops for the households are higher than the earnings from food crops. With declining international prices for coffee and tea in the 1988-1993 period, the contribution of export crops to food security at the household level was no longer assured. If food self-reliance was the oft-repeated regime's objective, the 1989 famine in southern Rwanda showed that food security was not high on the regime's agenda.⁹

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While increased productivity is generally considered a goal in most countries, it was a requirement in Rwanda. All Rwandans, especially the peasants, had to participate in the enterprise of development and had to increase their agricultural productivity. This is revealed in the following excerpt from a speech Habyarimana delivered at the National University in Butare in 1973:

*“The coup d’état that we did, was above all a moral coup d’état. And what we want, and we would consider our action as failed if we do not reach this goal, what we want, is to ban once and for all, the spirit of intrigue and feudal mentality. What we want is to give back labor and individual yield its real value. Because, we say it again, the one who refuses to work is harmful to society.”*¹⁰

When reading this excerpt from his speech for the first time, one is inclined to think that the speaker is a goal-oriented, conservative type of person. A closer reading, however, allows the researcher to interpret this statement. Let us go through it step by step. (1) He says he did not do a coup d’état, but a *moral coup d’état*. Something of a higher, divine order. As one of my colleagues put it, he sees himself as a person of historic importance. (2) His coup d’état has a goal, an objective. Habyarimana *literally says that he would consider his coup d’état to have failed if he did not reach that goal*. This speaker clearly has embarked on a mission. (3) In the next part we learn what the objective is, *namely to ban, once and for all, the spirit of intrigue and feudal mentality*. This is the most important part. These are exactly the words the regime used when it was talking about the Tutsi. The Tutsi were considered the feudalists, the former masters of the Hutu-peasants. You cannot trust them, the Hutu-ideology tells you (intrigue), they are always plotting against the Hutu and working for the benefit of their own ethnic group. Recall that, in the meeting of secret military staff (quoted above) we also find the expression ‘to solve forever’. (4) *To give back labor and individual yield its real value. The one who refuses to work is harmful to society*. Habyarimana wants all Rwandans to do manual labor (see also section 4.3). According to him, the value of manual labor has been neglected. Moreover, those not performing agricultural work, the ‘non-peasants,’ are harmful to society. Habyarimana is saying that only the Hutu peasant, the one tilling the land, is productive and good for society.¹¹

Habyarimana's 1973 speech contains words and expressions that appear in the exterminist propaganda of the nineties. Can one argue that the peasant and racist ideology is present in Habyarimana's speeches from the very beginning of his dictatorship? Can one interpret the 1973 speech as saying that Habyarimana wants to ban the Tutsi from Rwanda and would consider his presidency failed if he would not reach that objective? Does 'ban' mean the removal from public office or from public life in general? Does it mean the expulsion, forced emigration, or ethnic cleansing of the Tutsi? Implementing 'ethnic cleansing' against the Tutsi is considered 'good' because the Tutsi are harmful to society. In that way Habyarimana can realize his ideal of a real peasant society, where everybody is doing manual labour. Indeed, this comes down to interpretation, but in the months before this 1973 speech, thousands of Tutsi were indeed banned from public office (by the actions of the Committees of Public Safety). If 'ban' only means to ban a feudal mentality, not the Tutsi as a group, then at least the foundations for the banning of the Tutsi are laid in this speech. When one associates an ethnic group with a specific mentality, as Habyarimana did, then the removal of Tutsi from political power can be a first step, and the expulsion of the Tutsi as a group, a second.

In order to secure his power, Habyarimana had to dissolve the power base of his predecessor, President Kayibanda, but at the same time remain faithful to the Hutu ideology. Kayibanda put it bluntly: *'the Tutsi must also cultivate.'* Habyarimana was more discreet, but as least as determined. Nevertheless, I infer from his speeches that he too considered the Tutsi as pastoralists who refused to cultivate. This is resonant with Hitler's ideology, in which the Jews were not willing the work and were exploiting the Germans.

According to Habyarimana, all forces in Rwanda have to be mobilized for development

*"Isn't auto-development before everything else the exaltation of our living forces, isn't auto-development essentially the mobilization of all our living forces for a development, a progress, a national management of the challenges of our country?"*¹²

The Khmer Rouge used exactly the same language: Cambodia needed to be developed. Everybody needed to raise their productivity to allow Cambodia to make the Great Leap Forward.¹³

With almost all arable land in use, Habyarimana relied on the increased productivity of manual work to reach a higher production of food. Economists call this a labor-based strategy of intensification. However, because of the density of the population vis-à-vis the available land, the supply of labor in

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agriculture was abundant. Land, capital and technology were the constraints for the Rwandan economy, not labor. Increasing the labor productivity in agriculture would only mean that fewer people are needed to perform the same amount of work. This is the second inconsistency in the implementation of policies according to the ideology: if all agricultural work can be done by approximately 50% of the population currently working in agriculture, then why demand that everyone do agricultural work and that everyone be more productive?

Food production could have been increased, but not without various kinds of costs. First, since all land was already put into cultivation, one could only intensify cultivation to increase production. This risks further depletion of the soils. In this case, one has to use fertilizer. The regime however, preferred to use its limited import budget to buy fertilizer for its lucrative large-scale tea plantations.¹⁴ This is a clear trade-off between improving tea and improving food production. The issue was decided in favor of tea production, just as it was with coffee. Second, during the whole of Habyarimana's rule, almost no technological innovation was introduced in Rwandan agriculture. In 1993, peasants were still working with tools they had always been using.

Food self-reliance does not only concern the production of food, but also involves other activities

“Of course, in the strategy of food self-reliance, agricultural production is very important, but we should not minimize the connected activities : infrastructure, the roads to evacuate the products, the health centers, a healthy population is able to produce more than a sick one.”¹⁵

2.2. Organic Development, equilibrium thinking and the individual

The very modest Rwandan efforts towards industrialization were undertaken only after intense outside pressure. The development of small handicraft enterprises for example, was only allowed in 1985 after a campaign by the ILO, the Young Catholic Workers of Rwanda and the special representative of Switzerland.¹⁶ According to Habyarimana, industrial development should always be auto-centered and endogenous,¹⁷ but more importantly, industrial development should be organic:¹⁸

“Our strategy for industrialization will not have two heads (formal and informal sector); it will be an organic strategy coming from a global vision of the problems and the needs. Such a strategy will encourage industrial units of national dimension, but who will not be defined separately, or independent, but organic and in line with what is done for the small enterprise, in order for large enterprises to come to support the small ones and not to destroy them.”

The use of the word ‘organic’ normally refers to the anatomy of the human body. In a 1981 speech, we find more evidence for the analogy between the economy and the human body:

“The commune must remain a body constituted of several cells, lively and dynamic. And as every living body, the commune needs several elements to be able to render service to its population. The commune, the basic cell of our development and of our economy, has been restructured in order to fulfill better its mission i.e. to dynamize the living forces of the country for their well-being.”¹⁹

In this speech, Habyarimana thus viewed the economy as a human body where all organs should function together for the well-being of the whole. This fits perfectly into other parts of his ideology: he frequently repeats that the individual is subordinate to the collective.

The economic theory of Habyarimana resembles very closely a well-known theory developed in 18th Century France, by the Physiocrats. The key concept of this school were the following: (1) agriculture is the basis of the economy and the only source of productive value, (2) the economy can be thought of as a physical body where the products flow from producers to consumers as blood flows through the organs of a body, (3) Society consists of three classes: the peasant-producers, the landowners, and the ‘sterile’ class of administrators-politicians, (4) equilibrium conditions exist in each economy, where equilibrium means a situation of no surpluses or shortages.

The foremost theoretician of the Physiocratic School, Francois Quesnay, had a background of medical training before he began his study of political economy. According to the economic historian Taylor, Quesnay viewed the economy as a ‘circular flow’ or ‘body’ and attributes this to his medical background.²⁰ (It is interesting but not persuasive to note that before becoming a military officer in the new Rwandan Army, the young Habyarimana attended medical school for at least one year at the Louvanium University in Kinshasa,

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Zaire.) Although no references to Quesnay have been noted in the available Habyarimana speeches, both men have in common that their theory is not just a theory about the economy, but also a philosophy about the entire organization of society.

In a speech before the members of the Rwandan public administration, Habyarimana discussed his favorite topic, the macro-economic equilibria of the Rwandan economy. For him these equilibria are two-fold: the food/population equilibrium where food production should increase faster than population growth, and the internal/external equilibrium, or balance of trade, where the value of exports should equal the value of imports. In this speech, he stressed that there is a direct link between the everyday activities of every person and these equilibria. If, for example a secretary uses a car owned by the state to go shopping, this increases the cost of imports because the state has to import the fuel.²¹

Habyarimana often asked his public to be creative, innovative and to take responsibility, but in fact, the peasants were not allowed to cultivate the crops they wished, to use the techniques of soil protection they wanted, to move to the city, or to organize themselves outside the MRND. Instead, the peasants were told to work hard and increase their productivity. They were told to listen to the administration and to the burgomasters of their communes. Habyarimana was strongly supported by the Catholic Church in his advocacy of moral values, the labor ethic, and obedience to authority.

2.3. Ruralization and Restrictions on Movement

Habyarimana followed a consistent policy to make the peasants stay in the rural areas. They had to remain in an agricultural setting. Of course, this anti-urban policy benefited people already living in the cities, the so-called 'elite.' It also explains why in 1973, 95% of the population lived in the rural areas and in 1993, 95% still lived in the rural areas. The dictator considered cities places of immorality, theft and prostitution. This 'moral stand' closely resembled the teaching of the Catholic Church in Rwanda which also considered the cities as dangerous places which young people should be kept away from lest they be contaminated by the cities' immorality. Prostitutes or so-called prostitutes (often Tutsi girlfriends of expatriates) in Kigali were sent to a re-education camp in Nsinda in the prefecture of Kibungo.

Other dictatorships favoring ruralization instead of urbanisation have been studied. For instance, on the reason why the Khmer Rouge evacuated the cities, Ben Kiernan writes that it became far easier to control the population:²²

“From now on, there would be no more assembled constituency to whom dissident or underground political activists could appeal or among whom they could quietly work. No human agglomeration facilitating private communication between individuals. Nowhere that the exchange of news and ideas could escape tight monitoring that reduced it to a minimum. No venue for a large crowd to assemble except on CPK initiative, no audience for someone like Sihanouk to address. No possibility of pressuring the nerve center of the regime by means of popular demonstrations in the capital. And no chance for an orthodox marxist or other dissident faction to develop a base among a proletariat.”

The difference between Pol Pot and Habyarimana is that, during his reign, Habyarimana did not have to cleanse the cities in order to control the population. Nearly everybody was already living in the rural areas and he only had to make sure that they stayed there. However, the comparison with Pol Pot becomes chilling when one realizes that the capital of Kigali was the first place that was cleansed of Tutsi (and politically moderate Hutu) during the genocide.

In an interview in 1980, Habyarimana stated that he had eight children himself and that his character was strongly influenced by his parents and by his life on the farm :²³

“My parents were cultivators, simple peasants thus, they are dead unfortunately and it is really in this point in life in the countryside, on the hills, in life with the land (soil), that they have influenced me the most, and they were simple peasants, they were not part of the leadership at the time and also the fact that they were Catholic. Many points that one could underline for the part of my parents and that have influenced my character and my own life.”

In section (3.1), when we discuss population policy, we come back to the significance of rural life and the peasantry in Habyarimana’s speeches.

It is highly unlikely that a son of ‘simple peasants’ could first go to study medicine at Louvanium University in Kinshasa and later enroll in the military academy in Rwanda. Habyarimana is not the first dictator to ennoble peasants because of his regime’s ideology. The Cambodian mass murderer Pol Pot also pretended to be a simple peasant. Ben Kiernan writes that Hitler declared the farmer “the most important participant” in the Nazi revolution. In *Mein*

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Kampf, Hitler linked German peasant farmland with German racial characteristics.²⁴ According to Chrétien, several copies of films about Hitler and Nazism were found in Habyarimana's home.²⁵ In a 1997 book, David Large reminds us not to forget rural Germany and especially Bavaria (the NSDAP hot spot) during the rise of Nazism.²⁶

It is instructive to remember that Habyarimana's population and agricultural policies had their roots in the colonial area. The Belgian colonizers of Rwanda also tried both to prevent the growth of cities and to increase the production of coffee, undoubtedly because forcing the population to stay in the rural areas facilitates their control and exploitation.

In 1994, the World Bank condemned the restrictions on population movement because they impeded the development of market centers essential for developing a market economy. The World Bank added that this policy reduced the potential for economic growth. This means that Habyarimana's migration prohibition policy was considered an impediment to development by one of the world's leading development agencies. Of course, one could disagree with the World Bank on the grounds that it has an ideological bias toward free market economics. In this case, however, the World Bank was absolutely right in its condemnation of the regime's restrictive policy. In the same document, the World Bank added that these migration restrictions increased poverty by limiting the options of the poor. From the development economics literature we know that migration, and especially temporary employment in cities, is an important strategy to cope with poverty. The Bank does not go as far as saying that this restrictive policy was a means to control the population. When we look at this policy from a dictatorial point of view, the motivation behind the policy becomes clearer.

Habyarimana espoused a development ideology. His speeches reveal his vision for Rwanda. Unspoken, but just as important, is that this ideology served as a legitimation for his dictatorial power. As G. Prunier writes

“The MRND was a truly totalitarian party : every single Rwandese citizen had to be a member, including babies and old people. All bourgmestres and prefects were chosen from among party cadres. The party was everywhere.”²⁷

Prunier also writes that the MRND was not supposed to be a ‘political’ party:

“Indeed, the word ‘politics’ was almost a dirty word in the virtuous and hard working world of Habyarimanism. Every effort was made to forget- at least officially – that politics existed.”²⁸

Having one single party was the right choice for Habyarimana given his ideology and his desire to stay in power. He could control the entire population, outlaw political opposition and implement his vision of society. In so-called animation sessions, the population had to glorify Habyarimana.

In Prunier's words,

“Along the somewhat reminiscent lines of eighteenth century European theories of ‘benevolent despotism,’ President Habyarimana had decided to take upon his shoulders the heavy burden of the state so that his subjects could devote themselves entirely to the business of agriculture.”²⁹

Prunier opened the eyes of the world community with his book on the genocide. He also wrote about the ideology of Habyarimana, but he did not go far enough. Prunier believes the system worked at the economic level, but he does not consider the ultimate consequences of the agricultural and peasant ideology of Habyarimana (1995: 76–80).

It is possible to see that the policies he adopted were designed to further both the adoption of his ideology by the population, and his dictatorial power. Table 1 summarizes the findings that will be discussed in detail in the next section. Habyarimana's policies were expressed as “peasant-friendly,” that is, they were presented as helping peasants improve their lives. However, closer examination of several of these policies – including population policy and *umaganda* – indicates that these policies were in fact virulently anti-peasant.

3. Discussion of Specific Policies and Their Justification in Habyarimana's Own Words

3.1. Population Policy

As noted earlier, one of Habyarimana's primary policies was to make Rwanda food self-sufficient. However, it can be argued that a strategy of increased food production without a family planning policy is self-defeating. For many years, Rwandan farmers had been able to increase food production because Rwanda was blessed with fertile soil. However, at some point, land under cultivation reaches its absolute limit, and there is ample evidence that by the end of the 1980s this limit had been reached. Rwanda was one of the most densely populated countries in the world, yet developed no population control

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policy. In fact, Rwandan women had the highest birthrate in the world. In 1973, at the beginning of his dictatorship, Habyarimana told his audience that Rwanda had a demographic problem:

*“We are aware of the problems caused by the demographic growth of the Rwandan population and they should be getting our permanent and serious attention. We believe however that the people who seem to advocate fast solutions, resulting from a certain literature whose authors do not hide their egotism, should be more reserved. The solution that we are looking for shall be Rwandan, taking our mentalities, our moral values, our culture, our possibilities and human solidarity into account.”*³⁰

During his reign, Habyarimana gave different reasons to explain the absence of family planning. At one point he argues that the Rwandan family wants to have a lot of children. On other occasions he said that his scientists were looking for the best way to prevent population growth and that he is awaiting their answer. At yet another day he appealed to the Church to tolerate family planning. These arguments may well be valuable, but they also make clear that Habyarimana sought excuses to explain the absence of family planning. In fact, as is clear in his speeches, Habyarimana himself never promoted family planning. Rwanda had a population bureau, but it was a sham. Prunier (1995: 88-89) writes that the Ministry of Interior allowed Catholic pro-life commandos to attack pharmacies that sold condoms.

I have also observed a certain evolution in Habyarimana’s population thinking: in 1973 he advocated a Rwandan solution, in line with Rwandan culture, to the population growth rate (see previous citation). In 1979, he continues along the lines of Rwandan tradition, stating that

*“I have already affirmed in other occasions, that the number of inhabitants of our country should not always be presented as excessive, nor always be presented as a constraint on development. That development is exactly the fruit of people’s work.”*³¹

In 1980 he refers to the Rwandan desire to have children

*“A Rwandan by nature wants to have a lot of children because he considers his children a source of protection, a source of production to secure his living. The Rwandan family wants to have children and it is a disaster when it does not have children.”*³²

In correspondence with his views on agriculture, Habyarimana saw the peasants as production factors:

*“It is the Rwandan peasant that makes Rwanda live. Because the foreign currency we have for our imports, is because of the coffee, because of the tea, because of the export of furs, there you can see the role of the peasant, the farmer, the cultivator.”*³³

In 1987, one year after the MRND Central Committee’s decision (1986) to refuse the return of the 1959 refugees, stating that the country was overpopulated, Habyarimana has a less positive view on population growth than in the first 10 years of his reign. He says,

*“We believe there is a real problem. If the population grows faster than the economy, we have a problem. And nevertheless, we must reconcile two things, on the one hand, the more numerous we are, the stronger we are, because we have more arms and more brains, but the more numerous we are, the more we have to produce for that population in order to have enough food, to have education, to have clothes. We must reconcile these two parameters : population and growth.”*³⁴

In fact, I believe that the 1986-1989 period is key to see the link between population growth and Habyarimana’s peasant ideology : In 1986, he said at two occasions that the peasants were the real employers of Rwanda, because they allowed the State to function.³⁵ On the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the existence of the Rwandan Republic, on July 1st 1987, Habyarimana devoted his official speech to the glorification of the Rwandan peasant. He said that

“ If in the 25 years of our independence Rwanda has known a lot of success in its struggle for progress, if it has been able to take a number of important steps, it is in the first place our farmers who made this happen (...) it is their total devotion to the work, every day (...) their fabulous capacity to adapt, their pragmatism, their genius, their profound knowledge of our eco-systems that allowed them to extract an amazing degree of resources from their plots of land (...)”

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At the time, a commentator wrote that never before had such honor been given to the Rwandan peasants.³⁶ Four months later, at the occasion of the Government Council of November 13th, 1987, Habyarimana ennobled the Rwandan peasant by extending the term 'peasant' (Umuturage) to all Rwandans.³⁷ And again, two months later, in December 1987, Habyarimana will declare the year 1988 "The year of the protection of the peasant revenue." These decisions did not receive real attention from researchers, from western politicians or from the international press. Habyarimana was considered a president who did not fall victim to the urban bias in his policies, he was considered a peasant friendly president. With the advantage of hindsight however, one can observe that the rhetoric was peasant-friendly, but as Ntamahungiro wrote in 1988,

« To give a medal of honor to each and every peasant. To decorate some peasants as Model Farmers. To give decorations at certain officials considered close to the peasantry. To baptise a street, a place, a hotel, a day in the name of the peasants. To compose a song in their honor. To organise popular parties in each commune or sector. There is no shortage of ideas and we can count on the creativity of certain minds to supply tailor-made expressions(...) *We know however, how much this part, the majority of the population, suffers. The visits of the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communal Development and of the Minister of Justice have shown us some of these injustices. From its side, the national press regularly provides evidence of the poverty in the rural areas and in the cities.* »³⁸

The rhetoric was that of a regime caring for the peasantry, but, as I have tried to show in this text (see also Uvin 1998), the policies were benefitting elite interests, these policies were not advancing the well-being of the peasantry. Whether we take population policy, umuganda, coffee and tea policy, food price policy, education policy, exchange rate policy or land policy, we consistently find that policy measures favor the importers, the whole-sale traders, the construction companies, the state-owned companies.

There is however, another element behind the peasant-friendly rethoric. In his 1998 book, Uvin comments the 1987 decision to ennoble the term «peasant» as follows:

« if all Rwandans were peasants, there would be no more classes, no distinctions – except, of course, between Hutu and Tutsi, the only allowed and never forgotten distinction » (Uvin 1998: 24).

I believe this interpretation is only partly correct, as I would advance another element, namely that, in Habyarimana's ideology, the Tutsi are not real peasants. The peasant rhetoric of the regime is in fact anti-Tutsi. It is true that, as Uvin says, when all Rwandans are peasants, there are no classes anymore, but, it also means that there are no Tutsi anymore. As only the Hutu are Rwanda's peasants, there is no place for the Tutsi. The Hutu-Tutsi distinction is not forgotten in the peasant rhetoric, it is at the core of this rhetoric. The pro-peasant rhetoric of the regime masks a racist, anti-Tutsi agenda.

In the years 1986-1994, on several occasions, Habyarimana used the word 'overpopulation' as a justification to bar the return of the 1959 refugees (Tutsi) and their offspring. Population density was clearly not a problem, however, when the regime accepted first 6,000 (in 1988) and later 300,000 Hutu refugees (in 1993) from Burundi. The message ? Rwanda had space for only one ethnic group?³⁹

3.2. Umuganda Policy

Umuganda, the Kinyarwanda word for the wood used to construct a house, was one of Habyarimana's favorite speech topics and one of the regime's most influential policies, both in economic and in ideological terms. On February 2, 1974, the President ordered that every Rwandan perform unpaid collective work one day per week. This was stressed in a speech given by Habyarimana at a seminar for Burgomasters in August 1975, after the creation of the MRND (Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement):

"The doctrine of our Movement is that Rwanda will only be developed by the sum of the efforts of its own sons and daughters, the product of their efforts belongs to them. That is why it has judged the Collective Works for Development a necessary obligation for all the inhabitants of the country."

This policy was presented as the reestablishment of an institution that had long existed in Rwandan culture but that had been suppressed by the colonial economy. *Umuganda* was, according to the MRND, a reaction against the monetarisation of the Rwandan economy, the introduction of formal education and the development of off-farm labour under colonialism.⁴⁰ Related to this is the non-compensation of *umuganda*, which again makes the comparison with Pol Pot interesting. All Rwandans 'HAD TO VOLUNTARILY' contribute their labor to the weekly collective works.

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Economically, *umuganda* was very important for Rwanda since it made an enormous amount of unpaid labor available to the state. During *umuganda*, the Rwandan people built such things as schools, roads, sanitation facilities, and health centers.

However, the political and ideological functions of *umuganda* were even more important than its economic benefits to the state. Ideologically, *umuganda* was explicitly designed to make sure that all Rwandans would do manual labor. The local politicians and administrators were responsible for the organization of the weekly *umuganda*, which gave these officials great discretionary power. They could decide who did and who did not have to participate. Not surprisingly, the cronies and friends of the regime escaped *umuganda*.

The Manifesto of the MRND says that ‘it is a man’s labor that constitutes the essential source of wealth in the country and from there the basis of economic accumulation.’⁴¹ On many public occasions, Habyarimana expressed his low esteem for intellectual work and his high esteem for manual work. He instituted the *umuganda* policy by cultivating a plot of land together with his close friends.

“I admit that I do not understand, that I absolutely do not understand, when listening to certain intellectuals, one is obliged to hear nothing but disobeying remarks and destructive criticism regarding some accomplishments, regarding certain political options taken that are not open for questioning.

I take the example of Umuganda – our collective work for development, thanks to the manual labor of everybody. It is inconceivable that we could do without Umuganda. A country is constructed by hands, not by words! Rwanda will be constructed by the sweat on our face and not by useless speculations!

The results obtained by Umuganda, its remarkable realizations that many countries envy us, constitutes the best proof that it cannot be separated from the progress Rwanda made in the last 10 years, that it is an essential part of that progress and that it corresponds with our ancestral values – to engage oneself – so that everyone, by individual effort, performs better in a collectivity always in progress. Each intelligent and honest Rwandan can see this.

*I can only regret, with my last effort, that there still are 'intellectuals' who use their time to criticize, destroy, this institution with their words, instead of telling us how to improve it, making it more performing, adapt it better to our needs."*⁴²

It is clear that he wants Rwanda's professors to stop criticizing him and to contribute to national development. In other words, the professors should do the same as the general population: keep their mouths shut and work hard.

In part four, *umuganda* will be related to the organization of the genocide. It will appear to be an effective instrument of mass mobilization during the genocide. I mention it here in order to show that unpaid collective labor, supervised by the regime officials, had existed since 1974. In the preparation of the genocide, the regime could build upon practices and their ideological and economic justification in place since the mid-seventies. *Umuganda* also gave the local party and state officials knowledge and experience in the mobilization of the peasant population. A skill that was to prove deadly during the genocide.

*"Umuganda must be planned in order to reach its objective, developing our country by building the necessary infrastructure for its economy and, allowing the new Rwandan to engage in his work. Because of this, it has to be oriented towards directly productive actions. In order to increase the development projects in the Umuganda framework, the mobilization and sensibilization of the popular masses is necessary and the MRND offers the appropriate way to do this."*⁴³

Umuganda is one of the prime examples of a top-down policy with an appealing development image that was designed and used to exploit peasant labor, to control the peasant population, to humiliate the Rwandan intellectuals, to give politicians discretionary power over labor and to indoctrinate the Rwandans with the regime's ideology.⁴⁴ Because of abuse, corruption and disbelief, *umuganda* was not popular among the peasant population. As soon as the power of the regime decreased, *umuganda* was abolished. Uvin, writing on development aid, writes that Rwanda is a prime example of state-run, state-controlled, top-down development. All development initiatives in Rwanda were controlled by the regime, especially by the MRND party.⁴⁵

3.3 The Nature of the Second Republic

In a recent book, Mahmood Mamdani gives interesting insights into the political forces that shaped Hutu and Tutsi identities in the pre-colonial and the colonial periods and under the First Republic.⁴⁶ Coming to the Second Republic Mamdani argues that Habyarimana was publicly committed to a policy of reconciliation between Hutu and Tutsi within Rwanda. According to Mamdani, official vocabulary in the Second Republic began to speak of Hutu and Tutsi as “ethnicities” and no longer as “races.” The meaning of this, says Mamdani, was clear: “the Tutsi within were there to stay.”⁴⁷ The new regime, he writes, rejected the “national Hutuism” from the First Republic and brought the Tutsi back within the political fold. I cannot agree with Mamdani, as one could expect from my analysis of Habyarimana’s speeches in this chapter. According to me, he fails to discuss Habyarimana’s peasant ideology.

The nature of the Second Republic and the political ideology of Habyarimana are at the centre of this debate. In 1973 Habyarimana proclaimed his own coup d’etat a “Moral Revolution.” Mamdani accepts the good intentions that Habyarimana claimed to have with his “Moral Revolution.” Mamdani writes that the name given to mark the day of the Revolution namely “a day of peace and reconciliation” was not just a rhetorical gesture. He cites several examples in support of his argument, namely that Habyarimana included one Tutsi minister in his government. Mamdani’s interpretation of the morality of the “Moral Revolution” is however questionable. This emerges from Habyarimana’s 1973 speech in Butare.

Where Mamdani believes Habyarimana was a president that promoted reconciliation, this 1973 speech advances another interpretation, namely that Habyarimana wanted to go beyond the realizations of the First Republic. “*The spirit of intrigue and feudal mentality,*” “*the valuation of labor*” and “*the harmfulness of the one who refuses to work*” is, we believe, not directed to the Hutu extremists but to the Tutsi. It is exactly the language used to talk about the feudalists, the Tutsi. Additional support for the authors’ interpretation of the 1973 coup d’etat is found in a 1980 interview with Habyarimana. Asked by Yuki Sato how he judged the economic policy of President Kayibanda, Habyarimana replied:

*“One cannot judge a regime that ruled for 13 years in a few minutes time. I think one could search in different official documents to have a correct judgement. What I can say about the First Republic is that I praise its effort to accomplish the Revolution and to devote itself to the development of the popular masses. I have to say that it devoted itself a lot to domestic politics and it is therefore that it has neglected a bit the economic domain and certainly foreign policy. These shortcomings are something we can stress, but they do not diminish the merits of certain leaders of the First Republic. When we have been obliged to take action in 1973, it is because certain groups around the President started to defect from the road that was taken by the 1959 Revolution and by subsequent political activities. That revolution was undertaken to obtain equality between all the ethnic groups, all social levels, and towards 1973 one has raised the ethnic problem again. And that is why we were obliged to intervene to confirm the attainments of the Revolution and to confirm the principle of the equality of all the ethnic groups in our country, and to confirm also the primacy of the interests of the rural collectivity over individual interests. And where the economy is concerned, one has told you that Rwanda will always be handicapped by its geographical situation...”*⁴⁸

From this interview, it seems to me that Habyarimana directed his efforts against the leaders of the First Republic to safeguard the attainments of the 1959 Revolution and accused the leaders of the First Republic of jeopardising these attainments. Habyarimana namely suggests that the dignitaries of the First Republic had forgotten the objectives of the Revolution. In this interview Habyarimana says that ethnic problems constituted the reason for his coup d'état. He did not take power because he believed that the leaders of the First Republic were too racist (as one may infer from Mamdani's book), but on the contrary that these leaders had not fully implemented the objectives of the 1959 Revolution. Habyarimana wanted to consolidate the 1959 Revolution and believed that the leaders of the First Republic were off-track. Support for this interpretation is also found in a paper written by Guichaoua (1997). He writes that the coup d'état caused a reversal over power relations. The elite of the South (called *Nduga*), seen as close to the Tutsi, lost power to the elite of the North (called *Rukiga*).⁴⁹

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One of the problems in the First Republic was that most university students were Tutsi (90% of university students according to Lemarchand). As Mamdani correctly points out (2001: 135), the leaders of the First Republic were criticised for not advancing Hutu representation in civil society in general and education and government employment in particular. This caused major disagreement among young Hutu males. A 1966 law gave the State the control of the school system and by 1970, 60% of the students at the National University were Hutu. According to Mamdani it was the educated but unemployed Hutu who ignited the movement to remove Tutsi from schools and public offices in 1973. Mamdani adds: "The context for the crises was created by the massacre of hundreds of thousands of Hutu by the mostly Tutsi army in neighboring Burundi" (2001: 137). The so-called "Committees of Public Safety" published lists of Tutsi who should be expelled from the university or from their jobs. Mamdani then concludes that the inaction of the Kayibanda regime, the agitation in the whole country and the power struggle between Hutu from the North and Hutu from the South prompted Habyarimana to take over power. Mamdani does not discuss Habyarimana's involvement or the involvement of any of his aides in the unrest that caused the fall of the First Republic. Mamdani accepts that Habyarimana brought peace back to Rwanda: "Thus was born the Second Republic, which immediately declared itself the custodian of the revolution and the protector of all its children, Hutu as well as Tutsi" (2001: 138). Why then, one should ask, did Habyarimana not allow the Tutsi expelled in 1973 to return to their jobs and to their classrooms? Before 1973, these refugees had not joined the 1959 and 1963 refugees in neighbouring countries and were willing to live with and co-operate with a Hutu leadership.

The point here is that all these jobs, together with the land of the Tutsi, was already distributed among Hutu, especially the Hutu radicals, members of the "Committees of Public Safety." Instead of directing his 1973 speech at the university of Butare against these radicals (as one would assume from a president who wants to reconcile), Habyarimana blames "feudal mentality," and considers "the ones who refuse to work harmful to society." In other words, he blames the Tutsi for the unrest, not the Hutu radicals. It may well be that we encounter here a practise that we will see more in the 1990-1994 period, namely that Habyarimana tells western journalists what they like to hear, to talk about peace and reconciliation, and that he reserves a different discourse for his domestic audience.³⁰

Several other elements should be added to this discussion. One is a biographical one: Habyarimana had been in charge of the army from the start of the First Republic. He graduated as the first and highest ranking officer from the first promotion of the Military Academy in 1962 and was given command of the army right after. Under Kayibanda, he served as Minister of Defense. The single purpose of the army was to defend the country against attacks from Tutsi from neighbouring countries. In this period, in which a new leadership had to establish itself, attacks were also directed against Tutsi citizens residing inside Rwanda.⁵¹ An example is the massacre of several thousand Tutsi in 1963 in the prefecture of Gikongoro. In theory, it is possible that a military officer whose entire career-path coincides with the rise to power of the Hutu and whose responsibility was to fight the Tutsi rebels, would become a peace-maker and a promoter of reconciliation once he is president. But one should look at the facts. It was the Hutu from the North, who had a history of resistance to colonial and Tutsi dominance, who mounted the 1973 coup d'état. Pottier, referring to food policy and to the land contract (ubukonde)⁵² writes that:

“When the current (=Second Republic) Government of Rwanda took power, their ambition was to restore their own pre-Tutsi culture – a culture dominated by powerful landowners (*abakonde*) who attracted clients (*abagererwa*) through land.”⁵³

Other elements are found in a remarkable book published in 1987. This book, published by Omer Marchal, a maker of documentaries, is an Anniversary Publication for 25 years of Rwandan Independence.⁵⁴ The whole book is a beautifully illustrated *mythical and romantic history* of Rwanda and was commissioned by President Habyarimana.⁵⁵ The book was distributed by Habyarimana to his honorary guests (heads of state, presidents, ministers...) at the 25th Celebration of Independence. The book features many beautiful pictures from the Rwandan landscape, its people, animals and plants. Rwanda is described as a one large village, stating that Rwandans do not like cities (p. 24). The reader is offered a history of Rwanda where the 1959 events are called a *peasant revolution* during which the *predominance of the cow was replaced with the predominance of the hoe*. On p.44 we read that man *is an eminent product of his soil*. The Abanyiginya dynasty had not recognised the legitimate aspirations of taking part in government and had not respected the land rights of the peasant masses.

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On p.46, one reads that Rwanda is inhabited by *Hutu, Tutsi and Twa*. The first are bantus, *cultivators* from the great forest of the Sahara. The second are nilotics, *pastoralists* and great politicians from Egypt and perhaps from India. The Twa finally are pygmoid people, the most frustrated group. At the same time the book honors its leaders, foremost president Habyarimana who is in office since 1973. The president is presented as *the child of God and the Apostle of Life* (p. 96 and p. 56), adding that he is predestined by his name, which literally translates “It is God who gives life”.

In Marchal’s book, it is further said that the president belongs to the *race* of people who cut the forest (the Bahutu) (p.88). President Habyarimana, the reader learns, brought peace to the country and is not the type of person that would capture women from the noble classes (the Batutsi) while contemplating their extinction (p.92). On page 92 one also finds Habyarimana’s citation from a discussion with French and Belgian journalists saying that he is a “Muhutu pur sang” (a Muhutu from pure blood) and that his parents were simple peasants.⁵⁶ The time he spend on the hills, on the soil has influenced him the most. On the same p.92 it is repeated that the family of Habyarimana belonged to the race of people who cut the forest. On p.97 Habyarimana is called « *the greatest adventurer of the end of the millennium* » .

When he took power in 1973, we read that Habyarimana said that « the Rwandan will never spill the blood of a fellow Rwandan anymore » . On p.100, Habyarimana is honored for not advocating birth control, « life is a gift of God » , which is considered very courageous in a very populous country. In the book, the question of the Rwandan refugees in neighboring countries is linked to the demographic situation inside Rwanda: (p. 108)

The Rwandans say: “When Obote has sent us his refugees three or four years ago (a.1982), if we wouldn’t be many, wouldn’t he be very eager to send the refugees?” It is true : the power of a people is also in their number. Recently, Jacques Chirac (then prime minister), cited the demographic growth of the French population in order to launch the promise to make France the first economic power in Europe. And the Russians, in Afghanistan, build their presence on the axiom: “One only needs one million Afghans to build Afghan socialism.” Put in other words, one only needs to make children.

From this quotation, we learn that “The Rwandans” did not oppose population growth, but moreover considered it as the basis of their political and economic power. On p.174 of the Anniversary Publication, it is said that Habyarimana avoided introducing political parties because their rivalries in other parts of Africa had led to fratricides. Habyarimana, page 174 says, had set up the MRND to introduce his ideas in the peasant masses.

Of course, one could question the nature of this Anniversary book and dismiss it as the independent opinion of the author in question (Omer Marchal). Marchal was indeed a romantic author, but it was the president who commissioned the book. The least one could say was that Habyarimana liked Marchal’s writings. He namely commissioned the book for what was likely to be the most important celebration of Habyarimana’s entire presidency. “The Rwandans” from the citation are in fact Marchal’s contractors in the Presidential office.

There is more to it however. Marchal is not the founder of Rwandan mythology. As we will see, what he writes about Habyarimana and “The Rwandans” can be found in other citations of Habyarimana himself. It is therefore highly likely that Marchal only wrote what Habyarimana liked to read. Describing Habyarimana as the child of God resembles the answer the president gave on the question why he was not in favour of a multiparty system. This question was asked in the mid-seventies after establishing the MRND. The answer was: “*You also worship only one God*”. The idea of having a mission in life (greatest adventurer) is also confirmed in an interview with Habyarimana in 1980. On the question how he became president asked by Yuki Sato, the president answered:

*“...I would like to stress that I have served the First Republic since 1960 and I think of it now. Exactly at the date of Independence, the first of July 1962, was it a symbolic gesture ? But I think of it now and you can interpret it the way you want. The first of July 1962, I was part of the March-past and in the troops that composed this March-past, there was a young under-lieutenant. That was me. And it was this under-lieutenant that was given the flag of the army by former President Kayibanda. A flag that we still have now. I think about it and maybe it was a symbolic gesture.”*⁵⁷

The absence of family policy and the vision to regard the size of the population as an economic and political strength is not Marchal’s invention either. This is documented in the section on population policy (3.1) in this chapter.

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In the next section, we will discuss the relationship between peasant ideology and genocide in Rwanda. In Mamdani's book (p.222), we find a vivid expression of this. When Hutu friends of a Tutsi girl decided to take her with them and were preparing a strategy to pass the roadblocks set up by interahamwe, they told her: "Take nothing, try and be as a peasant."

The Relationship Between Development, the Peasantry, and Genocide

A number of references to the Rwandan peasantry can be found in the propaganda of 1990-1994. Most of this propaganda is racist, but sometimes racism is combined with the glorification of the peasantry. After all, in the interpretation of the ideology of the regime offered in this chapter, only the Hutu were the real peasants. Some examples of this can be found in the analysis of the extremist media by J.P Chrétien. I cite from his book (translating into English)

"Rwandan intellectuals, have courage, help the president defend the nation. I think that the silence of the Rwandan intellectuals on the war of October-November 1990 becomes more and more clear and maybe complicit as it was on the rural question for thirty years." ⁵⁸

"Did you know that 85% of the inhabitants of Kigali (= the capital) are Tutsi ? When they expelled all the unemployed from the city, only the Hutu remained. The Tutsi have obtained working permits because their brothers confirmed that they used them in the household." ⁵⁹

"During this Revolution one took the goods of these people who did not show their engagement and one gave them to the poor who had engaged themselves in the Revolution. So we can say that what we are concerned that this war is a final war, we have to show to the world that we are not impressed by the Whites, that the Hutu is more courageous than the Tutsi, that the majority people is more courageous, that we serve ourselves (French text: que nous nous autosuffisons)... This war is really final...we have to conduct a war without mercy." ⁶⁰

In these three citations from the genocide propaganda machine, one finds some of the central concepts of the Habyarimana regime that are discussed in this chapter: the anti-urban, anti-intellectual, and self-reliance ideology. As was said in the beginning, the use of genocide as a political strategy does not come out of the blue, it is rooted in principles and policies that existed long before

the genocide. I believe one could summarize the ideological construction of the regime by means of the following antithesis:

urban = consuming = immorality = trader = intellectual = minority =
Tutsi vs. rural = producing = morality = farmer = manual worker = majority
= Hutu

In relation to the autarkic economic ideology that was discussed in the first part, it is worth noting that early in the genocide, its organizers literally closed the borders of Rwanda to prevent Tutsi from fleeing Rwanda. The country was not only enclosed and surrounded by other countries, the organizers of the genocide made sure all its borders were effectively closed in order to kill all Tutsi.

In order to further support my position, I now turn to *umuganda*, the famous labor policy of the Habyarimana regime. I compare the decisions regarding *umuganda* taken by the Central Committee of the MRND (in 1982, 1984 and 1986) and the structure used to organize the killing before and during the genocide.

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<p><u>A) Decisions of November 12, 1982</u>⁶¹</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Members of the national <i>Umuganda</i> Commission : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - secretary-general of the MRND (pres.) - ministry of Plan - ministry of Public Works - ministry of Agriculture - ministry of the Interior - vice-president of the CND - secretary-general of the Chamber of Comm. 2. At the level of the prefecture, a Commission in charge of <i>Umuganda</i> composed of MRND officials is installed 3. rehabilitation of manual labor and obligatory nature of <i>Umuganda</i> 4. local officials have to feel concerned about the political weight of the <i>Umuganda</i> institution, serve as an example and manage the population 5. One should allocate the task in a proportional way in order to appreciate the work of each group objectively 6. For the Communal Works of Development, each participant must bring his own equipment. Only heavy or collective material will be given by the Cell. 7. Accumulation of unfinished projects or not useful projects must be avoided. <i>Umuganda</i> projects have to be harmonized with national programmes. 	<p><u>Organization of the genocide</u>⁶²</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The highest authorities of the country including the president, the president and secretary-general of the MRND, all MRND ministers and important army officers, together with the brothers of Md. Habyarimana organize genocide in Rwanda from 1990 to 1994. Business friends import weapons. 2. MRND officials given orders to execute massacres in the 1990-1994 period. They lead the population in the execution of the genocide. 3. National and local officials use the word <i>Umuganda</i> to describe the killing. 4. The population should act like one person to destroy the forces of evil. Local officials sensitize and mobilize the population 5. Individuals are forced to kill, implicate a lot of Hutu in the killing. Refusal to kill often is a death warrant. 6. Machetes, an agricultural tool most Rwandans own, is the main instrument used in the killing. Firearms are used by officials in case of resistance. 7. Propaganda calls upon peasants to finish the project, meaning that nobody should escape.
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<p>8. The militants must be informed on the results of the Communal Works for Development, the destination of the products of the harvest and on the evolution of <i>Umuganda</i> in other parts of the country</p> <p><u>B) Decisions of June 27, 1984</u></p> <p>1. Decision on the hours of work for <i>Umuganda</i> and on the radio broadcasting for <i>Umuganda</i></p> <p>2. <i>Umuganda</i> will take seven hours starting from the place of work</p> <p>3. The official responsible for <i>Umuganda</i> at the level of the Cell will decide when <i>Umuganda</i> finishes, but one should not leave the place before 10 o'clock</p> <p>4. In order to strengthen the sensitization for <i>Umuganda</i>, the Central Committee has decided that Radio Rwanda will provide broadcasting on <i>Umuganda</i> and animation.</p> <p><u>C) Decisions of April 10, 1986</u></p> <p>1. A price of 1.000.000 FRW will be given to the Commune ranked first in the <i>Umuganda</i> activities. This price will be inscribed on the budget of the MRND presidency.</p>	<p>8. Members of the genocidal govt. tell peasants not to hesitate to kill because killing is already going on in the rest of the country.</p> <p><u>Organization of the genocide</u></p> <p>1. At public meetings and on the radio, government officials incite the Hutu population to do a special <i>Umuganda</i></p> <p>2. Genocidal government decides who shall be killed first and who next.</p> <p>3. Local officials determine the start and the end of the killing. <i>Interhamwe</i> ('those who work together') kill day and night.</p> <p>4. Radio Rwanda and Radio Mille Collines provide false information on the RPF and incite killing.</p> <p><u>Organization of the genocide</u></p> <p>1. Various incentives used to implicate people in the killing, from giving free beer, the chance to loot the house of the killed person, to extract cash from victims and to grab a plot of land.</p>
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This comparison shows how a policy of forced unpaid work, designed to control and exploit the peasant population and to enable local and national officials to mobilize the population for collective ends, can be turned into an efficient extermination machine. Some have pointed out that communal labor activities are a feature of many communist-type regimes and do not necessarily lead to genocide. They are right, but I believe that it is not correct to consider the usage of *umuganda* for a campaign of mass murder as a mere 'perversion' of the *umuganda* institution. This would mean that *umuganda* was inherently 'good' and only abused by a group of killers. This is difficult to accept.

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Umuganda was deliberately installed to order all Rwandans to perform manual work, including students and professors. During the genocide, Tutsi intellectuals as well as Hutu intellectuals who opposed the regime, were among the first to be killed. During the Cambodian genocide, Pol Pot killed most Cambodian intellectuals. At one point, Adolf Hitler said that when he did not need the German intellectuals anymore, he would have them killed.

Umuganda allowed national and local officials to mobilize and control the labor of the entire Rwandan adult population one day every week.⁶³ In her recent book, A. Des Forges writes on this:

“Prefects transmitted orders and supervised results, but it was burgomasters and their subordinates who really mobilized the people. Using their authority to summon citizens for communal projects, as they were used to doing for *Umuganda*, burgomasters delivered assailants to the massacre sites, where military personnel or former soldiers then usually took charge of the operation. Just as burgomasters had organized barriers and patrols before the genocide so now they enforced regular and routine participation in such activities against the Tutsi. They sent councilors and their subordinates from house to house to sign up all adult males, informing them when they were to work. Or they drew up lists and posted the schedules at the places where public notices were usually affixed” (1999: 234).

5. The Economy, the Civil War, and the First Massacres

As long as agricultural production was increasing, especially the production of coffee for export, the power of the state was increasing. More production allowed for more tax revenue and thus for a larger government budget. This in turn strengthened the repressive apparatus of the state and the ability of the state to continue its rent-distributing capacity.

When, at the end of the eighties, state resources decreased sharply because of the drop in the world coffee price, the ability of the regime to satisfy two goals at the same time decreased: to satisfy the peasant population (to increase or maintain income) and to increase export earnings (rent-seeking).

We know that, by all means, the regime wanted to increase export earnings. This provided funds for the regime for import and elite rent-seeking. The effect of the forced cultivation of coffee on the peasant population however became more and more coercive in light of decreased coffee-prices. It

was, from the perspective of many peasants, economically uninteresting to cultivate coffee, since other crops gave higher yields.⁶⁴

A coffee price fixed high enough guaranteed the regime the loyalty of the peasant population. From 1990 onwards, this was no longer possible. The regime decreased the price paid to the producer from 125 Rfr before 1990 to 100 Rfr in 1990 and increased it again to 115 thereafter. Because of inflation, the real income of the peasant population decreased during these years. A dictatorial regime, as we have discussed earlier, can only survive when it receives a certain level of loyalty from the population on the one hand and produces repression on the other hand. When the supply of loyalty drops, as it did in Rwanda, the dictator needs to produce more repression to stay in power. I believe this is the mechanism that explains dictatorial behavior in Rwanda in the years preceding the genocide.

From the moment the exiled RPF rebels attacked in 1990, the regime started killing Tutsi civilians. From 1990 to 1993, about 2,000 Tutsi civilians were murdered by the regime. As in the case of Nazi Germany, the war offered a context and a cover-up for the killings. The difference is that the Nazis started the war themselves, whereas Rwanda was attacked by the RPF. Being attacked legitimizes the use of defensive forces, but can never legitimize the extermination of an entire civilian population.

I want to stress that the regime did not wait with its murderous campaign until later developments in the war. In the first action of mass murder, 348 persons were killed in 48 hours in Kibilira, only 12 days after the start of the RPF attack.⁶⁵ Habyarimana must have known about the upcoming attack by the RPF, since it is highly likely that his intelligence service informed him of this.⁶⁶ This means that the regime was prepared for the attack. The 'preparation', however, went a lot further than the usual military readiness. Only three days after this attack, the regime rounded-up 8,000 to 10,000 people in Kigali and put them in prison. In peace-time, the regime could only discriminate against the Tutsi. The civil war allowed a radical and extreme strategy.

Between January 25, 1991 and February 4, 1991 (three years before the genocide) a massacre was carried out against a group of Tutsi known as Bagogwe. At least 300 people (and maximum 1000) were killed in a series of brutal attacks in several sectors of the north-west of the country, in the prefectures of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri. According to a report by the International Federation of Human Rights, president Habyarimana himself presided over the meeting that organised the massacre of the Bagogwe. The

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massacre had the same features that would three years later characterize the genocide: the cattle of the victims was killed and eaten, houses were burned, furniture and crops were stolen, the activity of killing was considered a special *umuganda* and the explicit order not to spare the children was given.⁶⁷ For the purpose of the present chapter it is important to note that the Bagogwe used to be – and for the most part still were in 1991 – pastoralists. They preferred to live in the high mountainous regions with good pastures for their cattle. Only recently, with the reduction of pasture land have they begun to cultivate. Since the massacre of the Bagogwe was executed right after an attack of the RPF on the center of Ruhengeri, some scholars seem to believe that the massacre was an act of revenge from the side of the Habyarimana regime. I believe this is not correct. One should not forget that the area in which these killings were executed included communes located far away from the battle front. For the study of the motivations of the Bagogwe (and other) massacres, I believe it is more fruitful to look at the peasant ideology of the regime. Could it not be that the RPF attack on Ruhengeri was an excellent pretext to kill the Bagogwe? As I have tried to show in my approach to the regime's peasant ideology, I think the Bagogwe were killed because they were considered pastoralists by the regime. The motivation behind the massacre was thus genocidal. This is clearly different from 'revenge.' The speed, planning and location (Habyarimana's home region) of the massacre offer an extra indication for my reading of the event: the president may have wanted to 'cleanse' his home region first, before 'working' in the rest of the country.

These few lines are necessary to show that the civil war was not the real cause of the massacres and other actions of the Habyarimana regime. The war offered the occasion to kill members of the Tutsi population. This means, as I have tried to argue in this chapter, that the plan to commit genocide must have originated from something else. This, I argue, is to be found in a combination of the following factors

- a political economy argument: decreased coffee prices are a budgetary problem and a 'dictatorial problem.' If the economy no longer allows the dictator to win the loyalty of the population, more coercive and repressive methods are necessary to stay in power.
- an ideological argument: Rwanda is an agricultural nation and faced difficult equilibria, both internal and external. Every Rwandan had to be as productive as possible to keep the country in balance. This equilibrium was disturbed by the end of the eighties.

- an ethnic argument: this is stressed by many authors and is compatible with my argument in the following way. When resources are scarce, and regime leaders believe that only the Hutu are the legitimate inhabitants of Rwanda, the connection is simple, in this sense that the resources of the country are such they can only support one ethnic group.

Of course, during the civil war, the plan for genocide was further developed and elaborated. Various genocidal 'tests' were run to check the reaction of the local population, the local officials, the army, and especially the international community. From all these 'tests,' the regime learned that it could get away with mass murder. But the civil war also worsened the economic condition of the regime and of the population. The war was costly to the regime and food production was strongly disrupted because of internal displacement.

6. By Way of Conclusion

The policies that Habyarimana executed during his reign served his two main objectives at the same time: Rwanda would remain a rural society based on agriculture, and he would stay in power. It is this combination that provides the key to understanding the genocide: all Rwandans had to be peasants and perform manual labor. The racist element fits into this picture, since in the Hutu revolutionary ideology the Hutu alone are the real peasants of Rwanda. The Tutsi, the feudal class, the bourgeoisie are the development problem of Rwanda. The adherents of this ideology, first of all Habyarimana himself, gained additional strength by observing the shortage of arable land. This led Habyarimana to conclude that Rwanda only had space (or resources) for one ethnic group. Ultimately, the civil war became the occasion to spread ethnic hatred among the rural population, to increase the loyalty to Habyarimana, and to implement the genocidal program.

Political violence and massacres in the 1990-1993 period served several purposes: (1) The regime could blame the RPF for it and polarize the population along ethnic lines. (2) Violence and repression allowed the regime to stay in power and increase power in the face of declined loyalty from the population. (3) The regime could run 'tests' to observe the reaction of the population, the administration and the international community. (4) The regime could redistribute the goods and land of murdered Tutsi to supporters of the regime. In the small scale mass murders of this period, the local officials used the same language derived from agriculture to describe the task:

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Umuganda, the well-known word for weekly 'communal labor for development' is used to describe and organize the killing.

Combining the three perspectives used in this chapter, one can explain the genocide as follows: Rwanda should be a peasant society (ideology) and only the Hutu are the real peasants (ethnicity). Land scarcity and declining coffee prices diminished the loyalty of the peasantry towards the Habyarimana regime (political economy). In order to restore the loyalty of the Hutu population and to make Rwanda, once and for all, a real peasant society, all Tutsi had to be killed. This annihilation would allow a redistribution of wealth from Tutsi to Hutu and implicate a large part of the Hutu population in the killing campaign.

In the late eighties, the regime had lost the loyalty of the peasant population as a result of falling coffee prices, famine, corruption, land appropriation and nepotism at all levels. The regime increased repression and terror against one group of people (Tutsi) in order to secure the loyalty of another group (Hutu). In fact, by implementing genocide, three essential objectives of the regime were realized at the same time: they used the country's resources to enrich themselves and their supporters in the Hutu population; they were given the loyalty of that population and thus could remain in power; they could restore the food/population equilibrium in favor of the Hutu. The Rwandan genocide was indeed a 'final solution,' a policy to get rid of the Tutsi once and for all, and to establish a pure peasant society.

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Endnotes

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¹ I was unable to locate the speeches for the other years of his reign. The pages used in the footnotes of the sections where I cite from Habyarimana's speech refer to the pages in the publications by ORINFOR. The speeches of Habyarimana that are analysed in this chapter were published in Kinyarwanda as well as in French. The author translated them from French to English.

² Belgian Senate, Report of Rwanda Commission of Inquiry, December 6, 1997, pp. 493-494.

³ The GDP and even the GDP per capita increased in the seventies. This is indeed an achievement for a poor country. Some scholars credit Habyarimana for this. High international coffee prices and the cultivation of all available lands helped the president to achieve economic growth in the first half of his reign.

⁴ Keiner, H., Allmahlich schwand die Bewunderung for 'Habis' regime, Frankfurter Rundschau, November 5th, 1992.

⁵ Habyarimana, J., speech 'Youth and Development', May 21st, 1986, p. 49.

⁶ Habyarimana, J, speech on July 1st, 1987, pp. 205-206.

⁷ Habyarimana, J., Speech for July 5th, 1983, p. 220.

⁸ Habyarimana, J, speech on the occasion of July 5th, 1984, pp.196-197.

⁹ The author wrote an in-dept study of the 1989 famine, see Verwimp, Ph., Agricultural Policy, crop failure and the 'Ruriganiza' famine (1989) in Southern Rwanda : a prelude to genocide ?, Discussion Paper, Center for Economic Studies, Leuven, June 2002.

¹⁰ Habyarimana, J, Speech at the occasion of the opening of the academic year in Butare, October 14, 1973, p. 44.

¹¹ This is an interpretation of Habyarimana's speech. I believe however that it is an interpretation that has not been brought forward yet and merits discussion. We come back on this in section (3.3) where we discuss the nature of the Habyarimana regime.

¹² Habyarimana, J., Discours on July 5th, 1986 for the 24th anniversary of national independence, the 13th anniversary of the 2e Republic and the 11th anniversary of the MRND, p.108

¹³ The Khmer Rouge government in Cambodia (called Democratic Kampuchea at the time) from 1975 till 1979 killed 1.7 million Cambodians during their reign of terror and genocide.

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- ¹⁴ Länderbericht (Country Report) Rwanda, Statistisches Bundesamt, BRD, 1992, p. 41.
- ¹⁵ Habyarimana, J., interview by Swiss television, January 29th, 1988, Kigali, p.27
- ¹⁶ Willame, J.C, Au sources de l'hécatombe Rwandaise, Cahiers Africaines, 1995, p. 154.
- ¹⁷ Habyarimana, J., Speech 1986, p.43.
- ¹⁸ Habyarimana, J.,Speech 1986, p. 41-42.
- ¹⁹ Habyarimana, J., Speech on the occasion of the first session of the National Development Council, p.119, 1981
- ²⁰ Taylor, H.O, A History of Economic Thought, Harvard University, 1960, pp.14 and 21
- ²¹ Habyarimana, J., Speech, 1986, pp. 146-148.
- ²² Kiernan, B., The Pol Pot Regime: Race, Power and Genocide under the Khmer Rouge 1975-1979, p. 64.
- ²³ Habyarimana, J, interviewed by Yuki Sato, July 12, 1980, p.236.
- ²⁴ Kiernan, B., 'Genocide and "ethnic cleansing"', in The Encyclopedia of Politics and Religion, ed. Robert Wuthnow, Washington, D.C., Congressional Quarterly, vol. 1, p. 298.
- ²⁵ Chrétien, J.P., Les Médias du Genocide, 1995, p. 256.
- ²⁶ Large, D. Where Ghosts Walked : Munich's Road to the Third Reich, Norton, New York, 1997, taken from a review by Tom Nairn 'Reflections on Nationalist Disasters', p. 151.
- ²⁷ Prunier, D. The Rwanda Crisis, History of a Genocide, 1995, p. 76.
- ²⁸ Prunier, G. ibid, p. 77.
- ²⁹ Prunier, G., ibid, p. 77.
- ³⁰ Habyarimana, J., Discours-programme, August 1, 1973.

³¹ Habyarimana, J, Discours-programme du 8 Janvier 1979, Discours et Entretiens de Son Excellence le Général-Major Habyarimana Juvénal Président de la République Rwandaise, et Président-Fondateur du Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement, ORINFOR, Rwanda, 1979, p.23

³² Habyarimana, J., interviewed by Yuki Sato, July 12, 1980, Discours et Entretiens de Son Excellence le Général-Major Habyarimana Juvénal Président de la République Rwandaise, et Président-Fondateur du Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement, ORINFOR, Rwanda, 1980, p.243

³³ Habyarimana, J., interview by Swiss television, Kigali, January 29th, 1988, p.28.

³⁴ Habyarimana, J, interview given to ZDF, German Television Channel 2, September, 29, 1987, *ibidem*, ORINFOR, Rwanda, 1987, p. 258

³⁵ Habyarimana, J., Discours et Entretien, 1986, p.85 and p.143-144.

³⁶ Ntamahungiro, J., Eloge du Paysan Rwandais, Dialogue, n.130, Sept.-Octo. 1988, p.5

³⁷ Ntamahungiro, J., Eloge du Paysan Rwandais, Dialogue, no 130, sept.-octo. 1988, p.6

³⁸ Ntamahungiro, J., *ibidem*, p.8

³⁹ In May 1990, the National Population Office published four volumes titled “The Demographic Problem in Rwanda and the Framework of its Solution”. I did not find drastic proposals for the solution of the problem, but this publication is a very detailed study of the relationship between population and development in Rwanda and lists a large number of measures to be taken immediately. They include family planning, schooling for women, industrialisation and urbanisation, the creation of off-farm jobs. All sorts of measures that were not only costly to the state, but ran opposite to the regime’s ideology. From his speeches, I conclude that Habyarimana was extremely preoccupied with the food-population equilibrium in his country, but more research is needed to find hard evidence that links his ideas on demography and economics with the planning of the genocide.

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⁴⁰ Needless to repeat that Habyarimana continued and intensified the policy of coffee cultivation, which is practiced to extract taxes (monetary income) from the peasants. He only added another source of tax, non-monetary in nature, namely a tax on labour (umuganda). Both taxes existed in the colonial period. See, *L'Umuganda dans le développement national*, Présidence de MRND, Affaires Economiques, Janvier 1990, p. 10.

⁴¹ Manifesto of the MRND, cited from *Umuganda dans le développement national*, 1990, p.5.

⁴² Habyarimana, J., "Youth and Development", speech at the occasion of his visit to the National University of Rwanda, May 21, 1986, p.66.

⁴³ *L'Umuganda dans le Développement National*, 1988, p.39.

⁴⁴ I refer to the 1988 government publication on Umuganda p.20-32 for details on the organisational structure of umuganda.

⁴⁵ Uvin, P., *Aiding violence : the development enterprise in Rwanda*, 1998.

⁴⁶ Mamdani, M, *When Victims become Killers, Colonialism, Nativism and the Genocide in Rwanda*, Princeton University Press, 2001

⁴⁷ Mamdani, *ibidem*, p.140

⁴⁸ Sato, Y., interview with president J.Habyarimana, July 12, 1980, published in *Discours, Messages et Entretiens de Son Excellence le Général-Major Habyarimana Juvénal, Président de la République Rwandaise*, Edition 1980, p.238. Translation by the author.

⁴⁹ Guichaoua, A., *Les Antécédents politiques de la crise Rwandaise de 1994. Rapport d'expertise rédigé à la demande du Tribunal Penal International des Nations Unies sur le Rwanda*, Arusha, Avril 1997, p.12.

⁵⁰ Mamdani cites a journalist from *Le Monde* to support his point.

⁵¹ A.Des Forges, personal communication, March 1999

⁵² in contrast to the cattle contract (ubuhake), the land contract was NOT abolished in the aftermath of the 1959 Revolution.

⁵³ Pottier, J., *Taking Stock : Food Marketing Reform in Rwanda, 1982-1989*, *African Affairs* (1993), p.29. Pottier considers the near absence of food market

regulation of the Habyarimana regime as an illustration of the how policy makers regarded nutritional status as a by-product of agricultural strategies rather than a goal in its own right (p.27). The whole complex of policies on land, food and agriculture under Habyarimana is not taken into consideration by scholars who see Habyarimana as a promoter of peace and reconciliation. In an unfinished paper, this author, building on Pottier's insights, will analyse the 1989 famine in Southern Rwanda and relate it with Habyarimana's peasant ideology.

⁵⁴ Marchal, O., *Au Rwanda, La Vie Quotidienne au Pays du Nil Rouge*, Didier Hatier, Bruxelles, 1987.

⁵⁵ Marchal, who thanks the staff in the Presidents' office in the pre-amble of his book, died in 1996. In a telephone interview with a person familiar with Marchal, the author was told that the Anniversary Book was commissioned by the President.

⁵⁶ Apparently, rumor wanted that the ethnic affiliation of Habyarimana's father was debated, pushing the president to confirm his Hutu identity in public.

⁵⁷ Interview with Yuki Sato, *ibid*, 1980, p.237

⁵⁸ *Kangura*, nr 5, November 1990, copied and translated from Chrétien, J.P., p.35.

⁵⁹ *Kangura*, nr 18, July 1991, p.10, copied and translated from Chrétien, J.P., p.145.

⁶⁰ RTML, *Radio Terre des Mille Collines*, June 17th, 1994, copied and translated from Chrétien, J.P., p.330.

⁶¹ From the above-mentioned government publication on Umuganda, p.51-53

⁶² This evidence can be found in numerous books and documents on the Rwandan genocide: FIDH (1993), *Death, despair and defiance*, Africa Rights (1995), A. Des Forges, *Leave None to tell the Story* (1999), Chrétien, J.P., *Les Média du Genocide* (1996).

⁶³ Although Umuganda was forced labor, the majority of the population may have believed in the intrinsic qualities of this policy, at least in the beginning. This, however, is irrelevant to the regime's reasons for the policy and is a topic for further research: to what extent did the population cooperate with these policies?

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⁶⁴ The author is working on an in-depth study of the coffee economy.

⁶⁵ These killings, their organized character and the implication of the regime are described in detail in a report by the International Commission on Human Rights Violations in Rwanda since October 1990 (FIDH, March 1993). It is, I believe very important to observe that Léon Mugesera, close friend of Habyarimana and one of the ideologists of the genocide, was present at the location of this first massacre. Two years later, in 1992, this man would make an extremely racist speech inciting his audience to kill Tutsi.

⁶⁶ Adelman, H and Shurki, A., Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda, 1996, p.20.

⁶⁷ Report of the International Commission of Inquiry into the violations of Human Rights in Rwanda since the 1st of Octobre 1990. The members of the commissions were human rights experts with in-depth country experience in Rwanda and were sent to this commission by four human rights organisations, 1993, p.27-42.