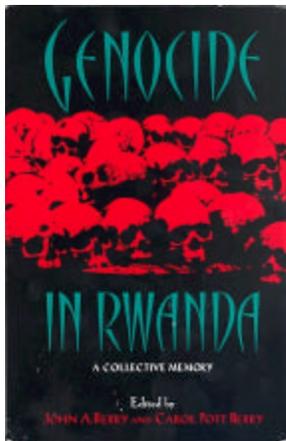


## Explaining Rwanda's 1994 Genocide

By Paul Magnarella

**A review of Mahmood Mamdani, When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001. 364 pp.**



and

**John A. Berry and Carol Pott Berry (eds.), Genocide in Rwanda: A Collective Memory. Washington, DC: Howard University Press, 1999. 201 pp.**

In 1994, Rwanda erupted into one of the most appalling cases of mass murder the world has witnessed since World War II. Many of the majority Hutu (about 85% of the population) turned on the Tutsi (about 12% of the population) and moderate Hutu, killing an estimated total of 800,000 people. Since genocide is the most aberrant of human behaviors, it cries out for explanation. The two books under review attempt to do this. To appreciate them, a short journey through Rwanda's history is necessary.

From 1894 until the end of World War I, Rwanda, along with Burundi and present-day Tanzania, was part of German East Africa. Belgium claimed it thereafter, becoming the administering authority from 1924 to 1962. During their colonial tenure, the Germans and Belgians ruled Rwanda indirectly through Tutsi monarchs and their chiefs. The colonialists developed the so-called Hamitic hypothesis or myth, which held that the Tutsi and everything humanly superior in Central Africa came from ancient Egypt or Abyssinia. The Europeans regarded Hutu and Twa (about 3% of the population) as inferior to Tutsi. Sixty years of such prejudicial fabrications inflated Tutsi egos inordinately and crushed Hutu feelings, which coalesced into an aggressively resentful inferiority complex.

During 1933-34, the Belgians conducted a census and introduced an identity card system that indicated the Tutsi, Hutu, or Twa “ethnicity” of each person. The identity card “ethnicity” of future generations was determined patrilineally; all persons were designated as having the “ethnicity” of their fathers, regardless of the “ethnicity” of their mothers. This practice, which was carried on until its abolition by the 1994 post-genocide government, had the unfortunate consequence of firmly attaching a sub-national identity to all Rwandans and thereby rigidly dividing them into categories, which, for many people, carried a negative history of dominance-subordination, superiority-inferiority, and exploitation-suffering. In their “Hutu Manifesto” of 1957, Hutu leaders referred to the identity card categories as “races,” thereby evincing how inflexible these labels had become in their minds. In fact, Hutu and Tutsi spoke the same language and practiced similar religions. They also intermarried.

In November 1959, the pro-Hutu PARMEHUTU party led a revolt that resulted in bloody ethnic clashes and the toppling of King Kigiri V. By 1963, these and other Hutu attacks had resulted in thousands of Tutsi deaths and the flight of about 130,000 Tutsi to the neighboring countries of Burundi, Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo) and Uganda. The land and cattle that the fleeing pastoral Tutsi left behind were quickly claimed by land-hungry, horticultural Hutu. As a result of the national election held under UN supervision in 1961, Gregoire Kayibanda (an author of the “Hutu Manifesto”) became Rwanda’s president-designate. Rwanda was declared independent on 1 July 1962.

Supported by the Tutsi-dominated government in Burundi, Rwandan Tutsi refugees there began launching unsuccessful attacks into Rwanda. These invasions were usually followed by brutal Hutu reprisals against local Tutsi. The Hutu government used a failed 1963 invasion as the pretext to launch a massive wave of repression between December 1963 and January 1964, in which an estimated 10,000 Tutsi were slaughtered. All surviving Tutsi politicians still living in Rwanda were executed.

In July 1973, Major Juvénal Habyarimana, a northern Hutu, overthrew Kayibanda, a southerner, and declared himself president of the Second Republic. Over the next few years, his security forces would eliminate former president Kayibanda and many of his high-ranking supporters as part of a plan to eradicate serious Hutu opposition. Habyarimana’s kin and regional supporters filled high level positions in the government and security forces. Close relatives of the president and his wife dominated the army, gendarmerie and, especially, the Presidential Guard.

Habyarimana’s Rwanda became a single-party dictatorship. He relegated the Tutsi to the private sector. Regulations prohibited army members from marrying Tutsi. Habyarimana also maintained the “ethnic” identity card and “ethnic” quota systems of the previous regime. By the mid-1980s, the number of Rwandan refugees in neighboring countries had surpassed one-half million. Thousands more were living in Europe and North America. Habyarimana adamantly refused to allow their return, insisting that Rwanda was already too crowded and had too little land, jobs, and food for them. However, the surrounding countries were also poor and had insufficient resources to accommodate both their own citizens and large refugee populations.

Rwandan Tutsi refugees in Uganda, together with some Rwandan Hutu refugees, formed the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and committed themselves to return to Rwanda. During 1990-93, RPF troops conducted a number of assaults into Rwanda from Uganda in unsuccessful attempts to

seize power. The fighting caused the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people. Habyarimana retaliated by heightening internal repression against the Tutsi. From 1990 to 1992, Hutu ultra-nationalists killed an estimated 2,000 Tutsi.

Owing to European pressure, especially from France, the Rwandan government allowed political parties and press freedom in the early 1990s. The result was more pro-Hutu, anti-Tutsi extremism. The December 1990 issue of a "Hutu Power" newspaper vilified the Tutsi as the common enemy.

Despite strong opposition from the growing Hutu Power movement, Habyarimana's government signed a series of agreements (the Arusha Accords) with the RPF that called for a power-sharing government with the Tutsi, return of Tutsi refugees to Rwanda, and integration of Tutsi into the armed forces. The RPF was to constitute 40% of the integrated military forces and 50% of its officer corps. For Habyarimana, the Accords amounted to a suicide note. Hutu Power leaders cried treason. If the Accords were implemented, many Hutu elitists in the government and the military would lose their privileged positions. A significant number of northern Hutu related to or allied with the powerful lineage of Habyarimana's wife were among those who would be adversely affected. Within days of the signing, *Radio Milles Collines*, a new, private station, began broadcasting anti-Accord and anti-Tutsi diatribes from Kigali.

On April 6, 1994, as Habyarimana's presidential plane neared the Kigali Airport on his return from Dar-es-Salam, it was struck by a missile and plunged to earth, killing the president and all aboard. Although the identity of his assassins is not publicly known, many foreign observers believe Habyarimana was killed by Hutu extremists in his own military.

Within the hour following the crash, and prior to its official announcement over the radio, members of the Interahamwe (Hutu militiamen) had begun to set up road-blocks in Kigali. During April 6th and 7th, the young men checked the identity cards of passers-by, searching for Tutsi, members of opposition parties, and human rights activists. Anyone belonging to these groups was set upon with machetes and iron bars. *Radio Milles Collines* blamed the RPF and a contingent of UN soldiers for Habyarimana's death and urged revenge against the Tutsi. The Presidential Guard began killing Tutsi civilians in Ramera, a section of Kigali near the airport. Extremists in the president's entourage had made up lists of Hutu political opponents, mostly democrats, for the first wave of murders.

The extremists exhorted the Interahamwe and ordinary Hutu to kill Tutsi and "eat their cows." The later phrase had both symbolic and practical significance. Symbolic, because historically Tutsi supremacy had been built on cattle ownership. Practical, because it also meant looting Tutsi homes, farms, offices, businesses, churches, and so on. Theft was one of the principal weapons used to bribe people into betraying and killing their neighbors.

RPF troops from the north began fighting their way south in early April in an attempt to stop the slaughter. By July 18, the RPF had reached the Zairian border. Having defeated the Hutu militias that opposed them, the RPF unilaterally declared a cease-fire. Within a period of only three months over 750,000 Tutsi and between 10,000 to 30,000 Hutu, or 11 per cent of the total population, had been killed. About two million people were uprooted within Rwanda, while the same number of Hutu fled from Rwanda into Tanzania, Burundi, and Zaire.

The RPF and moderate Hutu political parties formed a new government on July 18, 1994, but the country was in chaos. The government pledged to implement the Arusha Accords. The

government publicly committed itself to building a multiparty democracy and to discontinuing the ethnic classification system utilized by the previous regime.



Mahood Mamdani opens *When Victims Become Killers* by expressing his “growing discontent with the methodological underpinnings of area studies” (p. xii). Two of these underpinnings, he explains, are seeing state boundaries as boundaries of knowledge, and the methodological claim that knowledge is about the production of facts coupled with a stubborn resistance to theory. I agree with Mamdani that coherent explanations require a theoretical framework. Those who claim that theory is not necessary are simply oblivious of the presumptions and inferences that inform their own writing. Some may be too intellectually lazy to make their presumptions and inferences explicit; others may simply not understand the nature of explanation.

Mamdani explains that he wrote this book in an attempt to rethink existing facts in a new light and to explain the popularity of the genocide. For him, the genocide poses a set of deeply troubling questions:

1. Why did hundreds of thousands of Hutu, who had never before killed, take part in the slaughter?
2. Why did such a disproportionate number of the educated—civil leaders, doctors, nurses, judges, human rights activists, etc.—play a leading role in the genocide?
3. Why did places of shelter—hospitals, churches, and schools—turn into slaughterhouses?

Before people eliminate an enemy, Mamdani explains, they need to define it. He argues that the Rwandan genocide needs to be thought of within the logic of colonialism. The horror of colonialism led to two types of genocidal impulses. The first was the genocide of the native by the settler; the second was the native impulse to eliminate the settler. Following Franz Fanon, Mamdani says the second seemed more like the affirmation of the native’s humanity than the brutal extinction of life.

The Tutsi, a group with a privileged relationship to power before colonialism, were constructed as a privileged alien settler presence, first by the Hutu revolution of 1959, and then by Hutu Power propaganda after 1990. During the colonial period and thereafter, “Hutu” was made into a native identity and “Tutsi” a settler one. In its motivation and construction, Mamdani argues, the Rwandan genocide needs to be understood as a natives’ genocide. It was a genocide by those who saw themselves as sons and daughters of the soil, and their mission as one of clearing the soil of a threatening alien presence. It was not an ethnic, but a “racial” cleansing. For the Hutu who killed, the Tutsi was a colonial settler, not a neighbor.

Most writers on the subject trace the recent Hutu-Tutsi distinction to the Belgians’ use of the 10-cow rule for the 1933-34 census and identity cards. Supposedly, any male who owned 10 cows was classified as a Tutsi; those with fewer than 10 cows were classified as Hutu. No explanation for Twa is usually given. Relying on a doctoral dissertation by Tharcisse Gatwa, Mamdani writes that the Belgians actually used three major sources of information for their census classification: “oral information provided by the church, physical measurements, and ownership of large herds of cows”

(p. 99) “The fact is,” writes Mamdani, “that the Belgian power did not arbitrarily cook up the Hutu/Tutsi distinction. What it did do was to take an existing sociopolitical distinction and racialize it” (p. 99). “The origin of the violence is connected to how Hutu and Tutsi were constructed as political identities by the colonial state, Hutu as indigenous and Tutsi as alien” (p. 34).

Mamdani categorizes the 1994 killings into three different kinds. The killing of: 1) combatants on both sides; 2) Tutsi civilians by Hutu mobs; and 3) Hutu by Hutu, either for political reasons (e.g., the killings of moderate Hutu willing to work with Tutsi) or for economic reasons (as when poor Hutu killed richer ones to take their property). Mamdani writes that the second type of killing *alone* is the focus of his concern. This narrowing of focus is one of the book’s weaknesses. Mamdani’s racialized political identity hypothesis cannot deal with the murder of Hutu by Hutu. A satisfactory theoretical explanation must be able to deal with the mass murder of both Hutu and Tutsi, not only with the genocide (the killing of Tutsi by Hutu).

While Mamdani attributes the genocide to racialized political identities, he attributes the timing of the genocide to events in neighboring Uganda, where so many Tutsi had sought refuge. When the Ugandan government established an ancestry requirement for Ugandan citizenship in 1990, it forced the refugee Tutsi there to reestablish themselves in Rwanda. Hence, Uganda exported its own political crisis to Rwanda in the form of the Rwandan Patriotic Front, which began a series of invasions into Rwanda in 1990.

Mamdani seems to believe that but for events in Uganda, the RPF invasion and subsequent genocide would not have occurred. “The Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) invasion of October 1990 occurred at a time of internal reform—and not repression—in Rwanda” (p. 159). “On the eve of the RPF invasion...the Rwandan polity was healthier than many others in the region” (p. 155). The Rwandan government allowed for multiparty politics and a free press. The timing of the 1990 invasion, Mamdani insists, was determined by developments in Uganda, where the local population was opposed to the continued presence of Rwandan refugees in their land.

The author claims that the Tutsi had reason for optimism under President Habyarimana and the Second Republic. “The Second Republic promised ‘reconciliation’ between Hutu and Tutsi. Branded an *alien* minority under the First Republic, the Tutsi were redefined, even rehabilitated, as a *Rwandese* minority under the Second Republic...The 1990 RPF invasion changed this context dramatically” (p. 189). After the invasion, the Hutu Power advocates reracialized Tutsi identity.

Mamdani is well aware of the drastic economic decline Rwanda experienced in the late 1980s and early 1990s as well as the “massive corruption” in its government (p. 151). “By the close of the 1980s,” he writes, “the World Bank was citing Rwanda as one of the three worse performing sub-Saharan countries when it came to food production” (p. 146). He notes Rwanda’s growing population and land scarcity. However, he rejects them as causes of the genocide. “No matter how depressing these facts may seem, we need to keep in mind that there is no *necessary* connection between a drastic reduction in resources and deadly human conflict” (p. 198).

In response to Mamdani, one might add that there is no necessary connection between racial differences, immigration and genocide, as Mamdani seems to contend. Many countries contain populations of different races, ethnicities, and origins, but very few of them have ever experienced genocide. Mamdani’s approach is overly idealist and contradictory. He rejects infrastructural factors as causes of the genocide with the explanation that “humans shape their world based on human

consciousness and human capacities” (p. 198). Could the Rwandans suffering from famine consciously will food on their tables or an abundant garden ready to be harvested when they had no land to plant? Could they consciously will an increase in the size of Rwanda and a decrease in its population? Could they consciously will a lower national debt, reduced inflation, higher world prices for their coffee, and a higher gross national product per capita? Hardly. However, they could consciously will a reconceptualization of Hutu-Tutsi political identities. Political identity is, after all, a purely mental concept; land, people, food are not. Consequently, according to Mamdani’s own reasoning, political identities should not be given much weight as the causes of genocide in Rwanda. It would have been much easier for the people to consciously will them away, rather than slaughter their neighbors or be slaughtered.



The strength of *Genocide in Rwanda* (edited by Berry and Berry) is its multivocality. Rwandan academics, journalists, human rights activists, government officials and military officers, along with international relief workers and United Nations officials, offer their views of the nature and causes of the mass murders of 1994. The individual contributions to this book are rather short, and most of them originated as presentations made at a seminar held at the US Embassy in Kigali in January 1995.

Professors Ndayambaje and Mutabaruka of Rwanda’s National University offer a good, short summary of Rwanda’s history. Schiess and Nyberg of the UN Human Rights Field Operation in Rwanda write on the legal interpretation of genocide. Due to the date of this publication, however, these writers could not have benefited from the case of *Prosecutor v. Jean-Paul Akayesu* (1998) tried at the UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). This was the first trial before an international tribunal of someone charged with genocide, and it was also the first trial in which an international tribunal conceptualized sexual violence (including rape) as an act of genocide. This case has immense factual and jurisprudential importance. With its decision in *Akayesu*, the ICTR expanded on the UN 1948 Genocide Convention and introduced a subjective standard for determining what groups in a particular society are protected by the Genocide Convention. In addition, the ICTR explicated a method for determining an individual’s constructive genocidal intent.

Major MacNeil of the UN explains why the 400 UN troops in Rwanda at the time of the genocide could not have done more to save lives; they had neither sufficient manpower nor a pro-active UN mandate. Major Rusagara, a public affairs officer of the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA), writes about the role of the Rwandan Patriotic Army during the horror days of 1994. He explains that the RPA entered Rwanda with a three-pronged purpose: to end the genocide, to overthrow the dictatorial regime, and to create a broad-based government of national unity. Other contributors write about the devastation and suffering of the Rwandan people.

The contributors differ over whether to call Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups, racial groups, or one people. The editors, Berry and Berry, admit to terming the differences as “racial” “because it has been argued that Hutus and Tutsis share the same language, culture, history, and religion and therefore are members of the same ethnic group” (p. 8). These are, of course, insufficient reasons for concluding that these people are of different races, the term “race” itself being antiquated. Contributor Alain Sigg offers a more accurate assessment when he writes that “the Hutus and the

Tutsis were probably two distinct ethnic groups that time has culturally homogenized (but not unified) and biologically mingled (but not amalgamated)” (p. 28).

As for the causes of the 1994 genocide, the editors and some of the contributors blame the European colonialists and the post-independence Hutu governments for their intentional racialization of the Hutu-Tutsi distinction. In this respect, their proffered etiology is similar to that offered by Mamdani. The editors write that, “for the leaders of the First and Second Republics in Rwanda, as for the leaders of the Third Reich in Germany, the incitement of racial hatred was a deliberate political technique used to rally their supporters and distract attention from the real domestic problems of the country” (p. 3). Unfortunately, neither the editors nor the other contributors deal adequately with “the real domestic problems of the country.” Contributor Bucagu, Director of the National Office of Population, considers, but quickly rejects, demographic pressure as a potential cause. His monocausal critique, however, is inadequate.

While the editors and many of the contributors criticize the international community, especially Belgium, France, the U.S. and the UN, for failing to prevent or stop the 1994 slaughter, Rwandan journalist and contributor Kamilindi blames the Rwandans themselves. “Who taught us to kill each other?” he asks. “No outsider,” he answers. “If we are incapable of resolving our problems ourselves, the international community cannot do anything for us” (p. 153).

Neither members of the previous Hutu governments nor their sympathizers were invited to the seminar. The editors, did, however, include some of their published statements and radio broadcasts in the collection. Most of these vented hatred of the Tutsi. The most interesting of these statements from a legal perspective is a post-genocide indictment of the RPF (along with Uganda, Belgium and the U.S.), signed by the justice minister of the Hutu government in exile and printed in Zaire on September 21, 1994.

The indictment charges the RPF with violating the Arusha Peace Accords by invading Rwanda from 1990 to 1993, slaughtering Hutu civilians, destroying civilian property, and driving civilians out of their homes and districts. It accuses Belgium, Uganda and the U.S. of conspiring with the RPF in the commission of its alleged crimes. As I noted above, Mamdani also faults the RPF for its 1990-93 invasions, claiming they ruined whatever chances for peace and reconciliation the Arusha Accords promised. Mamdani additionally faults Uganda for exporting its refugee problem to Rwanda in the form of RPF attacks. However plausible any of the allegations against the RPF may be, it is highly unlikely that any Rwandan court will ever consider them. The UN International Criminal Court for Rwanda certainly will not, since its statute limits the Court’s temporal jurisdiction to the events of 1994.



Both When Victims Become Killers and Genocide in Rwanda are well worth reading. They provide useful information and perspectives on the great Rwandan tragedy. Both, however, suffer from a deficiency in analytic strength. They confuse proximate causes with ultimate ones. Neither deals adequately with Rwanda’s serious infrastructural problems. Neither provides a theoretical framework that can fruitfully integrate the economic, social, demographic, political and psychological elements that resulted in mass murder. In my own modest attempt to deal with these

issues (Magnarella, *Justice in Africa*, 2000), I employed a human materialist theoretical framework that analyzed the situation as follows.

Hutu and Tutsi lived together relatively peacefully prior to the mid-nineteenth century, a time when their total population was comparatively low (probably less than two million, versus over seven million in 1993) and land supply for both Hutu farmers and Tutsi cattle grazers was ample. With rapid population growth in the twentieth century, the situation changed. Rwanda was faced with a critical food-people-land imbalance. Throughout the twentieth century, Rwanda's people had placed tremendous pressure on the land. As early as 1983, when Rwanda had 5.5 million people and was the most densely populated country in all of Africa, expert observers warned that food production could not keep up with basic needs. By 1993, one year before the genocide, the population had climbed to 7.7 million without any substantial improvement in agricultural output even though an estimated 95 per cent of the gainfully employed population was engaged in agriculture. To the contrary, food production had been seriously hampered by periodic drought, overgrazing, soil exhaustion and soil erosion. In the years leading up to the genocide there had been a marked decline in kilocalories per person per day and overall farm production. Famines occurred in the late 1980s and early 1990s in several parts of the country. Hunger was endemic. Rwandan youth faced a situation where many (perhaps most) had no land, no jobs, little education, and no hope for a future. Without a house and a source of livelihood, they could not marry.

Because of their historically different modes of ecological adaptation—Hutu horticulture and Tutsi cattle pastoralism—within the context of a society over 90 per cent agrarian, a rapidly growing rural population, no significant employment alternatives, and diminishing food production and consumption per capita, the Hutu and Tutsi became “natural competitors.” Those Tutsi still engaged in cattle pastoralism wanted open ranges to graze their herds. In direct opposition, landless Hutu wanted those very lands, marginal as they may have been for agriculture, to build homesteads on and to farm.

By flight or death of more than half of Rwanda's Tutsi population from the early 1960s to 1973, vast tracts of land in the eastern region were freed up for Hutu settlement and cultivation. The political elites exploited these developments, which appeared to prove that Hutu farmers could have sufficient land if the Tutsi were eliminated. By the mid-1980s, population increases had again outstripped the amount of cultivable land. Farmers' attempts to increase food production by double- and triple-cropping their dwindling plots resulted in soil exhaustion. Foreign technical experts could do little to help farmers; the problem was the increasing imbalance of the land:people ratio. The 1990-93 war with the RPF contributed further to the devastation of Rwanda's economy. It displaced thousands of farmers in the north, thereby causing reductions in food and coffee production. It closed Rwanda's main land route to Mombassa and the outside world. It destroyed Rwanda's small tourism industry, which had become the third major foreign exchange earner.

There were few employment alternatives to farming. The country's major employer was the government. In the late 1980s, the central government was employing 7,000 people and the local governments 43,000. By law, only nine per cent of these employees could be Tutsi. Eliminating the Tutsi would open up 4,500 more government jobs for Hutu. Because the country had no social security program, the thousands of unemployed young people who entered the job market each year lived on the very margins of survival. Many became easy subjects for recruitment and manipulation. Two of the Hutu militias responsible for the mass killing were the *Interahamwe* and the

*Impuzamugambi*. Both tended to recruit mostly among the poor, who hoped to benefit economically from the genocide.

As stated earlier, Habyarimana had adamantly refused to allow Tutsi refugees back into the country, insisting that Rwanda was too small and too crowded to accommodate them. Some Rwandans believed that mass exterminations were necessary to wipe out an excess of population and bring numbers into line with the available land resources. However, economic conditions alone do not explain the mass murders. The strategies of Hutu leaders must also be taken into account. In this poor country, regional Hutu elites vied with each other to acquire the economic resources—especially tax revenue and foreign aid—that the reins of political power controlled. Their common plan involved marginalizing the educated Tutsi to eliminate any domestic competition from them and demonizing all Tutsi so as to dupe poor Hutu, the vast majority of the population, into believing that the elites protected them and represented their interests. With the Tutsi sidelined, Hutu regional elites competed with each other.

Rwanda's poor economy rests on peasant subsistence agriculture. The governing elite could extract only limited surplus value directly from the peasant masses. In addition to taxes, the governing elite had two other potential sources of enrichment: skimming export revenues and foreign aid. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the three sources of export earnings—coffee, tea, and tin—all declined. Coffee export receipts declined from \$144 million in 1985 to \$30 million in 1993. Hence, export revenues declined, government budgets were cut, and the only remaining source of enrichment was foreign aid. Those who could benefit from it had to be in positions of political power. Consequently, elite Hutu engaged in a fierce competition for control of the rapidly shrinking economy. But, rather than negotiate in earnest with the RPF, Habyarimana chose to increase the size of his armed forces (from 5,000 in 1990 to 30,000 in 1992), thereby diverting scarce resources from needed food imports, health care, and education.

The rule of dominant persons does not depend on political or economic power alone, but on persuading the ruled to accept an ideology that justifies the rulers' privileged positions and convinces the ruled that their best interests are being protected. From the 1960s until 1994, the ideology promoted by the Hutu ruling elite was as follows: Tutsi were foreign invaders, who could not really be considered as citizens. The Hutu had been the "native peasants," enslaved by the aristocratic invaders: they were now the only legitimate inhabitants of the country. A Hutu-controlled government was now not only automatically legitimate but also ontologically democratic. This political ideology validated both the persecution of Tutsi and the autocratic rule by some elite Hutu.

As for its economic ideology, the government promoted the idea that the Hutu "holy way of life" was farming. It strictly limited rural migration to the city. People could not change their residences without government permission, and that was rarely given. Consequently, the government made no attempt to significantly diversify the economy so as to create a viable non-agricultural sector or to limit population growth (except by killing and expelling Tutsi).

Religious ideology also contributed to the country's deepening demographic problems. The majority of Rwanda's population were Catholic. Despite Rwanda's evident overpopulation, those in the church and government hierarchy not only refused to promote birth control programs, they actively opposed them. Radical Catholic pro-life commandos raided pharmacies to destroy condoms with the approval of the Ministry of the Interior.

The authorities told common Hutu that the Tutsi RPF and all those who sided with them were demons who had to be eliminated. In addition to relieving fear of supposed Tutsi evil, eliminating the demons also earned material rewards (land, cattle, loot) for the killers.



In conclusion, the *sine qua non* of the Rwandan genocide was the increasing imbalance in land, food, and people that led to malnutrition, hunger, periodic famine, and fierce competition for land to farm. Rwanda's leaders chose to respond to these conditions by eliminating the Tutsi portion of the population as well as their Hutu political rivals. They employed the weapons of indoctrination to convince the Hutu masses that this strategy was right. However, they failed to employ the kinds of demographic and economic policies that would have addressed these problems in a peaceful and more effective way. These policies would have included birth control, economic diversification into non-agrarian sectors, requests for significant foreign food aid, sincere negotiation with the RPF, and attempts at a regional solution to the refugee problem.

Contrary to Mamdani and some of the contributors to the Berry and Berry collection, I would argue that the ultimate causes of the Rwandan genocide were the country's economic plight, caused in large part by the world economy and Rwanda's growing imbalance in land, food, and people that led to malnutrition, hunger, periodic famine, and fierce competition for land to farm. The proximate causes were the political indoctrination that demonized the Tutsi and convinced many Hutu that Tutsi elimination was the country's economic and political remedy.

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