

# FACTORS OF ETHNIC CONFLICT IN RWANDA AND INSTRUMENTS FOR A DURABLE PEACE<sup>1</sup>

by

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## **Introduction**

In Rwandan politics, ethnicity remains an important factor in the exercise of power by ruling hegemonic groups. However, before the horrible Tutsi genocide and other wanton ethnocides<sup>2</sup> of mid-1994 and thereafter, it does not seem to me that ethnic hatred had ever been a prevailing factor in national life as it is becoming in the 1990s. One may then ask how ethnicity has become a determining political factor and the major source of power conflict in present day Rwandan society. A lot of ink has flowed on this question, and there have been a lot of attempts by africanists, to suggest the answers. It is not my intention to review the analyses that were made by specialists on the Great Lakes region. I would rather focus on an aspect which has not benefited of sufficient attention in ethnicity and power relations, that is natural resource use and power relations as they relate to ethnic conflicts in Rwanda.

In my point of view, there is need for another look at the history of natural resource demand and use by different rwandan social groups. This is obviously more a suggestion of an area to explore, than an attempt to create an other dogma in the interpretation of rwandan social and political phenomena. Summarising this analysis, I would say that the crux of the Rwanda problematic is a tradition of centralised political control of natural resources and not of control by the community through a consensual land tenure. This type of control created resource scarcity at any given epoch of the country's post-Cyilima<sup>3</sup> history, through rules that kept changing in order to allow ruling pre-colonial dynasties or post-independance hegemonic groups to take into account the essential political and social bias they required for their perpetuation in power. To conceal their minuteness while gathering enough political resources for their power, these ruling groups appropriated their respective ethnies, and used ethnicity to create power bases through vertical solidarities. This model failed to function in this century, due not only to interaction with other

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<sup>1</sup> Paper presented at the International Conference of Experts, Basel, Switzerland, 27-29 September 1995: << Federalism against Ethnicity?, Institutional, Legal, and Democratic Instruments to Prevent or Resolve Violent Minority Conflicts >>.

<sup>2</sup> The extent of ethnic massacres of April-July 1994 and thereafter has been and remain underestimated by the press. It is estimated that between 1.500.000 and 2.000.000 rwandans were killed in Tutsi genocide and in Hutu counter-genocide that the International Community is not yet willing to investigate. On these statistics see also Gasana, J. & Nsengimana N. 1995. << Bâtir une nouvelle espérance pour le Rwanda. Eléments de proposition pour un contrat social. Africa Diasporama N° Spécial 5&6, janvier-juin 1995, p.37-52 o.

<sup>3</sup> King Cyilima II Rujugira (1675-1708).

instruments of power control, but also, and mainly to drastic changes in population and natural resources relationships for a society that remains predominantly rural. The problem therefore, is not that of ethnies as such, but of society's failure to construct a system permitting an equitable and consensual use of two resource bases: land and State.

Land is obviously a key resource in a densely populated country that largely depends on subsistence agriculture. At the same time, land based activity is not a sufficient means of livelihood for a tiny << learned élite >> which found State to be an alternative resource. As rules of access to both resource bases have shaped and have been shaped by past and recent history of ethnic relations, tensions resulting from their unequitable share are of the same nature, because private non-land and non-State based economic activity that could act as a buffer is still weakly developed. In this situation, the rule for stability was at the same time a source of lethal instability. Security in tenure, land or State, depends on the strength of hegemonic groups in power. That strength depends on how much control of the means of State violence the group in power has got, and how it is prepared to use them against other members of the same society who need to secure a socio-economic niche too. In this respect, there are striking similarities in the nature of socio-ethnic tensions resulting from land and State resources scarcity, when one compares pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial Rwanda. From a situation in which Tutsi clanic constellations in power had a quasi monopoly of State and land resources in pre-colonial Rwanda, we came to the postcolonial situation of Hutu or Tutsi winner group takes all and loser group loses all. Resulting intra-élite struggles in this up-and-down and down-and-up model of power exercise lead to total exclusion of weak masses. As the proportion of excluded populations increases with increasing population pressure on natural resources, these struggles become bloodier.

In this paper, I will develop these relationships from a historical perspective of natural resources use. I will then suggest what instruments to explore to ease ethnic tensions and allow for a shared development for all rwandans.

### **Rwanda's Political Systems Were Structured by the Ecosystem**

Rwanda covers an area of 26'338 sq. kms, that is almost the size of the State of Maryland, and almost 2/3 the size of Switzerland. In spite of its limited size, it is characterised by a great variety of bioclimatic regions which, as we shall see, have led to differential ethnic occupation in past history. Gasana<sup>4</sup> described 18 agro-bioclimatic regions from 9 life zones defined using Holdridge's models<sup>5</sup>. Four of these life zones are of interest for the purpose of this. paper<sup>6</sup>:

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<sup>4</sup> Gasana, L.K. 1991. Les zones agro-climatiques du Rwanda. République Rwandaise, Commission Nationale d'Agriculture.

<sup>5</sup> Holdridge, L.R. 1947. Determination of world plant formations from simple climatic data. Science 105 (2727): 367-368

<sup>6</sup> See the sketch in appendix.

Premontane subhumid forest (LZ-2)

*Impara sur basalte (2A)*

*Impara sur schiste (M)*

Premontane subhumid forest, warm dry transition (LZ-4);

*Bords du Lac Kivu (4A)*

*Plateau du Sud (4B)*

*Dorsale granitique (4C)*

*Plateau du BumbogolBuliza (4D)*

*Contrefort de la Crete Zaire-Nil (4E)*

*Plateau de l'Est (4F)*

Submontane subhumid forest (LZ-5).

*Hautes terres du Bufundu et Bushiru (5A)*

*Hautes terres du Budaha, Ndiza et Buberuka (M)*

*Hautes terres des laves (5C)*

*Hautes terres avec sol volcanique de contamination (5D).*

Premontane dry forest (LZ-6);

*Bugesera (6A)*

*Mayaga (6B)*

*Mutara (6C)*

*Kibungo Est (6D)*

The life zone of oldest agricultural colonisation is the Premontane subhumid forest, warm dry transition, LZ-4, of central and part of eastern Rwanda. With altitude ranging between 1500 and 1800 m above sea level, and average annual rainfall comprised between 1000 and 1400 mm, it has allowed development of complex agropastoral systems in which banana and bovine components play a key rôle. As archeological findings have proven, this is the most ancient life zone of permanent human colonisation in Rwanda. Although the original vegetation is a closed forest, years of agricultural activities under conditions of moderate temperature and rainfall gave rise to a rich herbaceous savanna that is a good resource base for pastoral production, and that attracted pastoralists from the east.

Premontane dry forest is the driest life zone of the country. Altitude ranges from 1300 to 1500 m above sea level, and average rainfall varies between 850 and 1000 mm from east to west. It is unfit for sustainable traditional agriculture, because insufficient and irregular rainfall, and generally poor soils do not facilitate permanent farming activities. However, as the natural vegetation is an open woodland savanna, conditions allow traditional pastoral activities.

Premontane subhumid forest has more rainfall than the LZ-2. But as soils of part of it, 2A, are of volcanic origin, their fertility permits a sustainable agriculture. Another life zone in which rich volcanic soils have allowed a sustained agricultural activity inspite of relatively high rainfall is 5C of the Submontane subhumid forest life zone. Potential for traditional pastoral activities in both 2A and 5C is lower than that of LZ-4 in which savanisation was a quicker and more sustainable process.

Central Rwanda, like other regions where agriculture is sustainable, was occupied by Hutu kingdoms, the most famous being those of the dynasties of *Ababanda* in Nduga (4C), *Abenengwe* in parts of present day Butare and Gikongoro prefectures (4B), and the *Abongera* in Bumbogo/Buliza (4D). Over the years, sedentary agriculture led to savanisation from an original forest environment, and created an important pastoral resource base in addition to agriculture resources. Under these conditions, pastoralism was more productive than in drier eastern woodland savanna.

In the east, there is a woodland savanna which is a western part of a similar but more extensive life zone in which hamitic pastoralist groups have traditionally carried out their activities. The Tutsi of Rwanda moved their herds westwards until they settled in Buganza around Lake Muhazi where the *nyiginya* dynasty that ruled over enlarged Rwanda until 1959 was founded<sup>7</sup>.

With this setting, there was a geographical specialisation as far as use of natural resources was concerned. But with cattle overpopulation, some pastoralist groups moved peacefully westwards for more space for their herds. At each stage, the point of settlement was determined by availability of pasture resources. There was no comparable movement of Hutu farmers. It was taking place over shorter distances, because in their case migrants were keeping as short as possible the social distance from their group. With this colonising pattern, there was a convergence of two different types of land resource use in the same ecological environment, and this had to be the socio-ecological background of ethnic relations in the last centuries.

Of major significance as far as shaping of social and political relations is concerned are the above LZ-4 and LZ-6. Adequate natural resources in central Rwanda, and inadequate resources for an expanding population in the east have led to movement of pastoralists towards the LZ-4, and to its despecialisation as far as socio-professional activities are concerned. With time, this led to a very important transformation of natural resource use. One type of activities, the pastoralist, evolved from a migratory logic, and the other, from a sedentarisation logic.

The socio-political system of Rwanda was thus built on a contradictory setting. Most of its Hutu and Tutsi populations, had to depend on the same land resources for their livelihood, thanks to territorial despecialisation as far as agriculture or cattle productions are concerned, while

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<sup>7</sup> The (mythological?) founder of the *nyiginya* dynasty is Gihanga (1091-1124). For this see Kagame A. 1972. Un abrégé de l'ethno-histoire, du Rwanda. Editions Universitaires du Rwanda, Butare.

maintaining ethno-professionnal specialisation. This contradiction, enhanced by an ideology emphasising supremacy of pastoralism, shaped the political system that governed the country until 1959, and that still influences present day rwandan politics<sup>8</sup>. Contradictory demands over land resources use due to production despecialisation had to be resolved not through social negociations, but through skillfull matching of ethno-professionnal and ethno-political specialisation. Cattle herders in original tiny Rwanda in the east, organised under the rule of the *Nyiginya dynasty*, ceased to move westward by peaceful means. They used war to increase the resource base for their herds, and cattle to forge social and political ties, but not social harmony. An important stage was the conquest of Nduga kingdom by King Mibambwe I Sekarongoro I Mutabazi I (1411-1444).

The increasing search for political and pasture resources led to high human and animal population densities in central Rwanda. The consequence was reduction of agricultural land for Hutu farmers, as priority was for cattle needs. This led to conflicts in land use. The political solutions to these conflicts in the last centuries has been the major driving force in social and political relations between Hutu and Tutsi, and not the ethnic factor as such. In the first instance, land tenure institutions have been subject to expansion policy of the Tutsi ruling dynasty, and to the need to consolidate its power. At each new territorial conquest, local land tenure was modified to the one used in central Rwanda, in order to increase dependency of new subordinates. Generally, the central power replaced a more collective ownership of land known as *ubukonde* and its corresponding clientship system known as *ubugererwa* by a more individualistic ownership, in order to reduce the influence of competing local socio-political structures. It is this political control of land resources by the central authority that made possible the nyiginya domination and that maintained Hutu and Tutsi social differentiation. With this centralised political control of resources, it was possible for the nyiginya dynasty to build up a powerful State which was seated in a favorable agro-pastoral environment, from which it increased its influence in peripheral territories.

### **Skewed Natural and State Resources Control as a Foundation of the Rwanda Conflict**

Construction of Rwanda as a nation resulted from construction of Tutsi monopoly over control of natural resources and gradual reduction of Hutu access to them particularly in the LZ-4 life

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<sup>8</sup> In his book << Le Rwanda. Emergence d'un Etat. L'Harmattan, Paris, 1993 >>, F. Nahimana discussed factors that led to division of Rwanda between a pastoral or *umukenke* zone and an agricultural or *ubukonde* zone asserting that this division is merely political. On page 103 he states that << *La division de Vespace rwandais en zone d'umukenke et en zone Xubukonde correspond à la mainmise Orieuse (partie de Vumukenke) et lâche (partie de Pubukonde) du pouvoir Pryiginya* >>. I do not agree entirely with that assertion. The highlands were protected from the same *nyiginya* stronghold as in the umukenke zone by environmental factors that were not favorable to productive pastoralism: topography is unfavorable for a non-mountain cattle race, post-deforestation savanna is of poor quality, particularly where soils are acid, etc. Therefore my point of view is that effective *nyiginya* monarchs' rule decreased with ecological distance from LZ-4 life zone. It was obviously not efficient for Tutsi monarchs to invest too much in the conquest and effective occupation of territories that did not have a high bovine production potential.

zone. This monopoly was realised by an increasing rigor in cattle clientship<sup>9</sup> system. At the beginning of contact of Tutsi pastoralist and Hutu peasants, this system started in the form of a normal two-way exchange<sup>10</sup>. But with increasing Tutsi political power in a process that I will not review here, cattle served as a factor in further consolidation of this power, as rents paid by clients kept increasing. As Tutsi cattle owners in LZ-4 life zone found that cattle clientship is a highly lucrative activity, they set up a similar system for agricultural land clientship to maximise exploitation of Hutu peasantry and of ordinary Tutsi.

The new type of clientship came into practice under the reign of Yuhi IV Gahindiro (1746- ?). Not only rents from cattle clientship had been very interesting thanks to use of increasing political power, but also pasture resources were becoming scarcer. In some regions, human and bovine population densities were critical. Until then pasture lands were public, and open to any cattle owner. It had certainly become difficult to organise communal use of a scarce resource under increasing cattle pressure. A new institution called *igikingi* (plural: *ibikingi*), by which Tutsi chiefs became owners of private pasture lands, was created in LZ-4 life zone. As privatized resources, attached to hereditary rights, the *ibikingi* became completely inaccessible to Hutu peasantry and ordinary Tutsi. Landless peasant families in need of agricultural lands had to seek subconcessions called *isambu* from powerful land owners, and to pay in return exorbitant rents in form of crop products or labour, becoming land clients. Even with these *isambu* leases, clients were in fact landless and totally dependant on the will of land owners because they had no user rights. The system acquired an oppressive character as the patron could take away from his Hutu client his *isambu* as he wished. This is how Linden & Linden<sup>11</sup> described the rôle and the effects of the *ibikingi* institution:

By usurping the position of local lineage heads by sheer force, or by interfering in land disputes and litigation, the chiefs came to control more and more land, exacting crop dues and labour from the unprotected serfs. Although cattle wealth symbolised the richness of the nobility, in reality it was control of land that was linked to political power. Bananas, possibly introduced in the wake of the invasions from Bunyoro, increased the value of fiefs and, despite the lack of agricultural technology, a rich soil manured by the Tutsi herds was the basis of the Rwandan feudal order.

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<sup>9</sup> In this system, cattle remained an exclusive property of the Tutsi. They lent it to clients, in exchange of agricultural products or labour. The offsprings of lent cattle under a clientship contract were equally a property of the patron. Thus the latter owned both the capital, the capital increment, and got the interest in form of product and labor. The system allowed Tutsi cattle owners to get all the agricultural products they needed without having to till the land. They could therefore spare all the time needed for militia training and war activities, and to consolidate their grip on power and on natural resources. Immense benefits derived from this exploitation of the peasantry strengthened minority solidarity as an ethnic group. This solidarity was carefully protected by an esoteric code entrusted to selected Tutsi notables, and exceptionally to Hutu, called *Abiru*, so that the ruling dynastic clan and allied clans were comparable to a secret society. They created myths to hide the realities of the system. This system is still functioning but modern *Abiru* are unidentifiable. It is the strength of militias that enabled Tutsi oligarchy to build up a monopoly over power and natural resources control; and it is this resource control that allowed this oligarchy to develop its militias and to consolidate its grip on power.

<sup>10</sup> This type of relationship persisted in the north west where isolated Tutsi subgroups of cattle herders called *Abagogwe* co-existed peacefully with Hutu farmers.

<sup>11</sup> Linden, I. & Linden J. 1977. Church and revolution in Rwanda. Manchester University Press. p. 16.

As there was a one-way influx of goods and labour, Tutsi chiefs contributed nothing to the economy. Instead, they went as far as incorporating collective agricultural lands owned by Hutu families, to maximise profits from this type of exploitation.

Accumulation of land resources by Tutsi chiefs was made possible by increased militarisation of the country. Local militia chiefs practiced cattle raids and land confiscations. Multiplication of exactions<sup>12</sup> on Hutu and ordinary Tutsi increased the need for protection by powerful patrons. Under increasing population pressure, the peasantry in the LZ-4 life zone had no other alternative but to accept heavy demands of land lords. With lack of access to personal land resources, clientship ties became a substitute resource, and an obligate path for survival of Hutu peasants. Therefore as time passed, the system became more oppressive for land clients and more lucrative for the Tutsi chiefs. There was a constant personal fear of having the *isambu* taken back by the *igikingi* owner. It is said that peasants who found the system unbearable attempted to escape central Rwanda and seek a haven in peripheral territories where *nyiginya* dynasty had limited or no influence. Thus natural resources, although abundant at that time, had become scarce because of this sequestration by chiefs, and of competition with cattle for space.

Both cattle and land clientship systems allowed Tutsi oligarchy to exercise total control of natural resources through hereditary rights. But when Kigeli IV Rwabugiri (1853-1895), the most famous *nyiginya* absolute monarch, needed to reinforce his authority, he replaced many district chiefs who owed their positions to hereditary rights, by his designated officers. This generated a new rule of mobility of chiefs which was generalised, and allowed the monarch to take over important lands owned by chiefs and other Tutsi dignitaries, and allocate them to his allies, Tutsi and Hutu, and his concubines. Thus centralised political control of natural resources by the monarch through his administration was effective in central Rwanda and in other regions like eastern, north eastern and part of western Rwanda where his influence was strengthened. Natural resources which had been an end of Tutsi domination, became, in addition, an instrument of this domination. To succeed these administrative reforms, Rwabugiri put the country under a dense militia presence and increased the size of the military.

A new situation evolved under Rwabugiri. Densification of administration and inflation of militias relying mostly on Tutsi, mobilised such numbers of administrative officers that Tutsi participation in power went far beyond that of former Tutsi oligarchy, and control of power, the military, administration and of natural resources was mostly in the hands of Tutsi minority. Ethnic stratification became rigid. Being a Hutu became a disadvantage because it meant inaccess to land resources, heavy payment of clientship, rents and of State taxes, and bearing increased exactions by Tutsi armies<sup>13</sup>. A later illustration of these exactions is given by the following two points in a letter that resident Declerck wrote in 1917<sup>14</sup> to instruct that:

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<sup>12</sup> The policy of terror as a means to increase demand for cattle and land clientship for physical security was practiced by Mutara II Rwogera (?-853) and Kigeli IV Rwabugiri. Thus the system that offered protection is the very system that created insecurity, and therefore a demand for protection

<sup>13</sup> Successive European administrations did not therefore invent nor worsen ethnicity in Rwanda. To try to prove the contrary as some africanists are used to, is an exercise in scientific fraud. Of course the system of indirect rule

- A Tutsi who confiscates a Hutu's harvests shall pay him back twice the quantities confiscated;
- A Tutsi who takes his cattle to graze a Hutu's crops will pay him back twice the quantity of destroyed crops.

In territories where the *nyiginya* monarch had limited control, like in the north and northwest, the *ubukonde/ubugererwa* land tenure system persisted. It was equally a land clientship system but which did not coexist with the cattle clientship. As it was less exploitative and less degrading, there were strong affective ties between the patron or *umukonde* and the client or *umugererwa*, and respective communities were more cohesive.

The XIX and XX centuries saw a tremendous increase in population in spite of frequent and quasi regular depopulations by famines. Cattle populations also increased, particularly in the LZ-4 life zone. Degradation of natural resources was already a problem by the end of the 1800s. Photos of landscapes taken by Germans around 1900 show a central Rwanda that was as denuded as we used to see it before reforestation work of the 1970s and 1980s. By 1949, population had reached 1.900.000 inhabitants<sup>15</sup>, and cattle was estimated to 450.000 heads. There was a considerable land shortage resulting from abuse of *ibikingi* rights. This shortage was described by Linden & Linden<sup>16</sup> as follows:

( ... ) there was considerable land shortage in some provinces by the 1950s. The kingdom was only about 100,000 square miles and had to support a leisured class of some 2,000 chiefs and about 50,000 Tutsi who never tilled the soil. The high productivity of the land well manured by cattle, with bananas and a wide range of grains and leguminous crops, made land valuable, especially when large tracts served as pasture for the Tutsi herds.

There was no parallel increase in *ibikingi* tenants, and the offer of clientship stagnated. There was therefore an increasing surplus of Hutu labor which could not find occupation under the prevailing clientship system of rigid land use. At the same time, there was an increasing inequality of access to natural resources within the Tutsi élite, as there were no more conquest of territories to expand the resources and spread Tutsi landlords. An elaborate social stratification steadily built up in the 1950s, and disgruntled Hutu and Tutsi élites started to voice their opinion against

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that was chosen by the Germans, and after them, by the Belgians, has had an unnegligible impact on ethnic relations, by assisting Tutsi to control the Hutu peasantry over the entire country.

<sup>14</sup> See Harroy, J.P. 1984. Rwanda. Souvenirs d'un compagnon de la marche du Rwanda vers la démocratie et l'indépendance. Hayez/Bruxelles. p. 88.

<sup>15</sup> I estimate that the threshold for cattle and land clientship system as it was practiced before the 1959 social revolution is a population of 2.000.000 inhabitants, and about 400.000 heads of cattle. This corresponds to 500.000 ha of agriculture land and 400.000 ha of pasture land. The total agropastoral area of 900.000 ha is all that Rwanda has got, if we exclude slopy terrains that are unsuitable for durable agropastoral production. Above those figures, environmental destruction and acute social tensions are unavoidable. Therefore 1950 was a critical year to reform the system and prevent social violence of 1959, and may be the ethno-political conflict of the 1990s.

<sup>16</sup> Linden & Linden, op. cit., p. ix.

feudalism. The situation became increasingly tense as land and cattle clientships underwent its unprecedented crisis, having failed to adjust to new demographic and social realities.

Under Belgian rule, the monarch did not enjoy any more control over means of State violence. He did not control the administration nor the Catholic Church which had become too vocal on the deteriorating situation of the common people. In addition Colonial authority had become unfriendly to the indigenous oligarchy that he headed. He was thus unable to use force to prevent the social explosion of 1959. The Hutu and Tutsi élites who advocated social and political changes had become quite popular with the Hutu peasantry and poor Tutsi who were too aware of the unwillingness of the monarchy to improve their access to natural resources. The rallying cry of these élites became equal access to land resources and no discrimination in the administration and education. Thus natural resources sharing project became a key factor for the revolution to occur, and for the fundamental changes in power and resource relationships. This revolution marked the failure of a system of inequality in land resources appropriation, under conditions of a fast increasing population and a prevailing rural economy.

### **Shift From Land Resource to State Resource based Power in the Republic Era**

The 1959-1961 Social revolution resulted in a levelling down of the ruling Tutsi aristocracy as far as their land resources were concerned. These resources were redistributed geometrically among landless Hutu families. This opening of pastoral lands to cropping led to a tremendous increase in agricultural production that reached the peak by the early 1980s. In the prevailing egalitarian ideology of the 1960s, agriculture and livestock were encouraged to integrate in order to despecialise land and ethnic production. This was reflected in a new terminology, the farmer was called *umuhinzi-mworozi* in Kinyarwanda, and *agriculteur-éleveur* in French, to reflect the egalitarian ideology that strived to suppress inequality between the cow and the hoe.

In this process of land redistribution, the new Republic régime did not realise that what had been done was going to be the foundation of the agricultural crisis of the 1980s which I would call the crisis of an egalitarian system of land appropriation. The quasi geometrical redistribution of land among all rwandan families was done in the inexistence of institutions that could help to set up an efficient use of land based resources for the benefit of all. The exception to this was the north west where the *ubukonde/ubugererwa* institution had not completely disappeared. Thus there was no institutional instrument to regulate partitioning of landholdings for hereditary rights, sale of land property, and to discourage accumulation of land for mere prestige or speculation. Before long, population growth increased land hunger and led to unhindered partitioning of landholdings for hereditary rights. A land market developed with a fast accumulation of land resources in the hands of those, nonpeasants, who were close to power. This led to a scarcity of land resources for the new generations of rural families and to a gradual reconstruction of a complex social stratification. The country returned to inequality of access to land resources, a system that the 1959 Social revolution had sought to abolish. By the eighties, the peasantry that constituted more than 92% of the population was in acute competition for land resources with the tiny bourgeoisie comprising the administrative, military, technocratic, political and business élites. This new

stratification highlighting intraethnic differentiation as far as land and other resources are concerned, came in competition with and overtook the ethnic stratification that the revolution had tried to destroy.

Failure to foresee the impending social explosion was due to the apparent prosperity of the 1970s. These were golden years for the economy of independent Rwanda. The effect of *ibikingi* redistribution of the 1960s was a tremendous increase in agricultural production. It was possible to cover adequately food needs of the population. Coffee exports on the 1973-1979 period were three times coffee exports on the 1966-1972 period. However, progress in production was achieved at the expense of the ecological capital. In mid-eighties, soil losses due to erosion removed from crop production an equivalent of 8.000 ha per annum representing loss of a capacity to carry a population of 50.000 men.

One of the consequences of this growth was an increase in State external earnings from coffee and tea exports. The resulting national budget comfort was used, not to reinvest in agricultural improvement, but to inflate State administration, and to finance inefficient import substitution industries, including those based on imports of quasi finished material as raw material. Thus a rent economy grew on agricultural and foreign aid rents. Increasing State administration became a tool for resolving discontentment of power and status hungry élites through redistribution of these rents. An administrative bourgeoisie developed, and ceasure with the rural population grew. A financial alloy of the military élite in power and Tutsi commercial élite developed to reap the benefits of the growing rent economy. To facilitate this, a controlled << liberalisation >> of the economy burgeoned, in which liberalisation meant allowing the civil and military officials to get actively involved in business without giving up employment with State, and tolerating criminal use of State to enhance private business. An unprecedented corruption in high spheres of power developed and led to a generalised competition of civil servants for illicit enrichment.

Also developed since the 1970s is accumulation of land resources by those in power and State administration, as State became the main instrument of accumulation under the Second Republic. Behind rewarding jobs, there was access to land, credit, and foreign exchange. Competition for land resources among people of unequal financial means led to alarming disparities<sup>17</sup>, not only of landholding for different categories of families, but also in the use of their production potential. By the 1980s, it was estimated<sup>18</sup> that 43% poorer families own only 15% of cultivated lands, whose average size of land area per family varied from less than 0,25 ha to 0,75 ha. About 50% of rural families had to hire land to produce for their basic subsistence needs. On the other end of the spectrum, 16% of land-rich families owned 43% of cultivated lands, with average area of more than 1 ha of land per family. Thus poor farmers have been squeezed in steep unproductive lands,

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<sup>17</sup> In absolute terms, these disparities would not be too alarming. But it is necessary to be aware of two things. First farm differentiation in size developed very rapidly from an egalitarian situation of the 1960s. Secondly, the proportion of those families that cannot produce enough to satisfy their needs because of minute landholdings is too high. What is important then to note is the absolute lack of access to land resources for a great number of rural families in a situation of no creation of employments.

<sup>18</sup> Gasana, LK. 1994. L'homme, l'arbre et la forêt au Rwanda. Problèmes d'un pays enclavé et très peuplé. ETR Zürich. 24 p.

where soil is constantly removed by erosion. Almost all these farmers, like most other poor Rwandans, are Hutu believed by the outside world to have shared power, from their hostile lands, with the tiny Hutu élite of the national bourgeoisie.

As a result of this imbalance, half the population of Rwanda was unable to meet the minimum food energy requirements of 2100 cal per person per day, their effective food energy consumption having fallen below 1900 cal per person per day. There was thus a structural famine whose roots were embedded in the unequitable and disorderly land tenure. In 1985 poor families spent 88% of their earnings to purchase food, and 98% of the poor were rural families. The skewed distribution of lands concentrating almost half of arable lands in the hands of wealthier<sup>19</sup> people who did not need to use its full potential aggravated this situation. It contributed to the appalling rural unemployment of adults that was more than 30% at the end of the 1980s. By mid-1990, before the October 1990 war, it was already clear that as a result of this unequitable land tenure and high population pressure, the social explosion was a matter of only a few years<sup>20</sup>.

In the second half of the 1980s, the country was severely hit by the deterioration of coffee price on world market, and the amount of its external earnings diminished. The exports value which was \$US 60 per capita per annum in the period 1976-1979 fell at \$US 13 in 1991. With decreasing external earnings, the capacity of the régime to redistribute State resources among its clients and to attract new ones suffered, and disgruntled élites started to express opposition to the political system. Among these were influential Tutsi businessmen who were involved in joint venture enterprises with their Hutu counterparts in power, and who felt they were being parasited under the conditions of a declining rent economy and dwindling State revenues. This led to an intra-élite crisis better described by a French saying that *<< quand les choses vont mal, les loups se mangent entre eux >>*.

The 1980s are therefore comparable to the 1950s as years of systemic crisis. While in the 1950s there was a crisis of the inequalitarian land resource appropriation, the 1980s were characterised by a crisis of egalitarian land allocation of the earlier years of the Republic era. But whereas there were unutilised land resource reserves in the 1950s, almost all drained arable lands were cultivated. Agricultural production reached a peak in early 1980s, while population continued to grow. The resulting land scarcity led to overexploitation of smaller landholdings, and accelerated deterioration of crop production environment. By mid-1980s, there was a massive exodus of

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<sup>19</sup> Paradoxically, it is agricultural prosperity that financed the desorganisation of land tenure. The inequitable redistribution of profits from cash crop exports that enabled the rich to accumulate land purchased from poor gardeners.

<sup>20</sup> See for example Gasana LK. 1991. Les productions agricoles du Rwanda. République Rwandaise, Commission Nationale d'Agriculture. On page 27: *<< ... on peut conclure que si le pays n'opère pas des mutations profondes dans son agriculture, il ne pourra pas nourrir convenablement sa population à son taux de croissance actuel. Contrairement à la tradition de nos démographes de montrer que le taux de croissance démographique restera positif sur plusieurs années à venir, on ne voit pas comment la population rwandaise atteindra même 10 millions d'habitants sans qu'il y ait des progrès importants en agriculture et dans d'autres secteurs de l'économie. Dès lors il est déjà temps de craindre les effets malthusiens de l'inadéquation croissante des ressources alimentaires et de la population, et des désordres sociaux qui pourront en découler. >>*

environmental refugees quitting hostile lands, particularly in Gikongoro and Kibuye prefectures, for Tanzania which repatriated them in 1990 as illegal immigrants.

These phenomena showed the weakness of a development model emphasising a rural development based on activities requiring land, and, consequently, excluding landless social groups. At the end of the 1980, the three decades of rural development projects were a total failure as far as financial resources invested are concerned. Beneficiaries of agriculture development programmes have obviously been families having sufficient land to apply extension programmes. Between 1985 and 1992, whereas the total population increased by 20%, the proportion of poor people grew by 70 %<sup>21</sup>. The poor peasantry and youth have not been captured by the dozens of rural development projects, except by occasional salaried employment.

Furthermore, most rural development projects followed State logic and became pipelines of international finance to further develop the burgeoning national bourgeoisie, and to strengthen State power. Rare are agricultural projects which have allocated more than 15% of their resources to finance agriculture. Most of the resources were used on project infrastructure, vehicles, and other imports. The more resources a project had, the more the élites reaped, and the less target beneficiaries got. Typical examples are most of the World Bank projects like the G.B.K. Agrosilvo-pastoral project, which have invariably oiled the corruption system in favor of a tiny élite in power. This is why in spite of a heavy financial investment per capita, rural development projects have failed to halt the trend to structural famine and to break the vicious circle of rural poverty.

The minuteness of family landholdings and subsistence orientation of rural economy did not constitute a possibility of decent life to the educated élite. With the undeveloped private economy sector, State employment acquired an increasing importance, not only for economic security, but also for status and political influence. Therefore, State employment took over the role played by cattle and *ibikingi* in prerevolution Rwanda. It represented for the State employee a kind of real estate, because many things in life, more important than the salary, depended on it: schooling for children, access to power, and not least, access to land resources. Loosing one's position in the State service meant loosing all that. This is why those in power used refusal of employment to dissidents and would-be dissidents, just as Tutsi monarchs used confiscation of *ibikingi* from their political enemies. Loss of employment for political reasons meant going back to till the land in one's commune of origin. Tying down opponents in their home areas was used against supporters of the first Republic régime after the 1973 military putsch as a means of

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<sup>21</sup> The appalling conditions of poverty and resulting inequalities in 1990-1992 are described by Marysse et al in the following terms: << *Un ménage 'riche' (dixième décile) disposait en 1990, d'un revenu monétaire 180 fois plus élevé que celui d'un ménage pauvre. En 1992, l'écart s'est encore creusé, puisque le ménage riche possède un revenu 485 fois supérieur à celui d'un ménage pauvre. Le ménage riche gagne, en moins d'une journée, l'équivalent du revenu annuel de la famille la plus pauvre! ( .. ) Quatre vingt pour cent de la population rurale voient donc se dégrader leur revenu monétaire. Il n'y a pas eu, seulement, dégradation du pouvoir d'achat, mais également répartition de plus en plus inégale, 20% de la population seulement voyant s'améliorer ses conditions de vie >>. See Marysse, S., T. de Herdt, & E. NdayambaJe, 1994. Rwanda. Appauvrissement et ajustement structurel. Institut Africain-CEDAF/L'Harmattan. p. 47.*

preventing spread of dissension or a mere exhibition of power. Thereafter, this incited people to purchase as much land as they could, mostly from poor farmers, and to construct villas there, to prepare a good cushion for use if they had to fall off State employment. Having a land and a villa for State officials became a mark of status. These are some of the factors that explain how land resource ownership became skewed in favor of wealthier citizens.

The specter for the State employee to << return to the hoe >> contributed to strengthening of vertical solidarities in politics and in administration and a new clientship for employment, political influence and status for a quicker access to State resources was created. With development of political clientship, a centralised political control of the administration became one of the most powerful instruments of power exercise as well as State resources control and redistribution.

This is how with the Second Republic, political power became a key to other resources, and private use of State by a tiny *abashiru* élite and their allies who piloted the new clientship system developed. Though this voracious élite are Hutu, their allies included many influential Tutsi. It is this joint piloting of the system by both Hutu and Tutsi élites, with complementary rôles, which consolidated President Habyarimana's system. By the end of the eighties, rural masses were convinced that their hardships, famine threats and diseases were caused by this system. A dialectical tension was fast developing between the system and the poor represented by very vocal farmer leaders. This course was disrupted by an opportunistic war that Tutsi extremists within RPF decided to launch against Rwanda from Uganda, with the support of the Ugandan army.

The systemic crisis became instrumental to generate the ethnic problem, where the basic focus of war was power. This overshadowed society's fundamental problems of poverty and injustice suffered by weak social groups in general. The overwhelming majority of the poor were Hutu, and the majority of poor Hutu were women and youth, who had no links with power, and no land resources of their own. Although there was such an ethnic concentration of poverty in disfavor of Hutu, concentration of wealth was not at all ethnic.

At present, we are witnessing a stronger use than ever in Rwanda's history of minority military power to control natural and State resources. For the first time in many centuries, there is an effort in instauring a model of ethnic and territorial specialisation in the LZ-6 and LZ-4 life zones. Large portions of land in the east and north east, mostly in 6A, 6B, and 6C, have been recolonised by Tutsi cattle herders returning from exile. This recolonisation is carefully planned by the new régime and aims at creating a predominantly Tutsi corridor that makes a juncture between Uganda and Burundi, and is considered to be part of a project of creation of a homeland for Tutsi in Rwanda and Burundi, an idea that was first launched in Ugandan press in 1992. In some parts of the LZ-4 life zone of central and eastern Rwanda, there is a real competition between agricultural farming and pastoral production. This competition in which returnees have the upper hand has already claimed scores of Hutu lives in Butare, Gitarama, and Gikongoro. This is reminiscent of the historical competition between Hutu farmers and Tutsi cattle herders for control of natural

resources of this life zone. Higher lands of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri in the north do not seem to be object of this competition. These are also regions where there have been limited Hutu killings by RPF and less Hutu populations who fled the country. The urban areas are generally more than 70% Tutsi, and even more for their economy and administration.

There is therefore an alarming structural situation of an unjustifiable control of Rwanda's resources by Tutsi ethnic minority that has reduced Hutu gardeners to landlessness and economic inexistence. As it should be expected, this supremacy of Tutsi as a dominant political and economic class is facilitated by monopoly on the control of the means of State violence. They allow them to keep Hutu in exile for as long as it is necessary to strengthen their strong hold on land and State resources. Pursuite of this objective by rapid buildup of an ethnic fundamentalism, has transformed the present Tutsi minority régime into the most repressive on the African continent today.

### **The Military Connection**

The tradition of use of State violence in the exercise of power has got deep roots in Rwanda's history. It is this violence, and not cattle clientship as such which facilitated Tutsi political domination over Hutu masses. Dissension has always been combatted by extermination and prevention has been done by maintaining terror against groups where dissension can originate from. Silence of oppressed groups has always been the golden rule of coexistence with those in power. As this power has always been in the hands of one ethny, the militias were recruited from the same ethny. Militiamen were usually Tutsi, and Hutu could only belong to non combat units.

After the 1959 Social revolution, there was a return to pre-colonial model of setting up an ethnic army excluding men of the group that was ousted from power. This army was used as an instrument of the new executive to protect Republican institutions against attempts of former aristocrats to return to power. This remained defense mission ever since independence, and the armed forces were never prepared for external defense mission until the NRAWF October 1990 invasion. The means they had, their structure, lack of modalities of civil defense are proofs that they were there to be used by a group of Rwandans against other Rwandans.

After the July 1973 coup l'état, there was more rigor in preparation of the army against Rwandan groups. Men were recruited not only from one ethny, but also, army cadres were drawn from a small sub-regional group where the President of the Republic came from, because there was a double potential source of dissension: Tutsi and southerners. Army units were deployed in each prefecture to double and control civilian administration. The *commandant de place* at the command of a prefectoral army or gendarmerie unit was a kind of counter-préfet who reported directly to the President. The latter was at the same time minister of defense, chief of army staff and chief of gendarmerie staff. This dualism allowed the military to control the civilian administration without giving an impression that the country was under military siege.

Since mid-seventies, army authorities became interested in business. Militarisation of credit allowed powerful officers from the President's subregion and their allies to invest in all kinds of business, from imports and exports to retail, transportation and industry. This is where the alloy with Tutsi élite originated from. Men in power did not have all the time and expertise required for the running of their business, but they were in a position of using the State to secure markets, obtain credit, facilitate criminal operations like hard currency smuggling. Then the army mission changed from protecting Republican institutions to protecting men in power and this new business partnership. The armed forces were administered in the logic of redistribution. Hybridization of the military and business which facilitated hybridization of Hutu élite in power and Tutsi élite in business facilitated criminalisation of public processes, from the administration to politics. The October 1990 war erupted when for reasons of economic decline analysed above, the process of dehybridization was ripe, and divorce of Hutu and Tutsi élites not having any more rents to share or mutual benefits to offer occurred. It is this divorce which, by offering an opportunity to an external invasion, made the sparks of ethnic conflict fly again in Rwanda.

The war that started in October 1990 and ended dramatically in 1994 has shown clearly that armed forces constitute one of the most powerful structural problems that threaten unity of Rwanda and impede its socio-economic development. Instead of abiding to a positive national defense mission, they have demonstrated their capacity to exterminate rival groups that abound in a deeply segmented society. It is the military and militia organisations of both ethnies, Hutu and Tutsi, which made possible the rapid execution of Tutsi genocide and Hutu counter-genocide. This exacerbated the lethal fact, proven by post-revolution history, that armies in Rwanda can not serve but against Rwandans.

To understand the evilness of armed forces institutions in Rwanda context, one needs to consider and reconsider the fundamental problem that exists among various human groups that make up the country's society. This problem is fear. There is inter-ethnic fear between Hutu and Tutsi are concerned, and intra-ethnic fear among Hutu of different regional groupings. Each group fears that if the other one gets more armed it will not only jump to power but exterminate the others as well. This fear leads to creation of monoethnic armies by those who get a chance to be in power. But the real problem is that they do not stop there. They try to create conditions of no return to avoid the swing of power from one group to the other. This strategy is shared by both Hutu and Tutsi armed extremist groups, in the official and non-official armies, in both Rwanda and Burundi. It is no secret that Tutsi extremists in both countries aim at ethnic demographic parity with Tutsi supremacy in all the élites, and Hutu extremists aim at ethnic purity. This is why in these two countries, every ethnic clash is bloodier than the preceding one, and a vicious circle of violent hatred and vengeance is established. At each ethnic massacre, more devastating means are used, and there is more grief and pain accumulating at individual and group level. But also, each time there is more poverty, and with a population explosion, there are more people to be killed in this ominous circle.

The most revolting character of this violence in which struggle for power relies on military strength, is that most of the victims are poor people, cut from national political and economic life.

It is as if ethno-extremists, Hutu and Tutsi alike, have discovered that killing scores of poor people is a way of combatting poverty. Of the 1.500.000 to 2.000.000 victims of ethno-military violence, not more than a few dozens were really involved in the lethal power struggle. As revolting is the new reality of a new version of equality among the inhabitants of the area: equality before the risk of death by an endemic ethno-military violence embedded in mutual fear. Equally revolting is lack of awareness among these populations that this equality before the risk of arbitrary death and of a lasting imprisonment in fear, can serve as a ferment to incite them to risk equality before hope by dismantling their mortal ethnic armies and resolving to give up revanchism.

In the historical context of Rwanda, armed forces are doomed to protection of group interests against real or hypothetical threats of the rest of the population. This has made impossible the search of solutions to major society's problems by dialectical approaches. Thus using Tutsi rebel attacks as a pretext, the First Republic relied on its military safeguards to suppress opposition parties, and create a de facto monopartism. In 1973, a group of no more than ten officers decided and managed to topple a legal government and to prepare the imposition of a new constitutional order. In 1994, following the assassination of President J. Habyarimana, a military assisted counter-coup put in place authorities who did nothing to stop Tutsi genocide, the worst genocide on the African continent. In July 1994, an army of Tutsi rebels of the Rwandese Patriotic Front, who had launched a massive Hutu counter-genocide won the war and set up a new ethnic hegemony based on a search of firm Tutsi supremacy<sup>22</sup> in the military, state administrations and the economy. With this military victory and the ensuing criminalisation of administration and the judiciary, terror conditions within Rwanda are maintained<sup>23</sup> to free land and other resources by keeping 2.000.000 in refugee camps. Tutsi as a group are thus able to restructure State and space to maximise their physical, economic, and political security, and to reconstitute supremacy in use

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<sup>22</sup> This Tutsi stronghold on power is described by the missionary review *Mundo Negro* of September 1995, p. 8 as follows: << A dos años del triunfo del Frente Patriótico Ruandés, una cosa es clara: los tutsis se han consolidado en el poder y controlan todos los resortes políticos y económicos.

<sup>23</sup> This policy of terror as a strategy of a minority group to stay on power in spite of a thin political base is reminiscent of the Mutara II Rwigyera and Kigeli IV Rwabugiri reigns. The best description so far of the methods used and the extent of atrocities perpetrated by the RPF regime is made by Desouter, S. & Reyntjens, F. 1995. << Rwanda. Les violations des droits de l'homme par le FPR/APR. Plaidoyer pour une enquête approfondie. Université d'Anvers, Anvers >>. On p. 37, they list down methods used in human rights violations that maintain a state of terror. Here are some of them:

1. *L'expulsion consciente et planifiée de toute une population de ses terres, ainsi que l'empêchement actif et conscient du retour des réfugiés.*
2. *L'élimination planifiée d'une partie de l'élite hutu et de l'empêchement de cette élite de retourner de son exil par une terreur soutenue.*
3. *L'élimination physique de personnes sur base ethnique: soit par des mitraillades dans des réunions publiques convoquées à cet effet; soit en tuant des hommes et jeunes gens pendant la nuit dans des maisons repérées la veille.*
4. *Maintenir la population sous une terreur continue en faisant disparaître de nombreuses personnes.*
5. *Des actes de vengeance par des soldats individuels du FPR/APR (le régime de Kigali les présente comme des 'bavures') ne représentent qu'une partie des massacres. D'autres font plutôt penser à un plan préconçu.*
6. *Tout ceci est exécuté avec une grande cruauté. Des formes de torture reviennent régulièrement et certaines portent nettement l'étiquette du FPR.*

etc.

of natural and state resources. There is therefore emergence of an *ethnie-Etat* which is by far less hospitable to the majority of Rwandans than the former *parti-Etat*, and of a sharp contradiction between it and the masses it is supposed to cater for. The price for maximum security for one ethnic group is maximum tension for society at large and insecurity of individuals. The slogans of liberation war give way to realities of war of conquest. Spoils of war include not only real estate and equipment belonging to Hutu, but State as well.

### **The Instruments of a Durable Peace**

From the above discussion, it appears that ethnicity is an effect of underlying conflicts on hegemonic control of natural and state resources. Hegemonic control of power, first by Tutsi aristocracy until 1959, then by successive Hutu sub-regional groups until Tutsi military élite took over in 1994, has been the instrument of such natural and State resource control. Power control was criminalised to facilitate limitless accumulations of wealth by individuals within privileged groups and in exclusion of rival socio-ethnic groups. All this has been made possible by the use of military violence perpetrated by monoethnic armies. So far Rwandans have not been able to work out consensual modalities of equitable access to resources and power. The egalitarian model of land resources redistribution deployed after the 1959 revolution led to the same inequality as the inegalitarian model based on cattle and land clientship which led to that revolution. Inequalities in natural and State resources control have been, in respective epochs, the purpose and the instruments of power control by hegemonic groups, and factors of ethnic conflict. However, as an ethnic conflict produces germs for more violence in a socio-economic and political environment where pretexts abound, from symptom this spiralling ethnic conflict becomes a structural problem. Therefore, efforts to reduce tension in Rwandan society must address first and foremost structures and institutions that lead to inequality of access to land and state resources, and that nourish inter-ethnic fear. These comprise, as I will describe below, reorganisation of State institutions, demilitarisation, and fast economic development.

### **Power sharing between State and the people**

Too much centralisation of power has led to lethal bipolar conflicts with opportunistic exploitation of ethnicity. Recent events have clearly demonstrated that in order to avoid further mishandling of ethnicity by sub-groups competing for power, and destruction of society by ethnic bipolarisation, a multipolarity approach that takes into account all the major cleavages in society should be envisaged. At present, these are regions and ethnies within which other cleavages, existing and potential, such as socioeconomic status, gender, confession, are nested. In the long run, even the ethnic conflict may be considered as nested in the region factor, so that a solution for the region conflict may serve as a solution for ethnic and other social conflicts. In the past, when there were parliamentary elections, electoral frontiers were ethnic, gender, subregional, and even confessional. Thus the debate should center on the choice among four << devides >>:

Devide and rule;

Devide and separate;

Devide and decentralise;  
Devide and federate.

The devide and rule approach by which Rwanda has been ruled by clanic or subregional groups within a single ethny has been disastrous, to say the least. It led to construction of authoritarianism and to creation of a violent State that is served by the people instead of serving them. By creating a structural power deficit and insecurity for groups excluded from the advantages offered by the State, centralised power is obviously one of the most powerful factors of socio-political tension in Rwanda, interethnic as well as inter-regional. It is hard to conceive an end to this tension without satisfying the need of power that all human groups share, and that increases under increasing scarcity of natural resources. Failure to meet this power need for all groups may strengthen the position of extremists in Rwanda and in the Great Lakes region in general, who advocate a more destructive solution of geographical separation of ethnies to create an independent Tutsistan and a Hutustan. This devide and separate approach ignores the existence of other cleavages, namely of regions and clans, which would constitute strong socio-political determinants in these new states. It ignores the realities of intermarriages that have created inter-ethnic ties. In addition, there are important practical problems related to modalities of this division. It may be easy for people to choose their new nation, but it may not be as easy to construct a geographical frontier between the new states in a way that does not create lasting problems of interstate wars for territories. Furthermore, an inevitable emergence of unionist and anti-unionist movements may bipolarise again the region comprising these states and reopen ancient wounds.

A more reasonable approach would be that of decentralisation of power. The **State** should give part of its power to the people so that different human groups may have access to it. The more the fraction of power the State can give, the higher group participation will be, and the lesser the ethno-political tensions. Thus the more realistic approach in the search of lasting peace between ethnies and other socio-political groups in Rwanda lies in a <<devide and decentralise >> choice. Regions defined by prefectures, can be seats of decentralised power. They should be given enough autonomy to plan their cultural, social and economic development. Integration of regional social poles may be achieved through new institutions such as regional parliaments, more autonomy to communes, careful drawing of political constituencies. At national level, it is important to have a clear separation of the executive, legislative and judiciary powers. For the legislative, Gasana and Nkiko<sup>24</sup> have discussed justification of having two houses, a high and a low.

Although this reorganisation of power institutions may ease tensions around power and State resources sharing, it has limits as far as perennial access to natural resources is concerned. For a

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<sup>24</sup> Gasana, LKA Nsengimana, N. op. cit., p. 45: << Dans la situation actuelle qui risque de ne pas se modifier dans le proche terme, afin de mieux tenir compte de la diversité nationale, il serait judicieux de créer une Chambre Haute selon les modalités à définir, qui tiendrait compte de la particularité des minorité ethniques et régionales, mais aussi les groupes sociaux, en particulier la paysannerie et les femmes. Le bicaméralisme, c'est la primauté donnée au principe d'inclusion >>.

country with a prevailing rural economy, tensions around inequitable share of natural resources will continue mounting with increasing population pressure. A more satisfactory formula would be << devide and federate >> on a larger regional basis. The world community should understand the problem of overpopulation that Rwanda and Burundi are facing and help them to seek solutions in federations with neighbour countries. An interesting proposal in this direction has been made by Burundian Bishop Alfred Nduricimpa<sup>25</sup> in the following terms:

Burundi and the sister Republic of Rwanda should be re-integrated and re-unified with Tanzania so that the two main tribes which have been creating havoc can be intermixed or swallowed by the numerous tribes of Tanzania. This is very possible since Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi were once in history part of one administration, the Deutsche Ostafrika. The two kingdoms of Rwanda and Burundi became part of the German territory under the terms of an agreement reached by the Germans with the Congo Free State in 1884.

East Africa is usually taken to comprise three modern states of Kenya, Tanzania (Tanganyika and Zanzibar) and Uganda. To these countries should be added Rwanda and Burundi, formerly Ruanda-Urundi, whose people have been closely linked with neighbouring areas of East-Africa then Equatorial Africa.

In case of re-unification with Tanzania, Rwanda and/or Burundi will become provinces of the United Republic of Tanzania in all aspects of governance. This can be a fruitful solution since it shall stop the power struggle between the two tribes and most important it shall resolve economic and land problems.

This idea should be welcomed by all the states of the region which receive regularly influx of refugees from Rwanda and Burundi. The importance of these population movements have been a factor of heavy environmental destruction and of social tension between refugees and local populations.

### **Demilitarisation is a condition of inter-ethnic confidence building**

Demilitarisation of Rwanda as a prerequisite for reconciliation and national reconstruction has been sufficiently argued by Gasana<sup>26</sup> and Gasana and Nsengimana<sup>27</sup>. The point underlying their vision is that with ethnic armies, ethnies that are excluded will always prepare resistance, in order to oppose or impose violence. Society will thus be maintained under explosive ethnic tension. There is no doubt that ethnicity is a reality, and so are memories of past inter-ethnic victimisations and revolving cycles of vengeance. It is equally a reality that ethnic violence is confounded in state violence, and both are embedded in ethnic armed forces. The crux of the problem is that there seems to be no formula by which armed forces can cease to be ethnic for several decades ahead. If they are formed to represent ethno-demographic realities, they will be considered by the Tutsi as a peril against them. On the other hand if they have a Tutsi

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<sup>25</sup> See << Presentation to the Assembly of Christian Council of Tanzania C.C.T. by Bishop Alfred Nduricimpa, Dodoma, June 8, 1995 >> 11 p. A. Nduricimpa is Resident Bishop of the United Methodist Church in Burundi, and President of Africa Central Conference.

<sup>26</sup> Gasana, L.K. 1994. Le Rwanda doit se démilitariser pour réussir sa démocratisation et sa reconstruction. Africa Diasporama N°3&4, p. 27-29. Same article in Dialogue N° 178, p. 35-40.

<sup>27</sup> Gasana, J.K. & Nsengimana, N. op. cit., p. 47.

over-representation, they will equally be considered as a peril by the Hutu. Demilitarisation is therefore essential if armies must stop sharpening ethnicity, and lending support to those in power who want to impose to the nation unjust structures and unjust institutions. It is a condition for expression of non bipolarising identities, for development of cultural, social, and economic goals shared by the larger society and for emergence a strong civil society. In a segmented society, it is this civil society, and not the armed forces, that should constitute the counter-power.

However, demilitarisation can not be achieved by Rwanda alone without the support and firm guarantees by neighbouring countries and the international community. It is most important that armed extremists who lost power or those who won it be asked to dismantle their lethal structures, and allow an interplay of political forces. There will, be no end to ethnic violence if non armed Rwandan democrats are excluded from contribution to the running of their country's affairs. At present, search of a peaceful settlement is impeded by lack of a unified approach among francophone and anglophone superpowers that have manifested an other type of ethnic bipolarisation of their own, and seem to have chosen sides. In particular, the anglophone superpowers are the ones that are failing to play the rôle of facilitators of dialogue by lending unhindered cooperation and helping to consolidate Tutsi power. It is under their biased indifference that the new ethno-military régime has set up an *ethnie-Etat*, with quasi monoethnic armed forces, administration, parliament, and economy.

An additional argument in favor of demilitarisation is suppression of competition for financial means between projects of destruction and those of development. In a poor and overpopulated country that does not justify its armed forces by the existence of an external source of insecurity, it is more justifiable to invest in social and economic development than in structures of social and economic destruction. In this respect, the Costa Rican model should serve as a source of inspiration. So are the examples of african countries such as Botswana and Mauritius which have made important human development for not having diverted their national resources to creation of disproportionate armies.

### **Reduce socio-economic inequalities and combat poverty**

Solutions to the Rwandan ethno-political conflict will bear no durable results if they do not include programs of fast socio-economic development. It is with social development and economic growth that society will determine common national goals, and offer guarantees to every single individual against violence rooted in poverty and fear of a hungry neighbour. The state of law for the élites can not co-exist with the state of misery for all rest of the population. A growing economic insecurity leads to physical insecurity, particularly if affected groups see ethnies, as determinants of an unjust order. Rwandan society can not get rid of explosive ethnic tensions if its social groups continue to develop at different velocities. There is therefore an urgent need to develop a Marshal plan for Rwanda with the support of the international community to combat the appalling poverty that has now reached the highest level with the 1994 destruction of the social and economic infrastructure, and the instauration of a social and economic apartheid against the excluded Hutu majority ethny since July 1994. This plan should

be conceived to support the effort of reconciliation, and to expand the carrying capacity of an overpopulated country.

The rôle that economic development can play in national reconciliation should not be underestimated. New development projects can be conceived to as opportunities to reunite Rwandans at a local level around solidarity actions promoting shared social goal<sup>28</sup>. There is therefore need to engineer a new type of schemes aiming at resolution of social conflict through a shared development. It is necessary to go forward from government's discourse on reconciliation to decentralised reconciliation through concrete community programs.

## **Conclusion**

The underlying factors of the ethnic conflict in Rwanda are basically related to inequality of access to natural resources that is inherent in a skewed control of power. In a country with a predominantly rural economy, and where over-population annihilates economic progress, State constitutes for groups of élites in power, an instrument of accumulation of wealth and of suppression of rivals of a different ethnic group. Ethnicity in this case is therefore a symptom of unresolved problems of ethnically skewed power control, inequitable access to natural resources, and appalling rural poverty. Restoration of inter-ethnic confidence requires total demilitarisation of the country in order to construct a State that is hospitable to all social groups. Security for individual citizens must be assured by new institutions that increase their political participation. On the country level, decentralisation models can respond to this preoccupation. But in the long run, their efficiency is limited by the untreachable natural resources base and an increasing population. Fast social and economic development and federation with neighbouring states constitute therefore a more durable solution.

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<sup>28</sup> See also Gasana, J.K. 1995. La guerre, la paix et la démocratie au Rwanda. In André Guichaoua (sous la direction de): Les crises politiques au Burundi et au Rwanda (1993-1994). Karthala. p. 237: <<La réconciliation peut se traduire en action par des projets de développement intégrateurs et participatifs visant tous les groupes socio-ethniques et touchant une base élargie plutôt que des élites du pouvoir et de l'administration. Ce développement doit se concevoir dans un cadre programmatique global pour permettre d'apporter des solutions aux problèmes sociaux immédiats d'une population affectée par la guerre et les massacres ainsi qu'aux problèmes de développement socio-économique de moyen et long termes. Il doit être exécuté à travers des structures décentralisées de réconciliation permettant une gestion participative des programmes par les groupes-cibles concernés>>.