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Los Angeles

“We are all Rwandans”:

Imagining the Post-Genocidal Nation Across Media

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy  
in Film and Television

by

Andrew Phillip Young

2016



## ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

“We are all Rwandans”:

Imagining the Post-Genocidal Nation Across Media

by

Andrew Phillip Young

Doctor of Philosophy in Film and Television

University of California, Los Angeles, 2016

Professor Chon A. Noriega, Chair

There is little doubt of the fundamental impact of the 1994 Rwanda genocide on the country's social structure and cultural production, but the form that these changes have taken remains ignored by contemporary media scholars. Since this time, the need to identify the particular industrial structure, political economy, and discursive slant of Rwandan “post-genocidal” media has become vital. The Rwandan government has gone to great lengths to construct and promote reconciliatory discourse to maintain order over a country divided along ethnic lines. Such a task, though, relies on far more than the simple state control of media message systems (particularly in the current period of media deregulation). Instead, it requires a more complex engagement with issues of self-censorship, speech law, public/private industrial regulation, national/transnational production/consumption paradigms, and post-traumatic media theory. This project examines the interrelationships between radio, television, newspapers, the

Internet, and film in the contemporary Rwandan mediascape (which all merge through their relationships with governmental, regulatory, and funding agencies, such as the Rwanda Media High Council - RMHC) to investigate how they endorse national reconciliatory discourse. This study focuses on the period from 1995-2012, from the last days of the genocide proper (though mass ethnic violence continues on in various forms) to the contemporary period of comparative media “freedom,” to map the trajectory of the space, discourse, and regulation of the Rwandan mediascape. In looking at the through-line of this media narrative, this study utilizes discursive analysis, trauma theory, and textual analysis to compose a geography of media production/consumption in tandem with a discursive analysis of key media texts. The goal is two-fold: First, to prove that there are many production and consumption registers within the Rwandan mediascape that all operate, to varying degrees, to reinforce a state-supported reconciliatory discourse, and that the diversification and democratization of media (satellite TV, the internet, etc.), though a significant development, has done little to alter the dominance of traditional media and message systems. And second, given the particular media geography of contemporary Rwanda, the deregulation of media has had a minimal impact on the centrality of state-run media in the everyday lives of the general populace.

The dissertation of Andrew Phillip Young is approved.

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2016

For Kerry, Charlie and Owen.

You sacrificed the most to let me follow my dream.

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## **Introduction**

"When the traumatic events are of human design, those who bear witness are caught in the conflict between victim and perpetrator. It is morally impossible to remain neutral in this conflict. The bystander is forced to take sides."

- Judith Lewis Herman<sup>1</sup>

In thinking about the social and cultural impact of the 1994 Rwanda genocide, there has been a tendency within the international community to ignore post-genocide developments within the country. This has led to the freezing of international awareness of the country in 1994. The other inclination in discussing Rwanda has been to argue, in rather utopian terms, that the country has moved beyond the imbrications of the ethnic divide. Such a position has been best expressed in the ubiquitous dual mantras of “forgive, but don't forget” and “we are all Rwandans,” uttered on television, radio, and in classrooms across the country. Both of these perspectives are, needless to say, problematic; in large part because they gloss over the serious socio-cultural cracks that remain in contemporary Rwanda. While the tendency for the international community to ignore what has happened within the country after 1994 is no doubt due to a combination of factors (including cultural proximity and media/genocide desensitization, not to mention pangs of guilt), the degree to which reconciliatory discourse has permeated all levels of Rwandan culture and society has emerged as an important development. There is a practical reason for this: the murder of almost a quarter of a country's population means that some degree of reconciliation is necessary to “keep things running” (well illustrated by Judith Lewis Herman's postulation above about the non-neutrality of the “man-made” traumatic limit event). There lies, within the production and distribution of these reconciliatory media, though, something far more important to understanding the contemporary manifestation of trauma (and nation) within Rwandan culture.

My own interest in Rwanda was born out of many experiences. As a teenager I, like millions of Americans in the Spring of 1994, tuned in to evening news stories of brutality and violence taking place a half a world away, in a country I had never heard of before. Though the images I was watching hardly did justice to what was actually happening on the ground in Rwanda, there was something that seemed different to me about *how* the nightly news talked about the genocide (not to mention that it disappeared from the airwaves once the war was over). It felt to me that the way news anchors discussed the events in Rwanda, as “tribal warfare,”<sup>2</sup> seemed quite different from how they spoke about the events taking place in Bosnia. According to Johan Pottier, terminology used in reporting of the genocide carried with it “strongly ethnicised, seemingly 'tribal' overtones and justification”<sup>3</sup> for the conflict. As an example of this phenomenon, while introducing an NBC Nightly News segment, Tom Brokaw once stated that, “with the President dead there, old tribal wars have broken out again.”<sup>4</sup> Beyond the inherent problems associated with referring to what was happening as a “tribal war,” the phrase “have broken out *again*” (emphasis mine) is not contextualized to a particular historical moment, or even a geographic location. Instead, it appears as an overt generalization of Africa as a whole: as a mythological racialized space in constant conflict. This systematized racialization is hardly reserved for media discourse on Rwanda, but it was important in framing international attitudes toward the country during the post-genocide period as a “tribal imaginary.”

Another major factor of differentiation is that the majority of stories covering the Rwanda genocide focused on discussions of the Rwandan refugee crisis, rather than the genocide proper. Meanwhile, the Bosnian War continued to receive a great deal of news coverage over the entirety of the conflict’s duration, as well as in the aftermath of the war (even in the face of television audience “genocide fatigue”). (See “Chart A: Weekly Frequency and Average Duration 4/6/94-

11/23/94” and “Table 1: U.S. News Coverage Monthly Frequency and Average Duration 4/6/94-11/23/94”) During the first 114 days of the genocide, less than 29% of major US and UK newspaper front pages included stories related to the conflict.<sup>5</sup> These numbers were even worse with newspaper editorials during that same time frame, as less than 5.9% of editorial sections included discussions of the genocide.<sup>6</sup>

When asked in March of 1994 why news coverage of Rwanda, which had been in the midst of a civil war since 1990, had declined, one journalist replied, “to be honest I'm not that sure why Rwanda has gone off the agenda, probably because it is not Europe, or a former colony.”<sup>7</sup> Indeed, issues of cultural proximity have pushed stories deserving of serious attention out of the media altogether. A more pernicious expression of this phenomenon is McLurg's Law,<sup>8</sup> explained by one BBC journalist as a method for selecting which stories receive coverage and which ones do not as “one European is worth twenty-eight Chinese, or perhaps two Welsh miners worth one thousand Pakistanis.”<sup>9</sup> Given that the focus of the majority of news coverage was on the 80,000 to 100,000 deaths in the refugee camps,<sup>10</sup> ignoring the approximately 1 million killed in just the first 100 days of the genocide,<sup>11</sup> one can see that cultural proximity was significant to the framing of these events in the international community.

In the ensuing years, Rwanda has remained an almost imaginary place; frozen in my own mind in the midst of the events that had plunged it into violence in the days following President Habyarimana's assassination in April of 1994. I continued researching issues of identity and reconciliation as they related to many cultural and social contexts that, though quite different from Rwanda, nonetheless buttressed my continued interest in the kinds of discursive issues that I identified watching those news reports so many years before. Then, in 2007, while my father was visiting Rwanda to explore developing micro financing opportunities for small business



owners, he mentioned to Joseph Habineza (the Minister of Sports) that he had a son that was a filmmaker and researcher interested in reconciliation. Thus, at the invitation of the ministry, and after a fair amount of research, I jumped at the opportunity to go to Rwanda, and was in Kigali filming less than a year later.

While the degree to which the Kagame administration, along with the Rwandan people, were able to rebuild and maintain peace following the genocide impressed me, my experiences in Rwanda also raised many questions. My interviews with filmmakers, politicians, academics, musicians, church officials and churchgoers illuminated the need to be critical. Is it realistic to expect that generations of conditioning and teaching, that one person should hate (and even be willing to kill) their neighbor, should just disappear because many may want it to? Though reconciliation is something that is easy to ask for, how is forgiveness possible when the people you have lived next to (and even had Sunday dinner with) for decades murder your entire family with machetes? While I saw many powerful examples of Rwandans overcoming their hatred and forgiving the unforgiveable, there was something else, in the background noise of my interviews, which seemed to give me pause. In the majority of my conversations, the people I spoke to, even if they only spoke Kinyarwanda, would say to me (always in English) “we are all Rwandans” and that “we should forgive, but not forget.”

Where did this come from? Why were individuals, placed on different ends of the social and economic spectrum (from young, poor children in villages, to affluent politicians and church officials), using these identical phrases? This was the question that ate away at me as I returned home, and that then governed a great deal of my research into Rwanda in the following years. While no one seemed to note the same issue in the literature I had come across, it seemed unlikely to me that such a phenomenon was coincidental. So I began researching potential

reasons that such a wide range of interviewees should share these phrases, attempting to identify the central nodes of their dissemination. While schools seemed the most likely location (and no doubt they play an important role), the lack of a history curriculum,<sup>12</sup> and the fact that many those individuals that I interviewed were well past school age, suggested that it had to be something else. The Church, too, seemed a possibility given the fact that 96.22%<sup>13</sup> of Rwandans identify themselves as Christians. Thus, it could be possible for the pulpit to be a central node for disseminating these phrases. In post genocide Rwanda, though religion is an important element in understanding public discourse, the popularity of the Catholic Church has been on a steady decline. Even at its peak in 1994 only 62.6%<sup>14</sup> of Rwandans self-identified as Catholic (this number now sits at around 45.12%<sup>15</sup>). The likelihood of many faiths, all operating in concert with one another, is small, and my own personal experiences in Rwandan churches (even those holding services in English), reinforced these differences. More to the point, these particular phrases were not part of any of the religious observances I saw.

Once I began analyzing the discourse of Rwandan media, it became clear that the likely central node of dispersion must have something to do with these creative media industries. How could this be the case, though, given the seeming limited controls put in place to regulate the majority of these media industries? Even further, with the large diversity of media producers, distributors and (within) exhibition spheres, how could such a concise and identical phrase appear across all media? The thesis of this project is that the particular relationship between media and the state, characterized by ritualized and repeated consumption of particular media, remains a central means of formulating national identity in Rwanda. Where before Rwandan court histories, folk literature, and songs legitimized the authority of the court, contemporary media legitimizes state sponsored discourse (such as the mantra's "forgive, but don't forget,"

“we are all Rwandans,” and the subtler use of the phrase “the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi”).

From a disciplinary perspective, attempting to engage with the expression of nationalism in media, necessitates an understanding of many different intellectual frameworks, fields, and approaches. Partly this is the result of the particularities of coming to understand any contemporary media space, but research on contemporary Rwanda, and its mediascape, requires a great deal of interdisciplinarity. This fact, in combination with the dearth of material written on the subject, requires that intellectual inquiry also expand upon more traditional approaches within the field of cinema and media studies. One particularly important addition to this project is its reliance upon quantitative research.

In combination with compiled data, this project utilizes several existing intellectual approaches. One of the most fruitful, though tangential, frameworks utilized in this dissertation is that of Rwandan history and cultural theory. I say tangential because, while the history of colonial conquest and the antecedents to genocide has received considerable attention, few scholars appear as interested in how these histories relate to the post-genocide period. This theoretical deficiency represents not a barrier to further interrogation but is, instead, an opportunity to construct a new framework for interpreting contemporary Rwanda through the lens of historical development (the ideological trappings of which require our attention). There is little material that exists analyzing the pre-colonial era (anthropologist Jan Vansina's historical work *Antecedents to Modern Rwanda: The Nyiginya Kingdom* serves as an important exception). There are several key studies that do look at media and culture during the colonial period (approx. 1899-1962), many of which focus on the role of the Catholic Church in promoting literacy, as well as introducing colonial mass media through newspapers. Several historians have developed theories about the role of the church and its media organs in the transition of power

between Tutsi and Hutu political authorities, and the similar transition, through radio, between the colonial and Hutu governments (including Ian Linden in *Church and Revolution in Rwanda* and Tharcisse Gatwa's *The Churches and Ethnic Ideology in the Rwandan Crises 1900-1994*), but these frameworks argue for the exceptionality of these media forms at the exclusion of the recognition of their interdependence. More genocide-centric texts, such as Gérard Prunier's *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide* and Allan Thompson's edited collection *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, similarly argue for the importance of media in the development of ethnic identity by neglecting the continued role of other media in this process.

Two key methodologies emerged as possible means of navigating around this problem: personal political memoirs and para/post-genocide socio-political studies. Works such as Fergal Keane's *Seasons of Blood: A Rwandan Journey* and Louise Mushikiwabo and Jack Kramer's *Rwanda Means the Universe: A Native's Memoir of Blood and Bloodlines* take outsider and insider approaches to convey the experience of genocide (with different political motivations and results). While this model is more limiting in terms of its applicable data set, particularly with its lack of direct emphasis on media (beyond a few anecdotes), it does offer a far richer context for the actualities of Rwandan media consumption. Pushing in the direction of para/post-genocide socio-political studies has opened up a much larger area of inquiry by linking the experience and memory of genocide with post-genocidal contexts. Much of this research has focused on the importance of ethnic identity and media in the period just following the genocide (such as Johan Pottier's *Re-Imagining Rwanda: Conflict, Survival and Disinformation in the Late Twentieth Century*) or it attempts to isolate how ethnic ideology continues to pose a particular hurdle for the rebuilding of the country (see Alexander Laban Hinton's *Transitional Justice: Global Mechanisms and Local Realities After Genocide and Mass Violence*), but in so doing they often

assume a complete social and cultural rupture between the pre- and post-genocide periods that requires further exploration. Indeed, while personal political memoirs and para/post-genocide socio-political studies both articulate a relationship between Rwanda's past and future, they do so by either arguing that the contemporary Rwandan social experience is a direct continuation (or survival) of a violent past, or a complete break with it; binaries that are dissonant with the actual contemporary Rwandan experience.

In a more general sense, post-colonial and African studies frameworks are a double-edged sword in approaching contemporary Rwandan media, in large part because, while they do serve as lenses through which to interpret media production and consumption activities (linking them across regions, as well as the continent, through shared experience and culture), often these assumptions of homogeneity are not completely accurate. No doubt, Edward Said, Frantz Fanon and Paulo Freire, add a great deal to our understanding of the oppressive role of the colonial authority in Rwanda, but the particularities of the Hutu/Tutsi/Twa dynamic are quite a bit different from those of ethnic and cultural identity in, say, Algeria (let alone in countries that share the same ethnic delineations, but different ethnic power dynamics, such as in Uganda). Taking this difference into account means that these frameworks can, and are, useful in linking systematic oppression in contemporary media production to specific practices. Moreover, they offer insight into how regional media systems, such as those in Uganda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), operate in relation to these oppressive ideologies and genocide.<sup>16</sup>

Such regional approaches are also, generally speaking, reliant upon nationalist and transnational media discourses. As pointed out by radio researchers, such as linguistic anthropologist Debra Spitulnik,<sup>17</sup> radio (and later TV) operates beyond political and geographical

borders. In fact, traditional nationalist discourse (such as Ernest Gellner's industrial-centric nationalism) seems ill equipped to handle the complexities of contemporary media environments, or "nations." By the same token, even problematized nationalism (such as Benedict Anderson's "imagined communities" or Partha Chatterjee's notion of resistance nationalism) offer limited understandings of how identity can become formulated around media. Instead, the solution seems hidden within one of Gellner's less noticed concepts: potentiality. Though he was attempting to answer the question of why some nations never materialize, it is arguable that spaces of media consumption and production (particularly in the transnational context) operate as potentialities of nationhood; a borderless nationality. David Morley and Kevin Robins<sup>18</sup> have approached this issue from the perspective of media and identity (mirrored by many other theorists including Masao Miyoshi<sup>19</sup> and Hamid Naficy, among others). Industrial analysis provides a means of attacking this issue from the other direction, through the concept of national potentiality. Rather than treating the media industries of Rwanda as the result of a simple political economy, it is important to recognize the resistant and transnational character of its many media sectors and products (such as a film industry with no domestic audience, or an exiled newspaper industry in outright revolt). Here Jennifer Holt, Michael Curtin, and Arjun Appadurai's work on media industries and media capital offer a useful framework for looking at transnational, and transmedia, production and consumption.

Finally, given the characterization of contemporary Rwanda as a post-traumatic state (dual meanings intended), trauma theory represents a key theoretical model through which to interpret media discourse. While more traditional texts (such as Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*) offer a strong theoretical foundation, for the purposes of this dissertation the much greater areas of interest are trauma narrativity and trauma representation. The degree to which

trauma narratives<sup>20</sup> act upon both national identity and personal/national history is noteworthy. Though the expression of trauma in cultural production can be responsive (such as Geurin and Hallas' work on visual trauma culture and Anton Kaes' work with German Expressionism), the persistence and evolution of certain trauma narratives represent what amounts to a “problem of history,” outlined by many theorists including Dominick LaCapra, Hayden White, Allen Meek, and Janet Walker. In what has come to mirror the memory wars of the 1990s in the United States, Rwanda currently faces the serious dilemma of negotiating between a reconciliatory and palatable collective memory, and the actual history that threatens to weaken a tentative political stability.

The interest of this dissertation is to bring together Rwandan media and cultural history, trauma theory, and discursive analysis<sup>21</sup> to identify the variegated (and integrated) rungs of its national (and transnational/diasporic) media space. This media space operates as many interconnected ideological spheres, built upon the same apparatus that facilitated genocide. Only these spheres have been repurposed to deliver a state sponsored reconciliatory message.

## **Literature Review**

Selecting literature for this particular project was a difficult but creative endeavor because there is little in the way of critical research into contemporary Rwanda and its media. As a result, the works selected for inclusion represent a wide range of disciplines and theoretical perspectives to both build upon previous models of approaching Rwandan media, but also to formulate a coherent intellectual framework for this dissertation. The following literature falls into three primary categories.

The first, “Violence, Reconciliation, and Memory” engages with available texts that negotiate the complex relationship between the experience of genocide and its systematic

retelling. These are works that utilize violence theory, or the personal accounts of witnesses, so as to explain the genocide. The second category, “Trauma and History,” brings together many of the various accounts of different elements of Rwandan history with trauma theory to problematize the notion of history as representational practice in relation to trauma (the “unrepresentable”). Much of this literature focuses on formulating a historical trajectory of Rwandan history alongside a coherent theory of trauma, but these texts often frame their discussion using utopian notions of reconciliation and reconstruction. The third category, “Media and Nation,” attempts to link media practice with the formation of nation and national identity. These texts connect media history, media and cultural studies, and national and transnational theories to shed some light on the state of Rwanda’s contemporary mediascape.

### Violence, Reconciliation, and Memory

As previously stated, the primary goal of this project is to identify how the deployment of the relationship between media and the state aids in formulating national identity in Rwanda. While many Rwandans directly experienced the genocide in one way or another, the particular cultural phenomenon that this project is attempting to isolate and quantify is the role of media in homogenizing and normalizing a monolithic notion of post-traumatic identity. In what ways is remembrance acceptable? What forms of ethnic discourse are allowable? How does contemporary media operate in this process compared to the past?

A great deal of the answers to these questions revolve around issues of acceptable public discourse, regulatory impulses, and the limitation of personal agency. One must also take into account the importance of memory in the constitution of Rwandan identity. As this project suggests, memory of the genocide operates within the Rwandan social imaginary to both solidify national identity (through its condemnation within acceptable public discourse) and unify



Rwandan cultural identity (as the shared experience of genocide transcends traditional ethnic discourse in the form of *banyarwanda* – “the people of Rwanda”). While the complex interplay between the affirmation and condemnation of ethnic identity that buttresses contemporary Rwandan identity has created a paradoxical and problematic basis for self-identification, the experience of genocide and its systematic retelling remains central to understanding the ways that the nation now defines itself.

International Relations scholar Alex J. Bellamy begins his book, *Massacres and Morality: Mass Atrocities in an Age of Civilian Immunity* by arguing for a historical trajectory of the ethical tradition of civilian immunity from violence.<sup>22</sup> Though such traditions have painted the victimization of innocent civilians as an intolerable evil, Bellamy notes that the persistence of such violence raises questions about the efficacy of such beliefs. Instead, supported by the systematic development of a “climate of impunity,” continued violence is indicative of a schism between what we say and how we act. Such a point serves as an excellent entryway for thinking about the interaction between violence and reconciliation in the retelling and narrativizing genocide.

In utilizing more traditional theoretical approaches to violence in the analysis of Rwanda, one is relying upon a potentially problematic cultural parallel. From G.W.F. Hegel to Frantz Fanon, many theories about violence rely upon an experiential formulation of the meaning and structural nature of violence. While much of the included literature builds upon these fundamental theories, the “experience” and structure of violence in Rwanda was, and is, quite different from the contexts in which Hegel and Fanon (and Hobbes, Marx, and Engels for that matter) were attempting to understand it. Structural violence is no doubt an important consideration for thinking about contemporary Rwanda, particularly when it relates to issues of

the relationship between governmental control and personal/ethnic identity.

Because structural violence in Rwandan society appears to be so prevalent it seems to be a foregone conclusion in available texts. For instance, political scientist Peter Uvin underscores the importance of development aid in fomenting structural violence through the “deep and widening inequality of life chances; corruption, arbitrariness and impunity; the permanence of social and economic exclusion [...] and an authoritarian and condescending state and aid system.”<sup>23</sup> International affairs scholar Jill Salmon echoes the clear role of education in fomenting, and being targeted by, structural violence.<sup>24</sup>

The central thrust of this project is not to argue for the importance of structural violence, rather it is to isolate the character and degree to which the formulation of acceptable public discourse has exacted its own form of violence. Thus, there is far more of a reliance on potential frameworks for understanding the psychological issues that govern the identity formation process. Social psychologist Lasana T. Harris and Susan Fiske’s article “Dehumanized Perception: A Psychological Means to Facilitate Atrocities” delves into how systematic dehumanization is necessary in order for humans to enact particular kinds of inhumane violence upon one another, including torture. This particular text offers an important means of approaching the fundamental issue of dehumanization in the perpetuation of genocide, but it also opens up to a larger question for this project: is there a continued role for dehumanization in Rwanda’s contemporary acceptable public discourse? While the answer is somewhat difficult to pin down, the fact that available texts seem to ignore this central issue should be seen as a call for further research.

Existing literature on violence and the Rwanda genocide generally attempts to explain or justify the actions of 1994 (often to efface the responsibility of particular contributors). For

instance, ethics scholar and humanitarian relief worker Fiona Terry lays much of the events of the genocide at the feet of direct participants, stating that “humanitarian assistance is necessary only once governments or combatants have been unwilling or unable to shoulder their respective responsibilities.”<sup>25</sup> This is usually done to avoid the inherent responsibility that many in the international relief community had for the Rwanda genocide. One of the earliest of these personal retellings of the genocide was journalist Fergal Keane’s report of his journey through the country in the midst of the conflict,<sup>26</sup> which won him the Orwell Prize for contributing to honesty and clarity in public language. Like many of these early accounts, Keane is particularly interested in conveying the insanity of genocide from his particular transient perspective, ignoring the perspectives of many of the participants. Though personal accounts of genocide are valuable, the scope of this particular project limits their usefulness.

Many other texts also dole out responsibility, including Lieutenant-General Roméo Dallaire’s condemnation of the international community, as exoneration for his own inability to intervene as commander of [United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda] UNAMIR forces in Rwanda.<sup>27</sup> Journalist and scholar Allan Thompson’s retelling of his own feelings of failure in the aftermath of the genocide serves as the most even handed exploration of violence and personal recounting of the events.<sup>28</sup> Other accounts seem to focus much more on individual themes of violence and the experience of genocide, including Dina Temple-Raston (war crimes tribunals, media, and reconciliation)<sup>29</sup> and Louise Mushikiwabo (genocide and the state).<sup>30</sup>

There are several accounts that were not selected for inclusion in this project, because many of them focused on themes or narratives that showed a bias toward tangential post-genocide narratives. For instance, Joseph Sebarenzi and Laura Mullane<sup>31</sup> and Immaculée Ilibagiza and Steve Erwin<sup>32</sup> (2014) focus on the importance of the personal experience of

genocide as framed through religion, but they don't appear pertinent to the discussion at hand as they do not offer enough of a critical perspective of the interplay between the state and contemporary Church. Additionally, the move away from the dominance of the Catholic Church in Rwanda limits their relevance to analyses of contemporary public discourse. Other texts, such as Stephen Kinzer's biography of Paul Kagame,<sup>33</sup> do not offer enough of a critical view of the current sociopolitical state of Rwanda, and veer too far into propagandistic territory.

### Trauma and History

Given recent interest in researching the history of the Rwanda genocide, the trajectory of theoretical development within the field is rather short. Early works attempting to gather a cohesive history of Rwanda capitalized on the recent genocide, which thrust the small central African nation into the news. Many others still focused on understanding the role of the international community in the devastating events of 1994. From a human rights perspective, historian and activist Alison des Forges' *Leave None to Tell the Story*<sup>34</sup> attempted to offer a more directed approach to the compiling of a genocidal history. Given her disciplinary perspective, a great deal of the text focuses on explicating the particular conditions that led to genocide, its logistics, and the responsibility of the international community for their own inaction. As a result, des Forges work was useful, but its discussion of media is much more concerned with the specifics of propaganda and the logistical role of media in carrying out the genocide. Though these particular issues are relevant to this project, the usefulness of the text remains limited insofar as it seems less concerned with the larger ramifications of these historical trends on current Rwandan socio-political conditions.

As with most histories of Rwanda oriented toward the contemporary era, des Forges text is struggling to isolate the events of the late 1980s that led to genocide, to designate

responsibility. Three particular thinkers have dominated traditional histories of Rwanda, which are more interested in a longer trajectory of explanation for the genocide: Gérard Prunier, Jan Vansina, and Jean-Pierre Chrétien. Though all three share similar personal and professional backgrounds,<sup>35</sup> their contributions to the base of knowledge for this study are quite different. Prunier has been quite prolific in his work outlining the historical conditions for violence in Rwanda, including research on how colonialism reconstituted ethnic identity to control (and foment genocidal hatred among) Rwandans,<sup>36</sup> the role of Rwanda in the catastrophic collapse of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC),<sup>37</sup> and political oppression in the late 1990s.<sup>38</sup> Prunier's particular approach is critical of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and the Kagame administration of Rwanda, but it also offers a counterbalance for more moderate and pro-RPF analyses.

Jan Vansina's dual role as a historian and an anthropologist (as well as his Belgian upbringing), influences his work reconstructing Rwanda's pre-colonial past,<sup>39</sup> offering considerable insight into the formation of the Nyinginya Kingdom. While this particular period of Rwandan history may appear unrelated to the discussion at hand, the reality is that, like all history, our understanding the present benefits from our deep understanding of the past. Jean-Pierre Chrétien's *L'Afrique des Grands Lacs*<sup>40</sup> expands on this history to plot a trajectory from the kingdoms of the Great Lakes, to the genocides and wars that ravaged the region. While Vansina enunciates a vision of Rwanda's past that confers too much responsibility for the ethnic division that led to the genocide on pre-existent social and political configurations, Chrétien assumes almost too great a cultural and social fluidity between the different nations of the Great Lakes region. There are cultural, linguistic, and social similarities throughout the region, but one must also take into account the considerable historical differences.

As a separate genre of Rwandan history, there are many other important historical studies that shed light on the genocide itself. Ugandan historian Mahmood Mamdani's *When Victims Become Killers*<sup>41</sup> treads much of the same ground as Chrétien, but the key difference is that he concerns himself with the particular limitations of reconciliation in the Rwandan context. Mamdani's analysis veers a bit off course in his general evaluation of what he perceives to be the "victor's justice"<sup>42</sup> of the contemporary Rwandan state, in that it ignores the sizeable inclusionary efforts on the part of the government. Still, his critical perspective is important in reframing the utopian stance taken by many scholars in conceptualizing contemporary Rwanda.

Journalist Philip Gourevitch<sup>43</sup> and genocide studies scholar Scott Straus<sup>44</sup> represent the two ends of a wide spectrum in approaching genocide history, with the bulk of Gourevitch's text devoted to the idea that straightforward answers for the genocide are difficult to ascertain. Straus, though, is much more focused on trying to seek out the definitive evidence that Gourevitch seems to discount, because "the more I learned about Rwanda and genocide, the more I saw that the theory had outpaced the evidence."<sup>45</sup> This point seems to ring true for a great deal of scholarly work on the genocide, but given the inherent need to "understand the incomprehensible" at play in researching genocide, it is hardly surprising.

The particular unfathomable nature of the Rwanda genocide has made trauma theory an important avenue of approach. Given the central role of representational practice in the formulation of this project's thesis, this is even more the case. The ubiquity of trauma in contemporary discourse, most often associated with the key limit events of the last century (World War I, the Holocaust, 9/11, etc.), is indicative of the increasing sense of untethering catalyzed by postmodern existence; as well as an indelible link between systems and cycles of representation and those of history. Such a point appears most clearly in Hollywood's propensity

for making historical epics of trauma that formulate a position from which to approach the limit event, but also in the parallel development of documentary form, to engage with the testimony of trauma. This project addresses the distinction between historical trauma, situated around key historical limit events,<sup>46</sup> and structural trauma, which (in LaCapra's terms) incorporates communal and individual trauma,<sup>47</sup> to understand that they each represent avenues for narrative and identity generation.

The implication of this point is that we need to view the representational practices of trauma within the context of history, but also as expressions of individual experience that may lie outside of communal experience.<sup>48</sup> As a result, this project approaches trauma from a cultural perspective, hybridizing these two elements. Understanding the relationship between history and trauma rests on trauma's definition, as well as its application to a specific area of study (seen, for instance, in the differentiation between historical and structural trauma). Enlightenment philosophy suggested that trauma was a collective experience, based within the event itself, which posed important opportunities for exploring the vast social experience.<sup>49</sup> Psychoanalysis deviated from this postulation by arguing that it was not the traumatic event, but rather its incomprehensible characteristics, that produce the psychological conditions of trauma.<sup>50</sup> Even further, lay theories based on these positions suggested a similar opposition between Enlightenment (traumatic experience results in indignation and outrage) and psychoanalytic (trauma leads to the repression of traumatic experience) thought.<sup>51</sup> The reckless implementation of these general lay theories obfuscates their individual perspectives and operates to level all experience as a uniform and egalitarian "trauma." To do this, is not only irresponsible, but it also ignores the interpretation of the wide-ranging varieties of traumatic experience (a point that is particularly problematic in approaching the areas of historical and structural trauma, both of

which speak to the study at hand).

The bifurcation between these two areas in the study and treatment of trauma emerged in Freud's writings and his development of psychoanalytic approaches to trauma. While his initial work focused on exogenous "external" traumas (such as train wrecks and child sexual abuse), he later shifted his attention toward endogenous "internal" traumas (those with no explicit external catalyst).<sup>52</sup> In such a way, Freudian psychoanalytic discourse moved from that which was historical (clear life "events") to that which was obscure and interior. In a similar sense, Robert Jay Lifton's conceptualization of this same duality in positions of "numbing," between that of "massive death immersion" and that of "everyday life" is indicative of the push towards the enigma of the banal, of the normalized trauma.<sup>53</sup>

If one is to begin a discussion of historical trauma with the "limit event," then we must understand the Rwanda genocide to be one of the key examples of the twentieth century. The emphasis in critical literature on the limit event has dominated the field of historical trauma, particularly as it relates to media representation, framing it as a struggle over the emplotment of the past. Our understanding of history remains caught up in its representation. Historical trauma argues for the direct relationship between the event (World War II) and the psychological symptoms that result from it (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder - PTSD), but such a construction poses an irreconcilable problem<sup>54</sup>: this direct correlation is neither uniform, nor universal. For example, the return to "normality," the break within the psychological buffer that protects the psyche through the formulation of narratives that normalize traumatizing experience, is the cause of traumatic symptoms (not the "event" itself).<sup>55</sup> Joshua Hirsch has posited a theorization of "post-traumatic cinema," as one that pivots on the historical event as a transition from pre- to post-trauma film form and aesthetics.<sup>56</sup>



Historical trauma faces further criticism in that it posits an “authentic reality,” which in representational terms is problematic. Even further, this does not to mention the degree to which the acceptance of this simplistic notion risks the possibility of sacralizing the event<sup>57</sup> and, through it, trauma itself. Seen in this way, structural trauma is a means of looking at traumatic experience as existing outside of specific, exceptional historical contexts. It is more, though, than a universalized, ambivalent, notion that encapsulates a traumatic “everything.” Instead, structural trauma allows for an expanding of discourse to allow for the cohabitation of event specific experience, and a more general notion of trauma. While historical trauma suggests that a short term periodization can be universally applied, and that memory can be contained to a particular spatio-temporal sphere (both of which are dubious points), a danger lies in the supposition of structural trauma as a stand-in or a replacement for historical trauma. They are quite different (though in some sense interrelated) phenomena, but one must take both into account when researching representational practice. The bridge between these two forms is cultural trauma.

Numerous theorists have suggested that the question of representational historicism hinges on the premise that cultures are subject to trauma.<sup>58</sup> The invocation of cultural trauma, though related, differentiates itself from structural theories through its emphasis on the formation of identity through trauma *and* its representation. As a result, the shared experience impacts group consciousness to both consecrate and expand social spheres, allowing for the viewing of traumatic experience as an expansive social process that exists both within the individual and across the breadth of public discourse. This collective traumatic consciousness is both unified, and altered, by the experience of trauma. In such a way, society, itself, operates to expand the circle of collective trauma by linking traumatized enclaves to ever-wider spheres of shared

identity through empathic or mutual identificatory communities (thus ethnic and social designation merge into a larger space of traumatic identification).

The key problem, particularly in thinking about the Rwanda genocide and representational practice, is whether trauma is representable at all. Theodor Adorno famously stated that "to write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric"<sup>59</sup> (mirroring Elie Wiesel's "moral limits" of representation<sup>60</sup>), suggesting that even beyond the capability to represent, it is a far more important question to ask whether it is moral or ethical to do so. In Rwanda, constant attempts by international and domestic filmmakers to recreate the events of 1994 on film has brought this particular issue to the fore.

Some have suggested that, by its definition, trauma is only accessible after the fact.<sup>61</sup> Due to the psychological breakdown instigated by the disconnection of the symbolic function of the psyche, representation is impossible because of the temporal destruction of memory and consciousness. These inherent limits of representation would appear indicative of an impossibility of trauma representation. Returning back to Adorno's earlier postulation, the process of traumatic representation moves beyond being inadequate, and fringes on the obscene. How, then, are we to understand not only the massive critical investment made in the development of discourses on trauma in relation to representation, but also the numerous cultural products that pertain to trauma (in the face of its unrepresentable nature)? It is not, just a matter of representation, rather it is a question of the capability of culture to contextualize trauma. Noting that traumatic periods in history have resulted in more representations, not less, only affirms this point.<sup>62</sup>

In place of the "psychic paralysis"<sup>63</sup> promoted by the conceptualization of trauma as unrepresentable, it seems more fruitful to posit a theory of limited representational historicism.

Though representation offers no essential historical truth of trauma, the formal and aesthetic systems developed in response to it are of some value to the question at hand. To this end, we must understand representation not as producing “copies” of traumatic experience, but rather as a cultural response to trauma. Representation also offers a site through which empathic response to trauma narrative allows for the formation of identity, and by proxy an affiliative trauma, one that requires no actual experiential referent.<sup>64</sup> The danger in this context is that the process of historicizing the traumatic event tends to lead to its sacralization. Sacralizing trauma, as an element of cultural trauma, is problematic in the sense that the construction of a post-traumatic identity through representation is dependent on the trauma itself.<sup>65</sup> As Dominick LaCapra has pointed out, the formulation of this identity becomes predicated on a resistance to working through trauma, because the act of casting aside such a past becomes likened to a betrayal of the victims of the original wound.<sup>66</sup>

Taking such a risk into account, the importance of the process of bringing together history, trauma theory, and textual analysis, lies in the potentiality of bridging the gaps between the past, as signified in “history,” and the signification of that text in the present; “between documentary and fictional modes of representing history; and between individual and collective experiences of history.”<sup>67</sup> In such a way, the “ambiguous” representation of trauma persists in media as “embeddedness” across a range of visual modernism's representational practices.<sup>68</sup>

As this project progresses, there is a clear link between trauma as a personal experience (in tandem with its impact on personal identity) and trauma as a shared historical phenomenon (that also impacts national identity). This is a simplistic way of thinking about both trauma and identity, particularly since the Rwanda genocide and the country's national identity are hardly fixed or distinct. Just as the genocide was the culmination of a number of variegated processes

(such as taxation, class disparity, colonialism, etc.), identity in Rwanda is built upon a wide range of factors including trauma (along with cultural and religious background, political framing, education, etc.). This is why a more integrative, cultural approach to trauma is so useful: it recognizes the numerous layers of trauma and identity, without suggesting the predominance of one in particular. Additionally, the systematic sacralization of trauma has created a situation in which personal identity (based in being a victim, perpetrator, etc.) is entangled in complex political machinations that this project must, and will, address.

### Media and Nation

Given the historical and geographical specificity of this endeavor, contextualizing contemporary Rwandan media and culture is particularly important. The struggle is that the bulk of research on media in Rwanda limits itself to the pre- and para-genocide period (up until 1994-1995). While this time lies just before the primary historical thrust of this analysis, understanding this media history is crucial to any analysis of the contemporary period, because it influences production, consumption, and discursive practice in Rwanda. For example, Allan Thompson's edited collection *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*<sup>69</sup> offers the most diverse interpretation of the role of media leading up to the 1994 Rwanda genocide. By approaching the subject from a variety of historical (ranging from early colonial newspapers to hate radio in the 1990s) and methodological perspectives (including chapters from human rights workers, communication theorists, and historians, among others), this collection more effectively engages with the numerous roles of media in the build up and actuation of genocide, but also in pre-genocidal Rwandan culture.

Where this text struggles, though, is that it falls into the same traps faced by the many Africanists and media theorists that have attempted to deal with media and the genocide,

particularly in its arguing for the centrality of radio in genocidal message making. Perhaps the larger issue facing media histories of Rwanda is that of their overemphasizing individual media forms and outlets, without discussing the interrelationships between them (a point that I hope to address). Keeping this limitation in mind, Thompson's compilation is an important starting point for thinking about contemporary Rwandan media, if only because it sets the table for the various social and political conditions that inform contemporary media space.

While the historical causations of genocide are important to understanding how contemporary Rwandan has navigated the complex interplay between personal and national identity, this study is particularly interested in looking at how nationalist discourse embeds itself in the fabric of the contemporary Rwandan mediascape. As a result, media regulation (and, as a parallel, educational reform) and popular response to it,<sup>70</sup> offer key insights into this particular phenomenon and explicate the importance of censorship in the early post-genocide period, as well as the discursive impact of censorship. Similar to the Thompson's compilation, these histories focus on one particular media (newspapers), and ignore the larger interrelationships between media.

Utilizing a wide range of theoretical frameworks within media studies, then, offers an excellent opportunity to parse out the various disciplinary approaches that could help link these various media. Jay Bolter and David Grusin's work on the interrelationship between media,<sup>71</sup> and Jennifer Holt and Alisa Perren's collection *Media Industries: History, Theory, and Method*,<sup>72</sup> are relevant because they allowed for the theorization and conceptualization of media industries as a range of texts and institutions (an interdisciplinary approach that is quite welcome). Additionally, research on cultural proximity and media dumping (such as Colin Hoskins, et al. 2004<sup>73</sup>), represents another point of entry into thinking about Rwandan media, particularly in an

international context.

Given the country's small size, its aspirations to be the media hub of central Africa, as well as the varied nature of production and consumption paradigms within the country (seen best in the comparison between radio, which is ubiquitous, and film which has next to no domestic audience), composing a media geography is important to my project in terms of analyzing the relationship between discourse and reconciliation. The theoretical framework of media geography deployed here views the different flows of funding, labor, and ideology as interrelated, but distinct, spatial arrangements that offer insight into the financing, creation and dissemination of media information. Though a comprehensive micro approach to mapping Rwandan media (between the home, school, work, and public space) would provide intriguing insights into how consumers use media, more detailed and wide-ranging data would be necessary. As a result, this project uses media geography as a framework for interpreting spatial relationships between industrial, political, and regulatory entities. This is particularly useful in the Central African context where geographical borders can be quite different from the borders and outposts of media (such as with Radio, which reaches well beyond the nations borders).

The goal of this particular use of media geography is to isolate how the drastic shift in acceptable public discourse, between “Hutu power” hate speech and the current “post-ethnic” climate, has operated to deploy reconciliation as a tool of social and political stability. In many cases, the centralization of spatial and financial media power in Kigali has led to a centripetal ideological configuration. Centralized control of media funding, the means of production, and (in some cases) producers themselves, has yielded a great deal of control of content over to the government, and its specific interpretation of Rwandan identity. In such a way, discussions of spatial constellations of finance and labor are also ideological, in the sense that they relate to the

deployment of political influence (even across more spatially dispersed media). The political deployment of trauma, as outlined in this project, makes such spatial organizations all the more pertinent to unpacking trauma and reconciliation in the Rwandan context, made all the more relevant when we understand reconciliation as a tool of social, political, and interpersonal stabilization.<sup>74</sup>

As this study is particularly interested in the flow of media capital and the agglomerative nature of media industries, formulated by Michael Curtin<sup>75</sup> (with media workers) and David Morley<sup>76</sup> (in thinking of its impact on identity), the question that emerges would be, what does any of this have to do with reconciliatory discourse? The answer is complex, but remains tethered to the larger political economy and regulatory impulses within Rwanda during the post-genocide period. What this mapping methodology offers is a means by which to visualize the agglomerative tendencies of media industries, but also how Kigali operates as a central national media hub (as a “media capitol”<sup>77</sup>).

Finally, in thinking through the issues of discourse within media industries, I will also look at linguistic and consumptive paradigms as they relate to the particular cultural contexts of Rwanda. Nick Couldry's work<sup>78</sup> offers useful insight into the processes of repetition and ritual that play a role in media consumption, which is relevant in the case of Rwanda in terms of both the relationship between audiences and media products, but also as a gateway into the ritualism of many messages themselves (such as the mantra's of “we are all Rwandans” and “forgive, but don't forget”). There is a danger in discussing Africa and “ritual,” in that it tends toward an exoticizing and “othering” process. The importance of ritual, as conveyed by Couldry, is as a universal phenomenon that plays into innate desires to systematize and normalize (or make exceptional) daily activities. Given the centrality of the mantras of reconciliation, linguistics

must also play an important role in this process. Debra Spitulnik's work on Zambian radio<sup>79</sup> is especially significant in understanding this phenomena, and is also useful in thinking about the decontextualization, recontextualization, and repurposing of phrases and terminology, while taking into account the particular importance (and characteristics) of radio in southern/central Africa, particularly in articulating a larger theory about reconciliatory discourse (i.e. how the contemporary the contemporary mediascape has recontextualized and repurposed it). Zambia is not Rwanda and, though near one another in central Africa, it is important to take these differences into account.

The primary reason for such specificity is that this dissertation is seeking to engage with the particularities of the Rwandan nationalist project. There is no place better to begin in thinking about nationalism and media than with Benedict Anderson's theorization of the constructed nature of the nation as "imagined communities."<sup>80</sup> Though Anderson is charting the development of nation in relation to industrialization, a great deal of his argument revolves around the mobilizing power of print-capitalism.<sup>81</sup> Though there are many critique's of Andersons theory,<sup>82</sup> its value to this particular study lies in its conceptualization of the nation state as being reliant upon mass communication constructing the imagined community. Historian and Social Anthropologist Ernest Gellner's work further emphasizes the fundamental importance of the transition from agrarian to industrial society as a catalyst for the nation.<sup>83</sup> To a greater degree than Anderson, Gellner enunciates the necessity of industrialization, stating that "the age of transition to industrialism was bound [...] also to be an age of nationalism, a period of turbulent readjustment, in which either political boundaries, or cultural ones, or both, were being modified, so as to satisfy the new nationalist imperative which now, for the first time, was making itself felt."<sup>84</sup> These affinitive perspectives hardly represent the wealth of literature on the



emergence of the nation.

As Elisée Rutagambwa suggests, in attempting to understand the development of the new Rwandan state and its imperative for reconciliation, the central role of the Church in this process (as well as the complicity of parishioners and priests during the genocide), makes forgiveness and the “imagined community” much more complex.<sup>85</sup> More abstract approaches to nationalism, transnationalism, and globalization have problematized classical perspectives of the nation state, even to suggest its decay, decline, and obsolescence. According to Masao Miyoshi, rather than being the explicit result of industrialization, “the gradual ascendancy of the nation-state around 1800 in the West was a function of colonialism.”<sup>86</sup> Such a position inverts the centripetal model of nation as a centralizing process of cultural homogenization. More important to the discussion at hand, such an idea gives credence to the relative importance of colonialism to the project of nationalism.

Due to the particular geographic and historical scope of this project, there are a number important texts and frameworks that this dissertation will not be engaging with. While the vast majority of Rwanda specific media texts were selected for inclusion, Roméo Dallaire’s recollection of media and the genocide<sup>87</sup> and the numerous writings that engaged more with western perspectives on this topic<sup>88</sup> were omitted. Although the objections to Anderson’s work by Anthony Marx<sup>89</sup> and Rogers Brubaker<sup>90</sup> are valid, they do not negate the relevance of particular elements of “imagined communities” to this project, thus they were not selected for inclusion.

## **Framework and Methodology**

My hypothesis is that there actually is a particular discursive trend within Rwandan media that reinforces a post-ethnic notion of Rwandan identity. The goals of this project, then,

are multiple. First, this dissertation seeks to define the particular characteristics of “state endorsed discourse.” Though nationalist ideology appears across numerous media in a wide range of international contexts, this project seeks to identify the particular terms that are specific to Rwandan nationalism, their contextual usage within Rwandan media, as well as a critical analysis of their deployment. For instance, the usage of the phrase “we are all Rwandans,” while a positive unificatory concept, raises many questions about how Rwandan nationalism reinforces a problematic “post-ethnic” notion of identity. While it is an encouraging step to move beyond the divisionary and violent forms of ethnic identity that were part and parcel of the 1994 genocide, what are the larger impacts of effacing ethnicity? If the latent practice of linking ethnic identity to responsibility for the genocide (the perpetrator/victim dynamic) persists in Rwanda’s cultural consciousness, then are all Rwandans actually as equal as the mantra suggests?

Second, once we identify the particular elements of state endorsed discourse, it is necessary to understand how and why they operate to reinforce contemporary Rwandan nationalism. One way of thinking about this issue is to plot the trajectory of “Hutu power” discourse that dominated Rwandan media in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and then compare and contrast it with contemporary state endorsed discourse. While this process serves the purpose of isolating the discursive similarities between “Hutu power” and post-ethnic nationalism, this comparison is only part of the story. Key industrial differences between these two periods (particularly in terms of regulatory practice), as well as the historical role of media in the project of nationalism, are imperative as well. For example, while the content of print journalism in Rwanda has shifted since the early 1990s, we must understand its general role in fomenting nationalism in relation to the medium’s general diminution during the Rwandan

Revolution (in favor of radio). Also, though literacy rates in Rwanda are comparatively low, the traditional oral dissemination of print media has meant that local and national newspapers remain important outlets for nationalist ideology.

Third, this project needs to explicate the particular historical links between media forms in Rwanda to plot how varied regulatory conditions are yielding similar results. For example, why would nationalist discourse appear in both the television (heavily regulated, and state-run) and film (unregulated for the most part) industries? This is due to the larger limitations of free speech and self-censorship that exist across both industries, and is further enunciated by exploring the particular market dynamics that govern production, distribution, and exhibition. These relationships become even more relevant when you take into account the centralized spatial characteristics of the Rwandan media environment.

Fourth, to understand the mechanisms that reinforce state sponsored discourse, this project needs to identify the particular legal and regulatory conditions that have protected and promoted it. To this end, media regulatory law and constitutional speech law should be placed in relation to one another so as to gauge the direct influence of the state on personal and public discourse. For instance, though media regulation has loosened over the last decade, there is little evidence to suggest that such changes have resulted in political diversity. In fact, the particular elements of nationalist discourse identified by this study have become all the more solidified, even among privately funded producers. Constitutional speech laws seem to be a major factor in framing acceptable public discourse along the lines of state sponsored ideology. Thus, regulatory law is unnecessary in the face of social and cultural pressures to conform to speech laws.

One should not view this particular project as seeking to replace the limited existent literature in the field. Nor is it intended to be a comprehensive study touching on all aspects of

the Rwandan mediascape. Instead, the desire here is to promote further inquiry so as to open up a more diverse dialogue about Rwandan media, but also of media studies as a whole. The great advantage of researching media in Rwanda is that it is a somewhat small and insular marketplace, even as it faces the importation of international media content. As a result, there is a great opportunity to build off of the general lines of inquiry raised in the following pages.

Key points of departure for this study lie in the differentiation of “state sponsored” and “acceptable public” discourse, as well as the potential impact of the effacement of ethnic identity. The implementation of state sponsored discourse has served to frame, but not dictate, acceptable public discourse. As a result, there remains some degree of maneuverability for voices of dissent, but this has been limited by speech laws. In critiquing the effacement of ethnic identity, this project seeks to underline a few particular points. For one, this process of erasure is paradoxical, because it relies upon a notion of national identity that erodes structures of ethnic identity, but that relies on a victim/perpetrator (Tutsi/Hutu) paradigm that is inherently ethnic. Additionally, while the extent of public reconciliation in Rwanda is incredible, it is important not to forget that public discourse is likely quite different than what is said behind closed doors. While this latter point is conjectural, and difficult to quantify, the limited examples of resistance within Rwanda’s domestic media seem to be an indicator of its accuracy. Such a point is further reinforced by the overt antagonism of Rwanda’s exilic media, alongside evidence that such ideology does have an audience within the country.<sup>91</sup>

There are a number of ways that this particular study expands existent literature on the subject. For one, the utilization of quantitative analysis in this project helps to both contextualize much of the available literature (particularly in affirming previous notions about Rwandan media), as well as to open new lines of inquiry. Though work in the area of cinema and media

studies has historically relied upon qualitative methods of analysis, this project seeks to reinforce limited qualitative interpretation and argumentation through the compiling and analysis of data sets (culled from available audience surveys, collected discourse data, census materials, etc.). The hope here is that such an approach will provide a more rounded exploration of the thesis, as well as to provide a more objective approach to the topic. By bringing quantitative analysis into cinema and media studies, the hope is to supplement and support (not replace) the important role of qualitative work in the field. The convergence between objective and subjective interpretations of media texts can only enrich and diversify inquiry.

Additionally, as this project is both multi-disciplinary and inter-media, it is able to take a macro industrial and historical approach to the subject that simply does not exist elsewhere. An advantage of this approach is that, while some disciplinary perspectives are quite useful in particular contexts, they are much less so in others. For instance, while the discussion of the socio-cultural importance of religion is quite effective in looking at print media, particularly the Catholic organ *Kinyamateka*, it is much less useful in discussing Rwandan television. This is because the limited reach of television into rural communities, in addition to the historical affinity between the public consumption of print media, characterized by oral transmission, and that of the pulpit.

Another important addition is the augmentation of current literature on industrial geography to both conceptualize a centripetal model of media production/distribution, and to articulate the importance of the spatial arrangement of ideological affinity. As a seeming extension of Benedict Anderson's "imagined communities," the model of modern/postmodern geography utilized here argues that the social organization of spatial arrangements needs to inform our understanding of human existence. As a result, human geography is both expressive

of, and defined by, the process of being in the world. Spatial power dynamics, while subordinated and removed from view by modern social theory,<sup>92</sup> remain tethered to a process which “hides” their political and ideological import within what appears, at face value, to be an “innocent” spatiality of social life (a point that has often been the focus of Foucault's writings). For Rwanda, the latent pressures placed on media producers to conform to particular ways of thinking in order to avoid government intervention (and to also to make their projects more viable for state funding, as there is a general absence of alternatives) is but one example of this.

Finally, though it is a considerable challenge in the face of available literature and evidence, this project has tried to walk a line of critical objectivity in regards to the Rwandan state. For the most part, available literature on issues of regulation, ideology, and governance in Rwanda has taken overt (largely critical) stances on the Kagame administration. This project is much more interested in analyzing the “message,” as opposed to critiquing the “sender.” While President Kagame and his administration are important in this discussion, the goal of their inclusion is to offer an objective analysis. For example, though there is a great deal of evidence of the alleged interference of the government in curtailing freedoms of the press, the potential reasons for this stance by the government are also explored. Complete objectivity is impossible, but it was a consideration.

The primary influences on this project are numerous, but must begin with Anderson's *Imagined Communities*. There are limitations to the broadness of his approach, but Anderson's articulation of the relationship between mass media and the construction of national identity was fundamental to the philosophical framework of this project. That is not to say that the argument of this project is for the preeminence of media in the social construction of genocide, rather that media remains important for its dissemination and maintenance. Where Anderson's approach

was too broad, Allan Thompson's collection *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide* was important in offering geographically and culturally specific information that rounded out my own personal positions (based on my time in Rwanda). More to the point, it serves as an exemplar for the wide range of political positions that current scholarship on the topic has taken. Foremost among these chapters was Lars Waldorf's "Censorship and Propaganda in Post-Genocide Rwanda," which offers a powerful condemnation of the RPF government in tandem with a concise history of government/media intervention. This project is in debt to Waldorf's work, if only because the veracity of his position necessitated a more critical engagement with the selection and analysis of included literature.

As a concise history of the genocide, this project is also far better thanks to Alison des Forges' *Leave None to Tell the Story*. While the concern of her project was much more on issues of intervention, human rights, and aid work, des Forges articulated a history that is much more geographically focused, even differentiating the character of the genocide at the local level. Though this history is less directed toward understanding contemporary Rwanda than other texts (such as Johan Pottier's *Reimagining Rwanda*), the emphasis on locality and regionalism was invaluable.

The final influential text, and a fitting place to begin thinking about project methodology, is the *Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009*. Produced by Incisive Research, this particular survey represents the most comprehensive compilation of data on media consumption in Rwanda, but it also underscores the fundamental problem that this project has faced. While it is necessary to take scholar and journalist bias into account (as in the case of Waldorf), it is also important to be critical of how texts interpret and select data for inclusion. The survey experienced serious backlash from private media producers and distributors because it indicated the supremacy of

state-run media. Whether such skepticism is valid or not, the lack of alternative data means that a critical eye was necessary in utilizing this particular source (a stance that characterizes a great deal of the source selection for this dissertation).

Each chapter of this project offers insight into a particular case study, with the intention of explicating larger impulses within Rwandan media, and they each include five major components: a media history, a discussion of a key question or theme, an analysis of the contemporary conditions of the particular media, a representative case study, and a short “Connections” section explaining the links between the current and upcoming chapter. While each chapter is quite different in terms of which literature, disciplines, and methodology they utilize, they follow a similar through line that builds upon the chapters that have come before.

Chapter 1 focuses on the burgeoning importance of radio to state influence, beginning with the Rwandan Revolution, continuing during the rise of RPF’s Radio Muhabura and “Hutu power” Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) in the early 1990s, and ending with contemporary state radio. This particular historical trajectory feeds into a discussion of media responsibility for fomenting ethnic hatred, as well as aiding in the logistics of genocide, in order to evaluate the actual real world impact of radio on the conflict.<sup>93</sup> As the discussion moves into the contemporary period, it transitions to link para- (or “during”) and post-genocide radio as a critique of the assumption of a “rift” in discursive practice between these periods. Though there was a pivot in discourse between ethnic division and reconciliation, this chapter seeks to conceptualize of expressions of trauma in Rwandan media alongside reconciliatory mantra’s as central to state endorsed discourse. To this end, the case study offers a comparative discursive analysis of Radiyo Rwanda and RTLM in order to offer a statistical correlation for the similarities that have thus far been only theorized.



Moving into Chapter 2, this study investigates the historical and social importance of print media in terms of its indelible link to key political and cultural institutions (particularly the Catholic Church). By linking the Church with the development of print culture, as well as literacy (since acceptance into the religious community required the ability to read), this chapter looks at how literacy became a tool for the colonial state in maintaining power. Even further, the continued success of the Catholic publication *Kinyamateka* (even as the Church currently faces a considerable challenge from Islam and Protestant Christianity) represents an important paradox. This larger history is then related to the importance of trauma narrativity to contemporary print media, particularly in its role consolidating Rwandan identity (building upon the same issues addressed in Chapter 1). Compared to contemporary radio, which is state run, the regulatory entities that oversee print media are somewhat more complex, necessitating a deeper analysis of how the state operates to control publishers and journalists. By plotting the trajectory of change in media regulatory and constitutional speech laws, this chapter seeks to isolate the seeming contradiction of increased censorship in Rwanda, even as the government seems to be deregulating print journalism. The case study, a discursive comparison of three contemporary news publications (*The New Times*, *The Rwanda Focus*, and *Umuwugizi*), seeks to underscore the relevance of self-censorship to understanding how contemporary speech laws have made media regulation obsolete.

This particular point is relevant to the topic of Chapter 3: Rwandan film and television. Much like radio, Rwanda T.V. is predominantly state-run, but the film industry is almost completely unregulated. Unlike their predecessor's, film and television have faced more barriers in terms of user access, infrastructure, and acquiring a critical mass in media market share. Though these issues have limited cinema's user base, the focus of Rwandan film has been on

producing narratives of genocide and reconciliation. As a result, this chapter looks at the potential role that media can have in the process of reconciliation (as well as its limits). While film and television reflect the same reconciliatory and state endorsed discourse as previous media discussed, the particular exceptionality of film as semi-unregulated media makes its discursive similarity all the more conspicuous. As a result, this project expends a considerable amount of energy analyzing how transnational production models and limited private funding have created a marketplace that pushes filmmakers toward producing politically benign didactic films. The case study for this chapter compares RTV and the “first wave” of Rwanda Cinema Center (RCC) films to identify their discursive similarities to other media discussed thus far, and to dig deeper into the larger complications posed by reconciliatory discourse.

The concluding chapter attempts to pull many of the conclusions from the previous chapters together and discuss them in relation to the Internet and regulation. While the progress made toward reconciliation in Rwanda is impressive, the emergence of the Internet and social media, alongside the mass adoption of mobile phones, has destabilized state control over public discourse. This has been particularly evidenced by the recent government push in Rwanda to surveil emails and phone calls. Much of the government concern revolves around the fact that the new “anonymous” public space of the Internet has removed some of the legal restrictions to acceptable public discourse. To bring together all the media discussed thus far, the conclusion analyzes the geographical organization of Rwanda’s media industries to discuss how centrifugal and centripetal production, distribution, and ideological patterns operate to link and differentiate media. The goal here is to offer a macro view into how the seeming insularity of the Rwandan mediascape has operated to aid in the reinforcement of nationalist discourse (a position that is somewhat under attack with increasing adoption of the Internet, ICTs, and pay television).

The structure and content of this dissertation will answer the invariable question of *why* we need to view these media in relation to one another. In truth, we can not understand the larger issues that dominate media regulation, production, and consumption in Rwanda without first recognizing the interdependence of these different spheres. The historical and political shifts that took place during the late 1800s (colonialism), 1950s (Rwandan Revolution), 1990s (genocide), and in the contemporary era, have impacted more than governance and national identity. These periods are also representative of key shifts in media history, with the introduction of print media alongside colonialism, the dominance of radio during the revolution, the emergence of television and film out of the ashes of the genocide, and the more current issues posed by the Internet and mobile technologies.

The rather ambitious scope of this project necessitates the use of a wide range of texts and evidence. While the literature review is a representative sample of much of the secondary texts deployed in this endeavor, the dissertation also relies on a number of legal, regulatory, and constitutional documents, including the constitution itself, its amendments, the media laws (n° 18/2002, Official Gazette n° 10, and the Media Law of 12.08.09), as well as reports from the Rwanda Governance Advisory Council. Additionally, this project uses numerous news articles as evidence of discursive trends from a wide range of publications including the *BBC*, *The New Times*, *The Rwanda Focus*, *Reuters*, *CNN*, *The New York Times*, and *The Guardian*, among others. Other key sources include census documents, audience analysis surveys, reports published by human rights and media research organizations (including the Committee to Protect Journalists, the Montreal Archive for Genocide Studies, Freedom House, and Reporters Without Borders), as well as primary media sources. This latter category includes numerous audio files and transcripts from RTLM and Radiyo Rwanda programs, several *The New Times*, *The Rwanda*

*Focus*, and *Umuvugizi* articles broken down for statistical analysis, a handful of video files, including interviews and English language news broadcasts, as well as several films (which appear in the “Audio Visual Materials”).

### **A Brief “Pre-History”**

Film, Television, Radio, print media, and more recently the internet, have all played important, though varied, roles in post-genocidal identity building. Articulating a larger theory on the mass-mediated production of post-traumatic reconciliatory discourse across a range of media (a worthy project to be sure) would require more space than is available here. At a macro level, reconciliatory discourse is resultant of dynamic socio-cultural conditions, but it is also dependent on pre- and para-traumatic history. This is founded on media consumption patterns, political climate (as either an indicator of ideological congruence with, or resistance against the status quo), as well as overarching institutional dynamics (the government, the Church, community organizations, etc.). What, then, is the character of this process? Is the dissemination/influence of post-traumatic reconciliatory systems unidirectional, cyclical, omnidirectional, or some other dynamic procedure?

The emergence of post-genocidal cultural production in Rwanda over the last two decades has resulted in a different political economy from those in Europe and the United States during the same time. These media industries, though, do not operate within a sociopolitical bubble. Allegations within the international community of government corruption and oppression of the media, and requisite calls for political and media reform, have left a mark on the Rwandan mediascape. Censorship, in its various forms, is nothing unique in any media context. But the extensive crackdown on media outlets by the Kagame Administration following the 1994 genocide, under the auspices of eradicating (or at least limiting) hate speech, has had

several notable side effects. Controlled media deregulation over the last several years is but one example of the fallout from this process, though its effectiveness remains uncertain. Such an overt relationship between legislation and cultural production has resulted both in a more “westernized” media discourse (seen in media “dumping” of American and European satellite broadcasts, in addition to explicit industrial and cultural partnering with foreign news agencies and Hollywood) as well as a subconscious ideological restraint in media production.

A great deal of our understanding of post-genocidal media production ties into trends in media consumption and the “pre-history” of the various production industries in Rwanda. The importance of the shift towards a more open media space has been particularly important in altering the “ritualized” practices of media consumption in Rwanda. At the risk of reducing dynamic and complex consumptive practices to simple compartmentalized spheres of activity, it seems useful to view Rwandan cultural production and ritualized consumption, that predate the current models in place, as being representative of the pre-colonial period. Though the specifics of cultural consumption during the pre-colonial period remain somewhat vague, many of the practices developed during this time have continued on in ritualized forms in the intervening years. From the late 1700s to the 1890s (when the Brussels Conference divvied up Rwanda and the Great Lakes region<sup>94</sup>), cultural practice began consolidating around what Jan Vansina refers to as a “cyclical” cataloguing of history<sup>95</sup> (through the naming lists, *Ubucurabwenge*, rituals, *Ubwiru*, and poetry, *Ibisigo*), a collection of royal myths (*Ibitekerezo*),<sup>96</sup> and an extensive and diverse popular (non-regulated) literature. Tribal leaders felt that history represented a continuous loop, in which events that had played out decades, even centuries before, were identical to those they faced in their daily lives. By the late 1700s, the interpretation of this circular history became a tool in prognosticating a given regime's future and, perhaps more

important in terms of tribal geopolitical ambitions, it “became the ultimate legitimation.”<sup>97</sup>

Within the court, “poets and performers of ballads on the zyther”<sup>98</sup> became significant participants both as entertainers, but also as heralds of a grand history that was perpetually in a state of repetition. To this end, court poets and historians catalogued and developed systems of cyclical naming to identify (and in some cases create) grand tribal lineages.<sup>99</sup> This process not only concretized and legitimized tribal power, but also increased the influence of dynastic poets, historians, and ritualists, and resulted in the creation of the court posts of official historian and official poet.<sup>100</sup>

This process served to define history as media (in that it operated to communicate a narrative produced as part of dynastic cultural production on a large scale); one whose political economy was so interwoven in the fabric of state affairs that its primary dissemination was within the court itself. That is not to say that folk histories and poetry were not formulated and circulated in the countryside (or privately funded through systems of patronage), but this process operated to consolidate the past with the future, as well as the social with the political. Poets and historians even became celebrities, with “modest social position,” receiving lavish gifts for their work,<sup>101</sup> and even after the end of the pre-colonial dynastic period their social importance persisted. The creation and circulation of court literature became ritualized. As part of daily court life, these court histories represent what Couldry refers to as a “habitual action,”<sup>102</sup> one codified and regimented by the structures of the court itself. These histories and popular legends had a reach far greater than the court, spilling over into popular discourse regarding the state and hierarchy of Rwandan tribal society. A key example of this phenomenon is dynastic poetry dealing with the role of the king. Poems characterized the King as a figure separate from the nobility, as an *imana* or God, and in so doing positioned him as transcendent of the imbrications

of court culture.<sup>103</sup> The complexities of court culture were also captured in these histories. For example, poets described the infighting between factions vying for power, and extreme tensions between the military and court ritualists, during the reign of Rujugira.<sup>104</sup>

Though the purpose of these records was to legitimize the authority of the King in the eyes of members of the court, and to compile these histories for later generations, they were also intended to reinforce the social and political hierarchy in place, by deifying the King and communicating the divisions within the court (which court society mimicked). More to the point, this court literature was not designed as factual recollections of the court community, instead “historic accuracy as well as the narrative continuum are sacrificed to the purpose of eulogizing, so that only some passages are narrative; epic epithets occur frequently.”<sup>105</sup> For whom were they intended then? The King and the courts, certainly, but what about the general public?

It would be a considerable oversight to ignore the importance that popular culture played in constructing Rwanda's dynastic ideology. Court literature would have been much more limited in reach, as a whole, than the unregulated “popular” texts distributed in the countryside, but it seems unlikely that the political implications of the events of the court would have no impact on the content of popular texts. Traditional forms of folk literature, such as hunting (*Imyasiro*) and pastoral (*Amazina y'inka*) poetry, as well as proverbs (*Ibisakuzo*), would have been politically benign. Family histories (*Amateka y'Imiryango*) and army hymns (*Indirimbo z'Ingabo*),<sup>106</sup> even though they were produced outside of the court's purview, would have taken on a distinct posture, either reinforcing or subverting state ideology. Though the history of distribution and consumption of these early forms of cultural production (court poetry and history in particular) remain ill defined, it is clear that these forms communicated information

that was central and active in the formulation of Rwandan cultural consciousness.

The reach of the Nyinginya Kingdom, emerging in the 1700s,<sup>107</sup> went beyond the borders of what we today refer to as Rwanda. After a series of border clashes, conflicts and allegiance switches, much of Burundi and portions of the surrounding area were incorporated into the Nyinginya Kingdom by the mid-1850s.<sup>108</sup> The geographic boundaries later imposed on the countries of the Great Lakes region during the early colonial period ignored the cultural and ethnic similarities that exist between many of the countries. For instance, the Tutsi ethnic group (a subsection of the Banyarwanda and the Barundi), rather than being an isolated tribal minority group within the general geographical area of Rwanda, is actually spread between a number of countries in the region, including Burundi, Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and Tanzania.<sup>109</sup> Additionally, much of the region uses Bantu Swahili as their official language (including Burundi, Tanzania, and the DRC), or, as in Rwanda, speak a language that is part of a Bantu sub-group (such as Kinyarwanda). Into the 1950s, many of these cultural similarities were regionally underpinned by the fact that radio, as a borderless media and important means of communicating the revolutionary message, was (and is) the most frequently consumed media in the region. Radio's borderlessness is particularly important in the Great Lakes region because Rwanda's small size (the country is roughly the same size as Maryland) meant that radio programs being broadcast in Uganda reach parts of Rwanda and vice-versa.

Historically, the similarities between the societies and cultures of the Great Lakes region has meant that, politically speaking, the events in one country often have direct consequences for surrounding communities. Violence in Rwanda in 1994 resulted in tremendous numbers of refugees flowing into surrounding countries where poor camp conditions (along with other factors) led to numerous deaths. This was not, though, the only regional consequence of the



genocide. Many retreating Rwandan military ended up in Zaire where they formed their own government and military force in exile, the Rassemblement Démocratique pour le Rwanda (RDR) (which later became Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda – FDLR in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo). Since 1994, this pro-Hutu group has intermittently attacked Rwanda and play an important role in the continued conflict in the DRC,<sup>110</sup> which is one reason that the Rwandan government has been particularly engaged in fighting FDLR forces, as well as in aiding the M23 rebels and protecting their leaders from the DRC government.<sup>111</sup> The irony is that these circumstances mirror those of the emergence of the RPF: an exiled pro-Tutsi government/military in Uganda, which invaded and took over the government (although unlike the FDLR, which began as a government in exile, the RPF was a body formed by waves of refugees fleeing earlier ethnic purges and discrimination in Rwanda).

This particular example illuminates the cyclical nature of ethnic politics in the Great Lakes region, but it also underlines the importance of ethnic identity, even as it has been minimized by the contemporary Rwandan state. Although the focus of this project is on the particularities of Rwandan media and nationalism, it is necessary to recognize that these regional relationships (and the shared cultural history that binds the Great Lakes region) remain important. By the end of the twentieth century many of the consumptive practices that marked Rwanda during this period would have critical implications for the country's post-genocidal identity.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Judith Lewis Herman, "A Forgotten History," *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence* (New York, NY: BasicBooks, 1992), p.7.

<sup>2</sup> There are many examples of U.S. evening news anchors using this rationale for the genocide, but its use is worth discussing for a moment. This issue of the genocide being a "tribal" conflict is troubling, as

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its repeated occurrence in news coverage, and its continued persistence in contemporary discourse, is indicative of a common misunderstanding of the nature of the conflict itself. Indeed, though the status of the relationship between Hutu and Tutsi (and the oft overlooked Twa) groups has been shifting for several centuries now (between a fixed monarchical class system with Tutsi as Kings and Hutu as herdsman, a more fluid class designation based on the number of cattle owned, ethnic codification under colonial rule based on racial and physical characteristics, etc.) (see Stuart A. Notholt, *Fields of Fire: An Atlas of Ethnic Conflict*, Leicester, UK: Matador, 2008, p.227), it would be difficult to describe them as distinct tribes, in that they share a common language, economy, and culture (see Louise Mushikiwabo and Jack Kramer, *Rwanda Means the Universe*, 2006, p.252).

<sup>3</sup> Johan Pottier, *Re-Imagining Rwanda: Conflict, Survival and Disinformation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p.9.

<sup>4</sup> *NBC Nightly News* (4/15/94).

<sup>5</sup> David Patrick, "Yesterday's News? Western Press Coverage of the Rwandan Genocide," *Presentation of PhD Findings* (Accessed 4 November 2014), p.3.

<<http://www.genocidecentre.dept.shef.ac.uk/documents/Paper%20-%20David%20Patrick%202.pdf>>

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p.4.

<sup>7</sup> Barrie Gunter, Jackie Harrison and Maggie Vykes, *Violence on Television: Distribution, Form, Context, and Themes* (New York, NY: Taylor & Francis, 2003), p.172.

<sup>8</sup> Though P. Schlesinger learned of McLurg's Law as part of his research for *Putting Reality Together* in the mid-1970s (long enough ago to somewhat moderate its colonial and racial components), the selection of articles for omission of by editorial entities remains an issue of considerable concern. The dictates of the marketplace are such that issues of cultural proximity remain relevant in attempting to understand this phenomenon.

<sup>9</sup> Barrie Gunter, Jackie Harrison and Maggie Vykes, *Violence on Television*, p.172.

<sup>10</sup> John Eriksson, "The International Response to Conflict and Genocide: Lessons from the Rwanda Experience – Synthesis Report," *USAID.gov* (Copenhagen: Steering Committee Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda, 1996), p.23.

<sup>11</sup> Fiona Terry, *The Paradox of Humanitarian Action: Condemned to Repeat?* (London: Cornell University Press, 2002), p.155.

<sup>12</sup> Harvey M. Weinstein, Sarah Warshauer Freedman, and Holly Hughson, "School Voices: Challenges Facing Education Systems After Identity-Based Conflicts," *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice* (Vol.2:1, 2007), p.55.

<sup>13</sup> Based on U.S. Department of State Religious Freedom statistics.

<sup>14</sup> Elisée Rutagambwa, S.J. Ed. Paul Christopher Manuel, Lawrence C. Reardon, and Clyde Wilcox, "The Rwandan Church: The Challenge of Reconciliation," *The Catholic Church and the Nation-State: Comparative Perspective* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2006), p.174.

<sup>15</sup> Based on U.S. Department of State Religious Freedom statistics.

<sup>16</sup> Some examples of this would be Christopher C. Taylor's "Visions of the 'Oppressor' in Rwanda's Pre-Genocidal Media" in *Genocides By The Oppressed: Subaltern Genocide In Theory and Practice* and David Newbury's "Understanding Genocide" in the *African Studies Review*.

<sup>17</sup> Debra Spitulnik, "The Social Circulation of Media Discourse," *Linguistic Anthropology*.

<sup>18</sup> David Morley and Kevin Robins, *Spaces of Identity: Global Media, Electronic Landscapes, and Cultural Boundaries* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1995).

<sup>19</sup> Masao Miyoshi, "A Borderless World?: From Colonialism to Transnationalism and the Decline of the Nation State," *Critical Inquiry* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, Vol.19, No.4, Summer, 1993).

<sup>20</sup> Such as those outlined in Cathy Caruth's *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

<sup>21</sup> This project utilizes and outlines many data collection methods, based on the particularities of each case study, but all data tables and referenced discourse data appear in the *Media Discourse Data* spreadsheet.

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- <sup>22</sup> Alex J. Bellamy, *Massacres and Morality: Mass Atrocities in an Age of Civilian Immunity* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2012), p.18.
- <sup>23</sup> Peter Uvin, *Aiding Violence: The Development Enterprise in Rwanda* (West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press, 1998), 107.
- <sup>24</sup> Jill Salmon, "Education and its contribution to structural violence in Rwanda," *Education in Emergencies and Post-Conflict Situations: Problems, Responses, and Possibilities* (Web 2004, Accessed 10 June 2015), 79-86. <[http://www.tc.columbia.edu/sie/journal/Volume\\_1/Salmon.pdf](http://www.tc.columbia.edu/sie/journal/Volume_1/Salmon.pdf)>
- <sup>25</sup> Fiona Terry, *The Paradox of Humanitarian Action: Condemned to Repeat?* (London: Cornell University Press, 2002), p.17.
- <sup>26</sup> Fergal Keane, *Season of Blood* (London: Penguin Books, 1995).
- <sup>27</sup> Roméo Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda* (Boston, MA: Da Capo Press, 2004).
- <sup>28</sup> Allan Thompson, "The Father and Daughter We Let Down," *The Toronto Star* (Web. 11 April 2009, Accessed January 20). <[http://www.thestar.com/news/insight/2009/04/11/the\\_father\\_and\\_daughter\\_we\\_let\\_down.html](http://www.thestar.com/news/insight/2009/04/11/the_father_and_daughter_we_let_down.html)>
- <sup>29</sup> Dina Temple-Raston, *Justice on the Grass: Three Rwandan Journalists, Their Trial for War Crimes, and a Nation's Quest for Redemption* (New York, NY: Free Press, 2005), p.2.
- <sup>30</sup> Louise Mushikiwabo and Jack Kramer, *Rwanda Means the Universe: A Native's Memoir of Blood and Bloodlines*, New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2006, p.252).
- <sup>31</sup> Joseph Sebarenzi and Laura Mullane, *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (New York, NY: Atria Books, 2011).
- <sup>32</sup> Immaculée Ilibagiza and Steve Erwin, *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (New York, NY: Hay House, Inc., 2014).
- <sup>33</sup> Stephen Kinzer, *A Thousand Hills: Rwanda's Rebirth and the Man Who Dreamed It* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2008).
- <sup>34</sup> Alison Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda* (Human Rights Watch, 1999).
- <sup>35</sup> All three are are historians from Western Europe whose research interests are focused on central Africa.
- <sup>36</sup> Gérard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).
- <sup>37</sup> Gerard Prunier, *Africa's World War: Congo, the Rwandan Genocide, and the Making of a Continental Catastrophe* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009).
- <sup>38</sup> Gérard Prunier, "Rwanda: the Social, Political and Economic Situation," *Writenet – UK* (Web July 1997, Accessed 15 June 2015). <<http://www.unhcr.ch/refworld/country/writenet/wrirwa07.htm>>
- <sup>39</sup> Jan Vansina, *Antecedents to Modern Rwanda: The Nyinginya Kingdom* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004).
- <sup>40</sup> Jean-Pierre Chrétien, *L'Afrique des Grands Lacs: Deux mille ans d'histoire* (Paris: Flammarion, 2003).
- <sup>41</sup> Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), p.266.
- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p.270.
- <sup>43</sup> Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will be Killed With Our Families* (New York, NY: Picador Publishing, 2000).
- <sup>44</sup> Scott Straus, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p.x.
- <sup>46</sup> Laurence J. Kirmayer, Joseph P. Gone, and Joshua Moses, point out the problematic nature of assuming a universal response to historical trauma, particularly along transgenerational lines, in their article "Rethinking Historical Trauma" (*Transcultural Psychiatry* 2014, Vol.51:3, pp.299). The approach used to here attempts to engage with this critique by identifying the key

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differences in how individuals, social structures, and the government each deploy different trauma narratives to better define their relationship to the trauma event.

<sup>47</sup> Conny Mithander and John Sundholm, *Collective Traumas: memories of War and Conflict in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Europe* (P.I.E. Peter Lang: Brussels, Belgium, 2007), 119.

<sup>48</sup> This is particularly the case when approaching media producers who, often, are formulating approaches to (auto)biographically representing their experience, while also constructing a persona intended to coincide and resonate with this representation. Such a relationship between the representation and the “re-presenter” is difficult to unpack and would be much more suited to individual case studies and auteurist approaches that do not quite fit with the project at hand.

<sup>49</sup> J.C. Alexander, “Towards a Theory of Cultural Trauma,” *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004), pp.3-4.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p.7.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p.3.

<sup>52</sup> Joshua Hirsch, *Afterimage: Film, Trauma, and the Holocaust*, (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2005), p.8.

<sup>53</sup> Andrew Slade, Eds. Ann E. Kaplan and Ban Wang, “Hiroshima, mon amour, Trauma, and the Sublime,” *Trauma and Cinema: Cross-Cultural Explorations*, (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009), pp.170-171.

<sup>54</sup> Ann E. Kaplan and Ban Wang, “Introduction: From Traumatic Paralysis to the Force Field of Modernity,” *Trauma and Cinema: Cross-Cultural Explorations*, (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009), p.12.

<sup>55</sup> Sarah L. Lincoln, Eds. Ann E. Kaplan and Ban Wang, “This is my History: Trauma, Testimony, and Nation-Building in the ‘New’ South Africa,” *Trauma and Cinema: Cross-Cultural Explorations*, (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009), p.29.

<sup>56</sup> Joshua Hirsch, *Afterimage: Film, Trauma, and the Holocaust*, 2005.

<sup>57</sup> Allen Meek, *Trauma and Media: Theories, Histories, and Images* (New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2010), p.8.

<sup>58</sup> This includes Allen Meek’s suggestion that *through* media memory we “fantasize history in the form of trauma” (*Trauma and Media*, pp.10-11), Ann Kaplan and Ban Wang’s discussion about how culture is able to traumatize (*Trauma and Cinema*, p.12), and J.C. Alexander’s general theories on cultural trauma (*Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*).

<sup>59</sup> Allen Meek, *Trauma and Media*, p.147.

<sup>60</sup> Joshua Hirsch, “Trauma as Representation: A Meditation on Manet and Johns,” *Afterimage: Film, Trauma, and the Holocaust*, pp.4-5.

<sup>61</sup> Isabelle Wallace, Eds. Lisa Saltzman and Eric Rosenberg, *Trauma and Visuality in Modernity* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth Press, 2006), p.5.

<sup>62</sup> Ann E. Kaplan and Ban Wang, “Introduction,” *Trauma and Cinemas*, p.12.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p.5.

<sup>64</sup> Allen Meek, *Trauma and Media*, p.12.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p.8.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> Joshua Hirsch, *Afterimage: Film, Trauma, and the Holocaust*, p.9.

<sup>68</sup> Lisa Saltzman and Eric Rosenberg, “Introduction,” *Trauma and Visuality in Modernity* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth Press, 2006), p.x.

<sup>69</sup> Allan Thompson, Ed., *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide* (Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press, 2007).

<sup>70</sup> There are several pieces including Chi Mgbako’s “Rwanda: Media Censorship Will Breed Resentment” and *The Chronicles* “Rwanda’s Shifting Media Policy.”

<sup>71</sup> Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000).

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<sup>72</sup> Jennifer Holt and Alisa Perren, Ed., *Media Industries: History, Theory, and Method* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2009).

<sup>73</sup> Colin Hoskins, Stuart McFayden, and Adam Finn, *Media Economics: Applying Economics to New and Traditional Media* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2004), p.322.

<sup>74</sup> The deployment of reconciliation, just as with trauma, is both a communal and individual process (rather than as one or the other). Just as we understand structural and historical trauma as two separate perspectives, reconciliation is individual, communal, and a synthesis of both positions.

<sup>75</sup> Michael Ed. Jennifer Holt and Alisa Perren, "Thinking Globally," *Media Industries: History, Theory, and Method* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2009),

<sup>76</sup> David Morley, *Home Territories: Media, Mobility, and Identity* (London: Routledge, 2000).

<sup>77</sup> Michael Curtin, "Media Capital: Towards the Study of Spatial Flows," *International Journal of Cultural Studies* (6:201, 2003).

<sup>78</sup> Nick Couldry, *Media Rituals: A Critical Approach* (London: Routledge Press, 2003).

<sup>79</sup> Debra Spitulnik, "The Social Circulation of Media Discourse and Mediation of Communities," *Linguistic Anthropology: A Reader* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2001).

<sup>80</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p.55.

<sup>82</sup> This list includes, but is certainly not limited to, Anthony Marx and Rogers Brubaker. Marx's primary critique is that Anderson does not fully address the major negative ramifications of the creation of the nation, particularly the lack of inclusivity that often accompanies nationalism (See *Making Race and Nation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, p.4). Brubaker, on the other hand, bases his critique on the perceived sweeping generality of Anderson's tome, particularly since "the *same* nation is imagined in different ways at different times – indeed often at the same time, by different people" (See "In the Name of the Nation: Reflections on Nationalism and Patriotism," *Citizenship Studies*, 8:2, June 2004, p.122).

<sup>83</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Thought and Change* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964), p.11.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p.40.

<sup>85</sup> Elisée Rutagambwa, S.J., "The Rwandan Church," *The Catholic Church and the Nation-State: Comparative Perspective*, p.186.

<sup>86</sup> Masao Miyoshi, "A Borderless World," *Critical Inquiry*, p.731.

<sup>87</sup> Roméo Dallaire, Ed. Allan Thompson, "The Media Dichotomy," *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide* (London: Pluto Press, 2007).

<sup>88</sup> Beyond the limited literature mentioned in this dissertation, the vast majority of texts relating media and Rwanda are concerned with the role of the international community in allowing the events of 1994, as well as in terms of how the genocide was covered in western news outlets. Even within Allan Thompson's edited collection, *Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, this particular bifurcation is present. As part of this collection, Matt Doyle ("Reporting the Genocide"), Anne Chaon ("Who Failed in Rwanda, Journalists or the Media?"), Lindsay Hilsum ("Reporting Rwanda: the Media and the Aid Agencies"), and Tom Giles ("Media Failure over Rwanda's Genocide") are all excellent examples of this particular body of literature.

<sup>89</sup> Anthony Marx, *Making Race and Nation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998

<sup>90</sup> Rogers Brubaker, "In the Name of the Nation: Reflections on Nationalism and Patriotism," *Citizenship Studies*, 8:2, June 2004.

<sup>91</sup> Though the popularity of anti-Kagame websites outside of Rwanda is limited, the fact that the government has taken steps to surveil phone calls and e-mail seems indicative of increasing concerns regarding state security and the dangers of the digital domain (see Simon Kimunzi, "Inteko yemeje itegeko," *Kigali Today*).

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- <sup>92</sup> This particular point is extensively critiqued by Edward Soja, insofar as he is attempting to critique the removal of geography from the construction of history (See *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*).
- <sup>93</sup> This chapter serves as a response to the overvaluations of media's role in perpetuating genocide, in particular David Yanagizawa-Drott's *Propaganda and Conflict*, which goes so far as to quantify the death toll radio is responsible for.
- <sup>94</sup> Jean-Pierre Chrétien, *L'Afrique des Grands Lacs*, p.217.
- <sup>95</sup> Jan Vansina, *Antecedents to Modern Rwanda*, p.91.
- <sup>96</sup> Rose-Marie Mukarutabana, "The Oral Literature of Rwanda," *Gakondo* (Web. 30 November 2011, Accessed 3 August 2014). <<http://webspinners.com/Gakondo/index.php.en>>
- <sup>97</sup> Jan Vansina, *Antecedents to Modern Rwanda*, p.94.
- <sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p.89.
- <sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.94-95.
- <sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, p.94.
- <sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, p.87.
- <sup>102</sup> Nick Couldry, *Media Rituals*, p.22.
- <sup>103</sup> Jan Vansina, *Antecedents to Modern Rwanda*, pp.82-83.
- <sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, p.106.
- <sup>105</sup> Jan Knappert, *Epic Poetry in Swahili and Other African Languages* (Leiden, Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1983), p.26.
- <sup>106</sup> Rose-Marie Mukarutabana, "The Oral Literature of Rwanda," *Gakondo*.
- <sup>107</sup> Jan Vansina, *Antecedents to Modern Rwanda*, p.45.
- <sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p.157.
- <sup>109</sup> Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will be Killed With Our Families*, p.52.
- <sup>110</sup> "DR Congo Launches Strikes Against FDLR Hutu Rebels," *BBC.com* (Web 25 February 2015, Accessed 7 May 2015). <<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-31617135>>
- <sup>111</sup> "Rwanda 'Protecting M23 DR Congo Rebels,'" *BBC.com* (Web 5 June 2014, Accessed 7 May 2015). <<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-27714346>>

## Chapter 1: Radiyo Rwanda - State Influence, the Socio-Cultural Function of Radio, and the Genocidal “Rift”

“The political leaders, as well as all of us, have underestimated the force that RTLM represented ... that was a lethal error.”

- Father André Sibomana, Director of *Kinyamateka*<sup>1</sup>

“I hold radio to be the most modern and the most important instrument of mass influence that exists anywhere ... As the piano is to the pianist, so the transmitter is to you, the instrument that you play on as sovereign masters of public opinion.”

- Joseph Goebbels<sup>2</sup>

### **Genocide and Responsibility**

On the evening of April 6, 1994, the plane carrying Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana and Burundian president Cyprien Ntaryamira was on its final approach, returning from a regional summit in Tanzania. As the plane descended, the popular radio station Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) announced the landing of the plane, but then “suddenly and surprisingly, the broadcast stopped and classical music was played.”<sup>3</sup> A surface-to-air missile struck one of the plane’s wings and the craft burst into flames, eventually crashing down in the gardens of the Presidential Palace. Three crewmembers and nine passengers died, but the larger legacy of the assassination is that it served as a major catalyst for the genocide that would follow. Once RTLM’s broadcasts resumed, following the confusion of the plane crash, announcers began to call for the extermination of what they called *inyenzi*, or “cockroaches,” indicating that Tutsi were responsible for the assassination of the president.<sup>4</sup> In the months that followed, radio continued to play an integral role in the incitement and logistical organization of violence, often calling on pockets of governmental forces and *interhamwe* militia to root out the enemy, but it is dangerous to overstate the active function of radio in carrying out the genocide.

It is tempting to want to find a single cause for extreme cases of violence and death. This has particularly been the case within the international community, whose simultaneous mission

has been to hold accountable perpetrators of genocide, as well as to absolve themselves of their own responsibility for the events of 1994 (which only serves to conceal the larger factors that served to catalyze violence in Rwanda). Absolution, though, is rather difficult to come by in the case of genocide. The death of nearly 800,000<sup>5</sup> people - a quarter of a nation's population – at the hands of neighbors, friends, and leaders (in addition to civilian collateral damage and alleged revenge killings by RPF troops entering the country through Uganda), means hardly anyone can avoid complicity in the violence; even if only through inaction. This may be why stories of resistance, such as Paul Rusesabagina taking in over a thousand refugees at the Hôtel des Mille Collines (inspiring director Terry George's 2004 film *Hotel Rwanda*), strike such an emotional chord.

In truth, often even such outliers serve to prove the rule, as Rusesabagina allegedly profited from the hotel residents as “payment” for their stay, and many that could not pay died right outside the property's walled perimeter.<sup>6</sup> Responsibility for the genocide extends well beyond Rwanda and its neighboring countries. From the French government,<sup>7</sup> to the United States and the United Nations,<sup>8</sup> there is plenty of blame to go around for the massive inaction and intentional dragging of feet which allowed for, and even extended, the carnage that tore through the country. In a broader sense, an even greater number of people were complicit in this horrific act because many, due to distant cultural and geographic proximity, remained detached from one of the most horrific events in human history, taking place less than half a world away.

On June 23, 1994, Connie Chung completed a segment on the CBS Evening News discussing the role of French peacekeepers in Rwanda by reporting the results of a poll asking network viewers, first, whether the United States should send in ground troops and, second, whether the welfare of Rwandans was important to US interests. The results stated that 28% felt



that the US should intervene in Rwanda with ground forces (with 61% saying no), and 15% of respondents felt that intervention was “very important” to US interests (with 48% saying that is was “somewhat important” and 26% saying “not at all”).<sup>9</sup> At this point, the genocide had been raging for more than a month and a half, and hundreds of thousands were already victims of militia and government death squads. And yet, these numbers indicate neither a complete ignorance of the worldwide impact of what was happening in Rwanda (oft referred to in US broadcasts as “this tiny central African nation”), nor a completely unequivocal condemnation of it. Instead, Rwanda served as one more in a string of grisly and terrifying tragedies that marked the world during the last half of the twentieth century. Whether or not the daily onslaught of images of the Bosnian War, or the public awareness of the Holocaust brought up by the release of Steven Spielberg’s *Schindler’s List* only a year earlier, desensitized western audiences, general awareness of Rwanda in the United States and Europe was limited.

There is little doubt that individuals and organizations that actively perpetrated genocide, in particular the *interhamwe* youth militias, governmental forces, church leaders, and, allegedly, RPF soldiers,<sup>10</sup> should shoulder much of the blame for the events of 1994. But to ignore the larger fundamental conditions that allowed genocide to exist, and persist, does little other than to allow such circumstances to continue unabated. The Rwandan genocide was not born the moment that President Habyarimana’s plane was shot down. Nor did it spring to life nearly three and a half decades earlier when ethnic tensions boiled over between majority and minority groups in both Rwanda and Burundi as part of the Rwandan Revolution of 1959 (known as the “wind of destruction”).<sup>11</sup> Just as there is no single individual on which to heap the responsibility of the Rwanda genocide, there is no single moment that fomented its conditions.

And yet, the radio broadcast of President Habyarimana’s final descent remains as the

demarcation point between the pre- and para-genocide periods in Rwandan history. This is because it was after this precise moment that militias began setting up roadblocks and systematically killing Tutsi sympathizers and civilians. The importance of radio to these horrific proceedings goes much further than imploring its audience to commit genocide. Histories of hate speech and media complicity in violence have been more than adequately catalogued by the numerous researchers that have struggled to identify and enumerate the role and crimes of radio, most notably RTLM, in its support and actuation of the 1994 Rwanda genocide (an endeavor that I will not seek to reproduce here). While there is little doubt as to the important role of RTLM (and other media outlets) in the horrible violence that claimed as many as one million lives, it is problematic to suggest that radio “caused” the genocide. Beyond linking the role of radio in fomenting a climate of hatred to the actuation of violence, not to mention that many stations participated and aided *interhamwe* youth militias in the logistics of genocide, some efforts have attempted to quantify the death toll due to the implementation of radio. David Yanagizawa-Drott’s work on the role of propaganda during the genocide<sup>12</sup> outlines the particularities of media influence on populations, and suggests that nearly 10 percent of the violence perpetrated during the genocide was the direct result of radio.<sup>13</sup>

While Yanagizawa-Drott’s statistical analysis may be a bit of an inaccurate assessment of the role of radio in the actuation of the genocide, radio was, and remains to this day, the most accessible and accepted means of mass media. As a result, one must view radio as an integral part of the formulation of Rwanda’s socio-cultural makeup from the medium’s rise to prominence in the 1950s onward; particularly in the construction and maintenance of national identity. The central importance of radio, and the nature of its relationship to Rwandan identity has largely been studied as separate from the country’s larger multimedia history. As a result,

media theorists and historians have bypassed the tremendous importance of Catholicism and print media on the development and the political necessity of radio that led to both its ubiquity, but also its central role in the 1994 genocide. Given this difficult and horrific history, then, what is the relationship between the Rwandan government and radio? What about between radio and its audience? Have these conditions actually changed since the events of 1994?

The goal of this chapter is to answer these questions as a starting point for understanding the interrelationships of different media in contemporary Rwanda as they formulate national identity. By looking at the larger socio-cultural function of radio as a dissemination point for state endorsed acceptable public discourse, the hope is to begin to question the idea of the “genocidal rift” as effacing the continued suppression of free speech in Rwanda. By delving into (and comparing) the discursive strategies employed by Rwandan media, both during the genocide and today, we get a clearer idea of how discourse has changed, but also how the centrality of identity formation remains vital to the rhetoric “acceptable discourse” deploys.

## **A Radio History**

The introduction of Catholicism to Rwanda in the late 1800s by the “White Fathers,” a missionary society that remains in the country to this day as “The Missionaries of Africa,” appeared in tandem with attempts to increase literacy and to translate the bible into Kinyarwanda. Though Tutsi political power brokers had prominent roles in the early Rwandan Church, by the late 1940s a new wind was blowing. Political reforms led to an increase in power for Hutu members within the church. This transition was also mirrored in the larger Rwandan socio-economic landscape by the abolishment of the “*ubuhake*” taxation system (a feudal arrangement whereby Hutu peasants had to give the *mwami*, or king, over half of their crop<sup>14</sup>) by King Rudahigwa, which led to wealth and property redistribution. This massive social and

economic change, paired with Belgian sponsored elections, had the effect of transitioning a vast amount of political capital from the traditional Tutsi leadership to a burgeoning Hutu power base (buttressed, no doubt, by their overwhelming majority in terms of population). Another major effect of this political change was a drastic ramping up of the ethnic anxiety.

Tensions between Hutu and Tutsi political interests hardened in the wake of these reforms and by 1957 political parties formed along Hutu/Tutsi ethnic lines. The first, and arguably most important was Grégoire Kayibanda's Hutu centered Mouvement Social Muhutu (MSM) Party, which later merged with the Party of the Movement and Emancipation of Hutu (PARMEHUTU).<sup>15</sup> By the late 1950s, cracks began to appear in the Belgian colonial authority's support for the minority Tutsi government, just as the Church was aligning itself with the Hutu majority. The political conditions in Rwanda deteriorated to the point that in 1959, following a false report that Tutsi political supporters killed Dominique Mbonyumutwa (a PARMEHUTU activist and Hutu sub-chief), violence broke out.<sup>16</sup> Belgian authorities supported the Hutu factions, letting them “burn Tutsi houses without intervening,”<sup>17</sup> and by the end of the conflict Kayibanda's MSM-PARMEHUTU seized control and drove out Tutsi loyalists. This conflict later became known as the “1959 Social Revolution.” The result was a country politically divided along ethnic lines, whose minority Tutsi power base was now operating in exile (and would continue to do so for the next several decades, in various forms). Once Rwanda announced its independence on January 28, 1961 it elected a new legislative assembly to form the government (installed under Kayibanda and his ruling party in 1962).<sup>18</sup> In 1961, before Kayibanda became president, the assembly immediately created legal language imposing censorship of press, as well as the establishment of Radiyo Rwanda as a government controlled media outlet.<sup>19</sup>

The Catholic Church remained a particularly important component of Rwandan cultural and political identity throughout the period from 1959-1994, but the creation of Radiyo Rwanda altered their role in one crucial way. Where before the consolidation of political power within the Hutu elite class had emerged from their education within the parochial system, the appearance of radio (superficially speaking) represented a more efficient dissemination, and (limited) democratization, of this power. In actuality, it transferred and amplified the autocratic control of information from the Catholic Church to the “Hutu Power” base by appealing to a consumer group that was largely illiterate,<sup>20</sup> but that could now participate in the political dialogue (though now wholly defined in the terms and limits that the government itself was continuously creating). This transition served to consolidate governmental power over media, controlling both the dissemination of information and its content.

Though it would be difficult to argue that radio operated as a ritual medium with the same *reach* as the Church, the *depth* of its influence is difficult to deny. The mass adoption of radio technology following the introduction of state media more systematically altered the variegated relationships of consumption between the audience and media. Where Catholic newspapers, such as *Kinyamateka*, and the pulpit were able to reach a large audience (both literate and illiterate, lower class and elite), radio was able to reach a similar, if not a larger, group. It did so, though, with a temporal immediacy that neither newspapers nor the Church could offer. Where newspapers were dependent on their publishing and printing schedule, and the pulpit was able to reach its audience only once or twice a week for a few hours at a time, radio was almost constantly available. This is a utopian interpretation of what radio consumption was like during this period. In truth, early adoption was more limited than this proposed model would suggest, and audience interactivity and influence on the medium was

even less likely given the complete control of the state over station broadcasts. Even further, as Yanagizawa-Drott's analysis suggests, the extreme topographic variability of Rwanda, as the "Land of a Thousand Hills," certainly had an impact on the actual availability of Radio for those living outside of the major cities as "this variation in reception is practically random."<sup>21</sup>

The transition toward radio was particularly impactful on newspapers, which had previously enjoyed, if not some autonomy, a productive relationship with the colonial government. The move toward radio at this point in Rwandan history was emblematic of far more than just a technological transition. Instead, it ushered in new audiences that previously were unable to participate with agency in the production and consumption of media (due to high rates of illiteracy). This was not a binary opposition between different consumptive practices, rather, as Michael Curtin (channeling Benedict Anderson) points out, Radio "promoted a shared temporality among audiences" while the Newspaper "pioneered this transformation by directing readers to stories that the editors considered significant and by encouraging them to absorb these stories at a synchronous daily pace."<sup>22</sup> As a result, the consumptive practices of newspaper audiences were systematically augmented by the emergence of radio, even while the two worked in tandem.

The transition from a limited reach medium, such as the Catholic press, to radio also led to the emergence of the Rwandan "'radio has said' minded citizens; believing everything announced on radio as biblical truth."<sup>23</sup> Though this characterization of the media/audience relationship is problematic, the nationalization of radio did function, in part, to condition the media consumer to a specific discursive and contextual mode. This particular mode mimicked the previous hegemonic position of the Catholic Church (for familiarity's sake, as well as legitimization). As Tutsi were increasingly being politically marginalized by the Hutu state, their

relevance to the larger national discourse diminished to the point that internal conflict became centered on regional, rather than ethnic divisions.<sup>24</sup> Hutu in the north had become frustrated by the centralization of power in the capital, and a series of economic and social setbacks left the Kayibanda regime in a particularly compromised position.<sup>25</sup> In 1972, Juvenal Habyarimana, the Minister of Defense (who was, himself, from the north), led an overthrow of the Kayibanda's government, which resulted in the immediate dissolution of parliament, the blocking of the ruling party's participation in the government (implementing, instead, a single party system under the flag of the Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement – MRND), and the deaths of many of Habyarimana's political rivals.

The “biblical truth” of the radio that emerged during the 1960s and continued over the course of Kayibanda's rule was heightened and codified during Habyarimana's regime. Fundamental discourses of national identity became tied to the “history” constructed by the state run media. As argued by Darryl Li, Radiyo Rwanda “played a pivotal role in propagating each of these discourses (history, democracy, development) [...] the majority of those I spoke to learned much of their country's past through the radio.”<sup>26</sup> The Habyarimana political machine utilized the state run media, particularly Radiyo Rwanda, in order to consolidate their political base, one that by the late 1980s was already beginning to crumble.

The emergence of Radiyo Rwanda did not mean that it was the sole voice dispensing ideology in Rwanda, quite the contrary. Just as the Catholic newspaper *Kinyamateka* was one of several information outlets during the 1950s, Radiyo Rwanda faced direct resistance from the Tutsi government in exile, now known as the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). The creation of Radio Muhabura in 1991, broadcast into Rwanda from Uganda by the RPF, offers a particularly interesting argument for resistant media practice and the dissemination of subversive ideology.

Though the station had a sizeable broadcast range, reaching all but the southern portion of Rwanda, it suffered from limited listenership due to its focus on English language programming. Not to mention severe crackdowns on those caught listening to it by the Hutu regime, which included severe beatings.<sup>27</sup> English continues to be an important element of post-genocidal Rwandan media, and the fact that it was so central to Radio Muhabura's programming is particularly important in light of Curtin's argument that radio's spatial limitations (as “radio signals traveled 30 to 60 miles from any given transmitter”) served as an effective “bulwark against cultural invasion.”<sup>28</sup> Given the compact geographic arrangement of the nations of the Great Lakes region, radio was a tool *of* the RPFs “cultural invasion.”

By 1991, as Habyarimana was facing intense internal and international pressures to re-democratize Rwanda, the government introduced a new set of press laws, as well as a constitutional guarantee of media freedom.<sup>29</sup> The result was an unprecedented growth and diversity in media that, for instance, led to an increase from the four primary print publications at the time (*Imvaho*, *Kinyamateka*, *Kanguka* and *La R'leve*) to “more than 60 by the end of 1992.”<sup>30</sup> Such progress became largely symbolic (and in any case short lived) as diversification was undercut by the government in the interest of supporting those outlets more in line with their Hutu Power agenda, primarily through funding restrictions.<sup>31</sup>

By the late 1980s and early 1990s, the strict state control that had characterized Rwandan radio from its inception was loosened (particularly in relation to audience/media interactivity and user generated content) with the creation of RTLM in 1993. What RTLM offered to its listeners was something not so sinister as the hate media that it would later become. Instead, it began as a way for Rwandans to interact with media at a personal level, in a manner unlike anything they had experienced before. As the first “private” radio station of this period allowed to broadcast in



Rwanda, RTLM began by asking listeners to call the station, at first to request music and make dedications, but then later to comment on their neighbors or local events.<sup>32</sup> As a rather rudimentary form of user-generated content, radio could now operate as the most expansive and interactive social network Rwandan's had ever known. In essence, RTLM began by bringing what had been a nationalized discourse, the media, into the local environment, while also taking the local and converting it back into a national experience (as it was broadcast all across the country). The listeners were able to participate in a national discourse, to engage in a dialogue government run media previously controlled. More to the point, by calling in to the shows, RTLM allowed users to extend their reach both as consumptive forces, but also as media creators. Though radios were prevalent in Rwanda, particularly in the cities, it was becoming much more of a communal experience. As Dina Temple-Raston points out, RTLM “pulled citizens in like moths to a flame, until they congregated in small knots on street corners, with transistor sets clamped to their ears, arms fluttering like wings as they called for silence.”<sup>33</sup>

RTLM filled a social gap by introducing a platform that could, more than ever before, represent its audience. This did not completely eradicate the need for publicly funded national radio, which continued to play the same “informative” role as it had during the first Republic. In discussing the civic role of pre-genocide Rwandan national radio, Alison Des Forges explains that:

“A large number of Rwandans could not read or write and, as a result, radio was an important way for the government to deliver messages to the population. In addition to the usual news, [...] it also broadcast daily reminders from the president, exhorting Rwandans to work hard and live clean, moral lives. [...] The national radio also helped link families whose relatives were distant, broadcasting news of deaths so that relatives could return home for funerals.”<sup>34</sup>

This compression of space, between relatives, between nation and values, served a similar function to RTLM's “personalized” programming, with an emphasis on politically

oriented and influenced content. While RTLM was eliminating social distance through user participation, national radio was doing so through the construction of a state political identity. This dualistic construction, though, implies a clear division of power between the “popular” social institution of RTLM and the political state institution of national radio. In truth, they served similar if not identical masters to facilitate similar ends through different means (the political and the social).

These superficial dissimilarities are relevant for their impact on consumptive practice. State run media appeared to many as a one-way monologue of government ideology, in service of the state. RTLM represented freedom from this system. As Couldry points out, “[media] rituals may have power implications [...] without necessarily having anything as explicit as ideological 'content'.”<sup>35</sup> In this way, discussions of rowdy neighbors and funeral announcements were relevant to the overarching power structure in a similar manner to Habyarimana's political speeches. Bound up in these seemingly harmless commentaries by radio personalities and callers were complex notions of self and community that fed into the ideology of the Hutu Power nation-state. Both stations postured themselves as representative of all Rwandans, particularly RTLM with its populist undertones. This surrogacy, though, only operated to disenfranchise the mass audience from their own variegated perspectives. It homogenized identity into a small band of traits and values, with disastrous results, and silenced and marginalized minorities as “every media claims to speak 'for us all' naturalizes the fact that generally we do not speak for ourselves.”<sup>36</sup> RTLM's posture of political neutrality is easily problematized by content designed to alienate certain sectors of listeners (such as geographically or economically marginalized communities, or even Tutsi and Twa listeners), prejudiced hiring practices in the interest of populating the staff with those disposed to support the stations latent ideology, and program

screening practices designed to keep certain ideas and communities off of the air.

Alongside the particularly virulent hate media, previously carried out by the paper *Kangura* (1990-1993), RTLM's creation represented an important shift toward a more violent strain of political discourse in the service of the Hutu Power movement.<sup>37</sup> The more traditional "news" oriented programming of Rwanda's other information media outlets, was replaced by an editorial format in which monologues by individual radio personalities accounted for the majority of RTLM's content, compared to news items that "took up less than two percent of airtime, whereas instructions and directives issued by the station took up less than 3 percent."<sup>38</sup> As a result, there was greater room for important civic and political announcements to be editorialized to benefit the power brokers that oversaw the station.

Content is a substantial issue in attempting to understand the role that RTLM played in the genocide, but the station's relationship to the national power structure in terms of both ideology and funding is equally relevant. As Couldry has argued, given the connections between this power structure and "the myth of a valorised social 'centre' [...] it makes less sense than ever to analyze rituals, including media rituals, in isolation from a broader analysis of power."<sup>39</sup> In the case of Rwanda, some have relegated this connection as being that between the station and an affinity with "high ranking Hutu extremists."<sup>40</sup> In reality, the connections between the station and the governmental administration were much more direct. A group of fifty shareholders invested one hundred million Rwandan francs (one million US dollars) to support RTLM, of which a substantial amount came from the *akazu*, a group of Hutu extremists with ties to the government. This group included F. Kabuga, whose daughter married one of Habyarimana's sons, as well as members of the board of the Interhamwe and Ministers of the MRND (along with German funds funneled in by International Christian Democrats through the Konrad

Adenauer Foundation).<sup>41</sup> The goal of RTLM was to counter public attacks by the various media groups within the now splintered Rwandan mediascape to help solidify the Hutu Power base. Immediately following the assassination of Habyarimana in 1994, RTLM had a new, though related, purpose: to aid in the extermination of Rwanda's Tutsi population.

### **The Genocidal “Rift”**

There has been a tendency to speak of Rwandan media in the period immediately following the genocide as though it represented some sort of vast rift between the kind of hate speech that populated RTLM's airwaves (and littered *Kangura's* pages), and the censored (and propagandized) content overseen by the new Kagame/RPF government. Though this kind of narrative seems reasonable, given the catastrophic collapse of Rwandan media and the de facto martial law laid down on publishers and broadcasters by the RPF at the end of the genocide, it relies on the problematic premise that the manner by which Rwandan media is now utilized sits in marked contrast to its pre-genocide past. While the message has changed, the means and methods of communicating government ideology remain the same. In fact, rather than acting as a rift between pre- and post-genocide Rwandan media, one could describe this period as a discursive transition, or pivot point, in ideology. While this may seem a subtle difference, to overlook it means a gross misunderstanding of the role of the Rwandan government in formulating the content of contemporary media.

In the years leading up to the genocide, radio was already a particularly potent tool of the RPF in maintaining a pro-Tutsi presence within Rwanda. Given the particular spatial characteristics offered by radio, allowing easy geographic distribution across borders to a population already acculturated to it as the central means of information dissemination, it is no surprise that a government/military in exile such as the RPF would have gravitated toward its

use. Radio Muhabura's creation in the early 1990s was symbolic not only of the growing threat posed by the RPF to the government of Rwanda in the years leading up to the civil war, but also of the media savvy that RPF leadership possessed in thinking to utilize radio as a weapon. In an interview with BBC journalist Nik Gowing on April 8, 1998, then General Kagame noted that the RPF was working very hard to control what information was getting out regarding the conflict, stating that "[during this time] we used communication and information warfare better than anyone."<sup>42</sup> In fact, the RPF was concerned with maintaining their ability to restrict international media and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) from giving out information regarding casualty numbers (particularly those of civilians) by first clearing reporters from conflict zones and then threatening those individuals that publicized the abuse of civilians with "expulsion and reprisals against local staff and their families."<sup>43</sup> Radio Muhabura was the next logical step in the RPF's attempt to maintain a presence within Rwanda that could keep the limited sympathetic public "on message," while counteracting the anti-RPF propaganda of the Rwandan government.

The fall of the old Rwandan regime during the 1994 genocide was consequential not only because it resulted in a mass exodus of Hutu military and government personnel, but also because it coincided with the end of the "Hutu power" media regime in Rwanda. The incoming RPF forces shut down publications such as *Kangura*, and radio stations like RTLM, and detained their editors and producers so that they could stand trial for human rights and various criminal violations. To say that these outlets were "closed down" tells only half of the story. As Lars Waldorf suggests, the incoming RPF government sought to "retool" rather than dismantle the previous regime's information and media apparatus.<sup>44</sup> Instead of completely destroying "Hutu power" media, RPF forces (and later the Kagame administration) adopted and augmented many

of the existing media structures already in place in order to produce their own brand of propaganda. Mirroring the messages of Radio Muhabura (emphasizing the need for Rwandan unification), the role of the “new” post-genocide media was to facilitate the governmental transition, but it was also meant to temper ethnic tension and allay public fears regarding anti-Hutu retaliation.

With the transition in government came real fears regarding the intentions of the RPF. For Rwandan Hutu, many of whom had participated in the violence themselves, there was an expectation that RPF soldiers would have retribution in mind for individuals that remained behind the wave of government military and political officials that were now retreating into neighboring countries. Given the systematic nature of the genocide, radio announcements echoing RPF orders for individuals to stay in their homes, were reminiscent of earlier broadcasts during the genocide that organized roadblocks littering many cities, where *genocidaires* checked identification cards in order to label Tutsi for slaughter. Just as Rwandan Tutsi would pack up their families, grab their identification cards, and drive to the roadblocks knowing what would happen, those Hutu that stayed behind waited in their homes for what seemed an inevitable death. Though some retaliation by RPF units took place, this grisly expectation never quite came to fruition.

Over a period of 8 years, from the cessation of the genocide proper in 1994 to the implementation of more liberalized media regulations in 2002, the Paul Kagame led RPF government cracked down on independent media. During this time, nearly all media fell under state control, ostensibly due to fears that an unrestrained press could reignite the same tensions that initially fed the violence. Such fears are hardly uncalled for, given the explicit and overt nature of anti-Tutsi hate speech in the years leading up to, and during, the Rwandan civil war of

the 1990s. The consolidation of media and the implementation of a stringent media regulation policy was also quite useful for an invading force that, though predominantly composed of Rwandans in exile, was still seen as outsiders. By limiting the number of outlets that could distribute media messages (particularly television and radio) within Rwanda, the Kagame administration exerted inordinate control over these industries that effectively forced out voices of dissent. Heavy regulation and censorship meant that, even beyond controlling who could and could not participate in media industries, the messages disseminated to the public were carefully constructed and simultaneously implemented across many media platforms. One would not be blamed for viewing these policies as the accouterments of an oppressive dictatorship, but one reason that Rwanda is such an interesting case study is that, following this short period of extreme government control, media has undergone a period of deregulation.

The change of policy in 2002 toward a more liberalized regulatory environment marked a clear departure from the previous period, not only in the diversification of Rwanda's mediascape, but also in the implementation of a clear code of press freedom (including the continued criminalization of certain offenses such as slander). As a result, Rwanda went from having one, government run, radio station in 2002, to twenty-six public and private stations by 2011.<sup>45</sup> Though there was only one primary Rwandan television station broadcasting as of January 2011,<sup>46</sup> the opening up of Rwanda to international broadcasts, particularly through the introduction of satellite television, has resulted in a massive diversification of available programming. A byproduct of this “opening up” has also been that Rwanda has experienced massive media “dumping” by corporate media conglomerates in France and the United States, a process that has impacted local production practice and content in a wide variety of ways. The deregulation of the Rwandan media has also allowed in international media, a point that is a

particularly important consideration given that regulation provides, according to Curtin, “a defensive response to the spatially expansive tendencies of commercial media industries.”<sup>47</sup> The result of this shift was a much larger emphasis on controlling the perceived dangers of the domestic independent press apparatus, rather than the superficially benign influence of international media. The danger of this, according to Michele Hilmes, is that “the brisk international trade in television programmes and formats has made it increasingly difficult to specify the national or cultural origins of many televisual forms.”<sup>48</sup> Such homogenization has resulted in a Rwandan media marketplace in which much of its cultural production is indistinguishable from imported programs.

Though this is perhaps more accurate an assessment in the relative racial and cultural homogeneity of Europe and the United States, the influx of international broadcasts via satellite television and Internet radio has resulted in a shift in audience consumption. For example, though hip-hop has been popular in Rwanda since the 1980s, in large part because of “widespread American influence”<sup>49</sup> in the country, it came into its own with increased public exposure to international music television (as well as the Internet). Perhaps most interesting, though, is the manner by which Rwandan musicians have localized their product in the face of these exogenous industrial tensions in such a way that “production and consumption are closely connected and symbiotic [...] in the sense that producers emphasize the importance of local politics and culture rather than simply striving for profit maximization.”<sup>50</sup> A point that lies in sharp contrast to the cultural homogenization Hilmes refers to.

It would be foolish to suggest that the freedoms offered to media by the Rwandan government and its regulatory bodies have come without a price, or any strings attached.<sup>51</sup> In fact, Waldorf proposes that there is “less press freedom and media pluralism in Rwanda today



than there was before the genocide,”<sup>52</sup> but why would this be the case? In the interest of playing devil’s advocate, any attempt at understanding post-genocide Rwanda must take into account both the traumatic relevance of genocide to the country’s socio-cultural consciousness, as well as the differing degree’s of audience responsibility for the events of 1994 (whether it was in resistance, complicity, or silence). To promote direct democracy would have been problematic, since the occupying military force represented the interests of a now decimated minority. Additionally, deeply ingrained notions of identity and national history, that could hardly disappear over night, served as a foundation for the conflict. Those that resisted participating in the killings found themselves joining in, often at the behest of the military or out of fear of becoming targets themselves (as Tutsi sympathizers). According to one community leader, the feeling was that “[Tutsi] killed Habyarimana, our parent, that no one could stay [home] without joining the attacks; that the Tutsis were fighting to retake the country as it was before 1959 [i.e. before the revolution].”<sup>53</sup> Such feelings were shared among Rwandan Hutu and, as a result, the situation on the ground was volatile.

The front line for influencing public opinion, then, became the airwaves. From the end of 1994 (when the RPF took control) until 2002 (with the outward expansion of media in the private sector), this meant an increased governmental awareness of the importance of limiting the viewpoints allowable on the air, as well as complete control over acceptable public discourse. There are two ways to read these changes. The first is that such they represent a considerable push within the government toward transparency and democracy. The other, as seen in Waldorf’s statement, is that such changes are cosmetic, masking a much more complex kind of censorship and media control. Though one should give some credence to the first narrative, particularly given the extensive deregulation that has taken place over the last couple years, there is little

doubt that “unofficial” censorship, or self-censorship, plays a central role in the construction and creation of Rwandan media.

Ethnic ideology has, at least to some extent, become a weapon for the contemporary Rwandan government. Even as there is a growth in the number of media outlets, such expansion operates as a “façade of media pluralism.”<sup>54</sup> Those that remains resistant to the hegemonic aims of the state are crushed under the labels of promoting ethnic division and ethnic supremacy. Such practices reach beyond media and are evident in the large number of Rwanda’s political casualties over the last two decades. More than 40 prominent political figures have been forced into exile since 1995, and even more have been assassinated or put into prison.<sup>55</sup> That does not even take into account the persecution of numerous media members under the guise of fighting ethnic division (including the shuttering of vocal opposition newspapers in the lead up to the last presidential election), allegedly to facilitate the continued political dominance of the Kagame administration. To suggest, as Waldorf does, that this is all in service of maintaining the regime, though, misses the larger point of the importance of *how* the framing of acceptable public discourse serves to reinforce larger notions of national and individual identity. The stepping down and removal of representatives of resistance, politicians and journalists alike, is a clear maneuver by the Kagame administration to protect its interests. Rwanda’s government, though, is hardly without substantial opposition. The labeling of media outlets as “ethnically divisive” has no doubt become a tool for the silencing of dissidents, but some still continue to be critical of the government, even in the face of extreme intimidation and professional ruin.<sup>56</sup> Additionally, pressure from the FDLR, particularly those elements composed of ex-members of the National Army (*Forces armées rwandaises* – FAR) and *interhamwe* militia, have continued military actions within the country from their base of operations in the DRC, allegedly including grenade

attacks that rocked the capital of Kigali in the days after President Paul Kagame's re-election.<sup>57</sup>

The geographical proximity and size of Rwanda in comparison to the rest of the region, particularly given the relative instability of other countries in the central Africa (civil wars in the DRC, spurred by retreating Rwanda forces, child soldiering and the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda, Tanzania's involvement in the DRC and worsening relations with Rwanda, the recent end of the Burundian Civil War in 2005 with an uneasy peace, etc.) has served to amplify these threats. It is no great reach to think that such conflicts could spill across the border, and the Rwandan government has capitalized on such fears. As far back as 1996, when Rwanda invaded Zaire in a bid to replace President Mobutu Sésé Seko (resulting in the formation of the DRC), the Kagame administration has played a heavy hand in regional conflicts. Media has played a part in setting out the acceptable public discourse surrounding Rwanda's role in these wars by expressing both the justification for participation, as well as the unacceptability of oppositional viewpoints – paralleling them with being anti-Rwandan or ethnically divisive. It is this particular “framing” of discourse that has most notably marked the contemporary era of Rwandan media.

### **Contemporary Rwandan Radio and Theorizing Trauma**

Regardless of the public face that the government has placed on its role in the DRC (and even in Mali), there remains a divide between governmental discourse – via radio, television, newspapers, etc. – and what Rwandans believe. In fact, if a considerable rift between the para- and post-genocidal periods in relation to media exists in Rwanda, it is more that media consumers are less likely to trust what they hear, read, and see. André Sibomana most effectively conveys this in his book *Hope for Rwanda*, stating that “Rwandans realize perfectly well that there is a significant discrepancy between what they see with their own eyes every day

and what they hear through the official media or private newspapers, which support the government line.”<sup>58</sup> Such a statement raises questions regarding the degree to which media consumers recognize and accept the bias within information systems toward the institutions of power that govern those systems. While quantifying the degree to which Rwandans distrust state run media would be difficult, given the social and geographic complexities of Rwanda,<sup>59</sup> this relationship between media and its audience(s) remains important.

At its most basic level, this is a conflict over the formulation and the adoption of a new value system, propagated by Rwandan media, in which collectivism and collective identity play a part in prescribing a set of values endorsed by the state. Repeated phrases on the radio and across a wide range of public institutions (in newspapers, churches and schools just to name a few), such as “we are all Rwandans” and “forgive but don’t forget,” operate as anchor points for Rwanda’s acceptable public discourse. Such reinforcement reaches far beyond semantics or phrasing, though, and even operates at a linguistic level. The emergence of the new government has brought with it a redefinition of identity through the use of language, as French is now limited in official communication and English is becoming much more common (though Kinyarwanda remains the dominant mass communication language). This shift, though present across a wide range of media, is hardly uniform. For example, the vast majority of radio programs have always been, by and large, hosted in Kinyarwanda, while television programming has shifted toward English language content.

While we will delve into the reasons for this difference when looking at language division in television content (as it has a far larger impact there), it is important to understand why radio continues to maintain such a central role in disseminating mass media messages in Rwanda. With 62.6% of Rwandan homes owning a radio, it is the most owned media device

(with mobile phones the second most owned at 40.3%).<sup>60</sup> Though there is an even split of radio ownership between urban and rural homes (75.7% of urban households and 60.4% rural<sup>61</sup>), the bulk of the listening audience are rural (approximately 87% of Rwandans live in rural areas<sup>62</sup>). As a result, out of the total population of Rwanda (10 million),<sup>63</sup> 5,254,800 live in rural households that own a radio, compared to 984,100 living in urban areas. Additionally, radio is the most used media in terms of frequency, with 78.05% listening daily (and only 0.8% never listening).<sup>64</sup>

Radio has also been uniquely suited to navigate around a number of Rwanda's geographical and infrastructural issues. Some mountain communities are in areas where it may be difficult to find a radio signal, but the much larger issue for alternative media adoption has been the lack of availability of electricity. In fact, only 1 in 10 Rwandan households have electricity,<sup>65</sup> and the majority of those are in urban areas (45% of urban households – or 585,000 of the population – compared to 4% of rural households – or 388,000 of the population<sup>66</sup>). As a result radios, and other mobile media powered by batteries (such as mobile phones), are much more likely than television or desktop computers to be adopted.<sup>67</sup> The prevalence of cyber cafes in Kigali, as well as attempts by the Rwandan government to engage in social media,<sup>68</sup> are indicative of a shift in urban technology adoption that is worth further attention.<sup>69</sup> The high cost of adoption and wealth inequality has limited the the use of newer media formats throughout Rwanda, with the exception of mobile phones, whose low cost of entry has allowed for their rapid spread. Only 12.6% of rural households fall into the highest wealth quintile (compared to 67.6% in urban households), while 20.8% fell into the lowest (compared to 15% in urban households).<sup>70</sup> Television, in particular, has struggled in the face of these economic and infrastructural disparities. So much so that of the 530,000 people (5.3% of total population<sup>71</sup>)

that live in households that own a TV, only 8,480 are in rural communities (1.6% of total households).<sup>72</sup>

Unlike Rwandan television, which has quite a bit of content in other languages (particularly in English and French), much of the broadcast content for Radiyo Rwanda remains in Kinyarwanda. This makes sense, given that Kinyarwanda is the primary language spoken in most Rwandan households (98.3%), but a considerable number of Rwandans also speak and read French (20.5%) and English (12.5%).<sup>73</sup> To cater to this diversity, while still maintaining the interest of single/regional language audience members, non-Kinyarwanda content generally appears in language specific news broadcasts (appearing once a day on the national radio station, in French and English). The result is that Rwandan radio caters to the largest audience possible, not only to maintain awareness and interest (or in a commercial sense “market share”), but also to reinforce its role as the central point of dissemination for civic, cultural, and social messaging by the state.

The dominant position of radio, though, is also tied to the particularities of Rwandan media history. Following the genocide, the reduction and control over the number of media outlets further concentrated state ideology, only now in service of the stabilization of President Kagame's government, and the limitation of oppositional or violent speech. Radio messages from government officials announced public events, news, as well as the Public Cleaning Day, where on the last Saturday of the month everyone must stay home and clean.<sup>74</sup> Just as before the genocide, the radio necessitated a national listenership by disseminating essential information. To some extent, this phenomenon continues on in that the mass listenership of Radiyo Rwanda causes, and is caused by, its utilization as the central platform for information dissemination. In other words, the audience listens because it needs to keep itself informed about key civic events

(such as Cleaning Day), but Radiyo Rwanda is the chosen platform for disseminating this information because people are listening - though its role as the main government run radio station also plays a part in this process. The growth of the radio industry, from the announcement of the first private radio station in 2004 to the more than 20 stations registered with the Media High Council (MHC) as of 2009,<sup>75</sup> has done little to curb the dominance of Radiyo Rwanda. According to the MHC “Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009,”<sup>76</sup> Radiyo Rwanda ranks as, far and away, the most popular station (rated “most liked” by 40.53% of urban audiences, and 58.31% of rural audiences) and has the highest station awareness among Rwandans (with 91.55% citing spontaneous awareness, compared Radio Salus, the second highest at 58.25%, and BBC radio at 26.75%).<sup>77</sup>

What this data suggests is that, beyond its basic role in disseminating key governmental information, the overt popularity and frequency of listenership indicates that Radiyo Rwanda has a potential presence in formulating public discourse. As a result, it is important to understand how the introduction and repetition of concepts and ideas act to reinforce ideology. In doing so, one must recognize that the development of a narrative by endogenous media producers that is generative of a forward looking, unificatory national identity<sup>78</sup> is self serving, but it also highlights the continued presence of trauma in the formulation of what it means to be Rwandan.

Trauma theory offers one possible means of explaining how Rwandan identity is formed, particularly as it relates to representational historicism. In the case of contemporary Rwandan media, we need to address two key issues: first, how do the different realms of individual and communal trauma negotiate with each other in the formulation of media messages, and second, what is trauma’s explicit impact on Rwandan media’s representational strategies? To begin with, the terms of individual trauma are rarely taken on their own in relation to larger traumatic

historical events. While testimonies are important as a means of archiving and taking possession of one's own traumatic past, they are often relegated to serving as anecdotal evidence for the larger communal experience (thus the Shoah Archive collects individual testimony, but it does so in order to frame larger events such as the Holocaust, genocide, apartheid, etc.). More often, individual trauma becomes politicized or repressed depending upon its affinity with the current ideological impulse of the government. Thus, individual experience that matches the narrative set forth by the state (particularly the persecution of Tutsi by Hutu) is not only given more time in media programs, it is often utilized as a touchstone for the remembrance of genocide.

The impact of trauma on media is a complex issue to unpack, particularly because the strategies of representation media creators deploy are dependent on numerous conditions including funding, regulatory policy, cultural background, and even the shifting of acceptable public discourse. For instance, references to Hutu victims of the genocide have disappeared from media discussing the event. Such an omission is the result of government oversight via funding policy, which has necessitated a metered approach to discussing the topic. This is also the result of regulatory and speech laws that have vaguely forbidden "divisionist" approaches to speaking about the genocide, a potential trap that producers have tried to avoid. For the many media creators that were, themselves, victims or perpetrators of the genocide, representing their own experiences can be so personal a task that it seems much more prudent, if not safe, to fall back on more accepted and generalized genocide narratives.

To take this point even further, poststructuralism plays a part in a homogenized approach to representation, in that it "tends to universalize trauma as inherent in history, language, or even experience itself."<sup>79</sup> Contrary to this tendency towards the collectivization and universalization of experience, though, it is necessary to recognize the importance of individual trauma to the



larger collective experience (which testimonies are quite useful for), as well as the inherent individualized character of trauma itself. As J.C. Alexander points out, psychoanalytic theories of trauma suggest that it “is not locatable in the simple violent or original event in an individual’s past, but rather in the way its very unassimilated nature – the way it was precisely not known in the first instance – returns to haunt the survivor later on.”<sup>80</sup> This “unknowability” of personal trauma is problematic for any attempts at identifying shared characteristics of trauma. The fact that our contemporary human condition is fraught with multiple levels and degrees of traumatic experience that react and interact with one another has only made this more difficult.

How, then, does one attempt to navigate the tempestuous waters of “trauma”? Though Freudian psychoanalysis (with its emphasis on the centrality of the death drive<sup>81</sup>) has been important in the formulation of trauma theory, more recent notions of communal/cultural trauma have nuanced earlier concepts in order to view internal drives as being in service of social constructivism. Such a perspective is particularly useful to the discussion of trauma and media, thanks in part to the implied historical specificity of the “event of genocide.” More importantly, this framework is compatible with the elements of individual trauma *in combination* with its large-scale social construction and reinforcement. Using Maureen Turim’s multifaceted approach, one can view the 1994 genocide as a “nexus of events”<sup>82</sup> that were not universally experienced or temporally contained. Nor was their impact isolated to the individual, as genocide can be, and often is, a participatory group experience. The distinctions between the perpetrator and victim are often blurred, as not all Rwandan Hutu were direct perpetrators of genocide, and many Tutsi that now live within the country have returned from the diaspora over the last several years. As a result, the variegated experiences of the 1994 genocide were, in some cases, mediated. The purpose of this classification, deploying ethnic identity as a delegation of

responsibility, is much more complex than it would initially appear. Additionally, linking trauma to ethnic identity is all the more problematic in a “post-ethnic” environment.

The importance of theorizing around “psychocultural trauma,”<sup>83</sup> as an extension of J.C. Alexander’s postulation that “events do not [...] create collective trauma,” but rather that it is a “socially mediated attribution,”<sup>84</sup> it is necessary to view media messages, their aesthetic, tone, and repetition as part and parcel of trauma in the process of creating identity. At the representational level, traditional trauma studies have dealt with the question of trauma as being an analytical binary between Berel Lang’s “moral limits” of representation (that which should not be represented) and Elie Wiesel’s “inherent limits” of representation (that trauma is unrepresentable). And yet, trauma is (if ineffectively) embedded at explicit and latent levels within media, with a capacity to re-injure or invoke past wounds.<sup>85</sup> Thus the question should not be *whether* trauma appears in cultural production, but rather *how* it appears, and to what end? The simple and imprecise answer is that trauma can appear in a variety of thematic, aesthetic, and structural elements of media, for a wide variety of purposes.

In some sense, rather than being “traumatic media,” these cultural forms represent a sort of “post-traumatic” approach to production and consumption. As suggested by Joshua Hirsch, cultural production “not only represents traumatic historical events, but also attempts to embody and reproduce the trauma for the spectator through its form of narration.”<sup>86</sup> This is relevant to Rwandan film, because many of the productions that receive wider distribution are autobiographical. As a result, in attempting to reproduce the traumatic event, many Rwandan filmmakers are systematically trying to convey trauma. In such a way, post-traumatic production is a meaning making exercise that seeks to create “understanding,” as “trauma as a phenomenon is only, however asymptotically or not, understood as or when pictured.”<sup>87</sup>

There is a clear gap, though, between media and reality. The complex interplay between perceived reality and reproduction, discussed in numerous fields,<sup>88</sup> appears in trauma theory. This is particularly the case in thinking about the inability for representation to cull experiential reality from the image. According to Isabelle Wallace, “the image in its irreducible distance from animate materiality is itself cadaverous, for whether mirrored or mimetic, the image exists at a permanent remove from its referent and is, for all its mimetic capacity, nevertheless incapable of the referents resurrection.”<sup>89</sup> Thus, the process of reconstructing memory, traumatic or otherwise, is tethered to subjective narrativity. In a sense, trauma theory is, itself, built upon a need to reconfigure reality into a form that is narrativized, or as Allen Meek suggests, “trauma theory would be an attempt to understand the relation of subjectivity to history through the process of narration”<sup>90</sup>

One should not see the limitations of representation as a hindrance. Instead, we should recognize the potentialities of traumatic and post-traumatic media to communicate to us the reflections of the limit event that have embedded themselves within cultural production (narrativized as they may be). According to Ann Kaplan and Ban Wang:

"Visual media do not just mirror those experiences; in their courting and staging of violence they are themselves the breeding ground of trauma, as well as the matrix of understanding and experiencing of a world out of joint. The visual media have become a cultural institution in which the traumatic experience of modernity can be recognized, negotiated, and reconfigured."<sup>91</sup>

As a result, Rwandan media is a surface on which we can view the reflection of communal and personal trauma. Consuming Rwandan film, television, radio, and print media offers insights into the reconfiguration of traumatic experience at the personal level (particularly in the context of autobiographical narrativity), but more important to the discussion at hand is the role that this reconfiguration plays in the formation of identity. Such a point is all the more

important given the central role of the genocide in formulating contemporary Rwandan identity (such as state endorsed discourse seen in the mantra's "we are all Rwandans" and "forgive, but don't forget"). As suggested by Robert Lifton, "the survivor dwells in the circumstances inaugurated by the catastrophic event and is bound to his or her status in a relations of death and rebirth."<sup>92</sup> For Rwanda, this particular point links survival and death to a simplistic conceptualization of ethnic identity based around a perpetrator/victim (Hutu/Tutsi) dynamic.

Though there are distinct differences between the traumatic experiences of the Holocaust, South African Apartheid, and the Rwanda genocide, there are many parallels between them in terms of the phenomenon of secondary trauma. In discussing South African nation building and its relationship to the Commission for Truth and Reconciliation, Sarah Lincoln points out that:

"The painful and often destructive effects of *being a witness* – whether directly or indirectly – have spread beyond those involved in the Commission itself to affect the community at large. These 'secondary' traumas, however, have proved (paradoxically, perhaps) to be crucial tools in the process of forging the new nation. In exposing the inadequacies of existing cultural resources for dealing with and representing traumatic events, they have begun to act as a catalyst for the radical transformation of culture, and a new 'South African' identity is being forged precisely out of this shared experience of a traumatic past."<sup>93</sup>

While the meaning of "Rwandan" and "South African" are distinctly different, from country to country and person to person, Lincoln's postulation that the community takes on trauma is fundamental to this dissertation. Though there is little doubt as to the import of trauma as it relates to contemporary Rwandan media, it is only one element in attempting to understand how identity politics have shifted after the genocide. This requires that we link the socio-political conditions of Rwanda with textual evidence in order to isolate the particularities of this occurrence.

## Case Study: Radiyo Rwanda, RTLTM, and Ethnic Discourse

“I thank the RTLTM’s journalists. I am so thankful the Rwandans who listen to it and like it, who follow its truth. As it said several times, it is not a radio of a party, of a particular person. It is our radio, all the Rwandans.”

- Anonymous Kigali Resident, RTLTM Broadcast<sup>94</sup>

“Rise all of you listening to us. Let us fight for ... This Rwanda. Rwanda is nowhere else in the world. Rwanda is here in Central Africa, where God located it. Rwanda is found nowhere else in the world. We are Rwandans, we are Rwandans.”

– Kantano HABIMANA, RTLTM Journalist<sup>95</sup>

Comprehensively identifying the particularities of *how* radio has aided in constituting acceptable public discourse around unificatory identity requires a deeper analysis of content than would likely be impossible with the current dearth of materials available in translation. Available texts offer us a glimpse into the potential discursive strategies operating within Rwandan mass media. Of particular interest to this study are terms and phrases that are unificatory or divisive in their approach to national or ethnic identity. It would hardly be any great leap to suggest that the discursive strategies surrounding ethnic identity shifted between the mid-90s and today, but it is important to address both *how* they changed, as well as what elements continue to play an important role in contemporary Rwandan media.

Before engaging with the methodology of this enterprise, one needs to take a critical approach in thinking about why certain materials were chosen to be archived, as well as why they continue to be available. For the most part, media criticism on Rwanda is reliant upon either texts in translation (as well as the limited availability of those produced in English/French), or scholars that work and research texts only available in Kinyarwanda. Both proffer serious problems because they are reliant on some form of intermediary interpretation or ideological impulse, emanating from the selective isolation of identifying those texts that are “important,” and those that are “unimportant.” A number of scholars have worked in both modes

(translated and original texts) in an attempt to catalogue and quantify the language of the genocide,<sup>96</sup> but such studies focus on interpreting these texts outside of a larger historical framework, or even as distinct from their relationship to contemporary Rwandan media texts. The goal of this particular case study, then, is to address these concerns through a comparative discursive analysis between older (1993-1994) RTLM transcripts and newer (2013) Radiyo Rwanda data, compiled in order to assess particular rhetorical and ideological shifts in their on-air discussion of national and ethnic identity.

The second problem with approaching texts in translation (in this case from Kinyarwanda to English) is that projects such as this are at the mercy of what particular texts archives and governmental organizations have deemed worthy of translation and have made available to researchers. The available selection of RTLM transcripts, acquired through the Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies (MIGS) Archive, appears to be based on the particular severity of their usage of ethnic terminology, as well as their incitement of violence. As a result, broadcasts that were not identified by the MIGS Archive or the International Criminal Tribunal – Rwanda (ICTR) as being particularly virulent examples of hate speech (or as material evidence), are not available. For those English language Radiyo Rwanda broadcasts, obtainable previously through the *L'Office Rwandais d'Information* (ORINFOR) web portal,<sup>97</sup> their availability seems much more based on their being current (as older materials are taken off the site). As a result, the repetition of particular terms may be based less on large scale and long-term discursive strategies or trends, and may instead be the result of the social relevance of contemporary events (such as conflict in the DCR, or the Rwandan commemoration of the genocide). Additionally, those programs available in English are generally short form (15-30 minutes), while transcripts for RTLM programs vary quite a bit; from long form 60 minute

programs, to 1-2 minute extracts (largely due to the particularities of show format). While Radiyo Rwanda's programs are exclusively short form news shows, RTLTM's transcripts appear to be from op-ed talk radio shows. Finally, unlike Radiyo Rwanda which is officially a state run media entity (paired with Rwandan state television), RTLTM was a private radio station that had extensive ties to the "Hutu Power" movement and President Habyarimana.

The dissonance between these sample sets, rather than posing an irreconcilable difference, instead places an even greater emphasis on those results that correlate. The sample set of broadcasts is limited by program availability, but by being cognizant of the potential pitfalls outlined above (particularly the heightened discursive toxicity of RTLTM) we can actually seek to ascertain if divisionary language was higher during the buildup to, and carrying out of, the genocide. Additionally, though the variation in duration and format of these programs could be problematic to an analysis focusing on frequency, repetition, and segment placement of key terminology, the goal of this study is to utilize statistical analysis to isolate trends in term usage. Rather than attempting to offer a 1:1 statistical analysis of the frequency of unificatory and divisive terminology (which would be impossible given the limited availability of media materials), the repetition of key terminology over an extended period of time should direct our attention towards the analysis and contextualization of emergent terminology. For example, if a term of ethnic identification in RTLTM broadcasts, such as "Hutu," occurs more than twice as often as its partner term, "Tutsi," this should signal the need to interrogate the reason and meaning of this difference. Because of this, the fact that the sample sets of audio materials are of varied formats and durations is of less importance than the fact that they are both pulled from sources that are, even if unofficially, organs for the dissemination of state sanctioned ideology.

## *Methodology*

Based on the difference in materials (particularly that Radiyo Rwanda programs were available as English language audio files, while RTLTM materials were available as transcripts translated to English), it was necessary to develop two parallel methodologies for analyzing their data. For Radiyo Rwanda programming, the limited English language materials archived through the ORINFOR site provided a basis for selection. The 6 programs that were available range from 8/27/12-5/2/13, with three programs from late 2012 and early 2013 (8/27, 9/1, and 1/31), and three more that are from mid-2013 (4/11, 4/15, and 5/2). Selected programs were then analyzed so as to summarize their coverage of main news stories, as well as their repetition of key terms. Each program was broken down by news segment so as to offset the statistical variations that result from stories that might repeat specific terms (for instance, in a news story covering the conflict in the DRC, the term “Conflict” may appear several times). Thus, if a given segment mentions a term more than once, it is only counted once in the overall data summary. Rather than calculate the frequency of occurrence for a given term in an episode, it actually expresses the number of segments in which a given term appears. There were 81 distinct segments throughout all the broadcasts analyzed. This includes a number of stories (approximately 4-5 in each program) that are redundant, as it is common for larger stories to be briefly introduced at the beginning of the program, and briefly recapped at the end. These particular summaries are part of the data because they remain statistically relevant, insofar as they underline the relative importance of these stories to those that were not summarized.

In analyzing segments, there was no limit placed on potential terms to quantify, but no segment required the identification of more than 8 terms. Key terms were identified based on their relevance to issues of identity, public policy, as well as their characterization of



(inter)national relationships. Data was then sorted by the rate term of occurrence in order to isolate words that most frequently appeared during the programs, as well as those that were most conspicuously absent. Based on what was found to be a distinct shift in the occurrence of certain terms during the two periods of sampling, between 8/27/12-1/31/13 and 4/1/13-5/2/13 (from a time of particular activity in the DRC conflict to the anniversary of the 1994 Rwanda genocide), occurrence data was divided to show how the frequent implementation of those terms changed between the two periods.

RTLTM data was pulled from digital transcripts in the MIGS Archive from the 24 documents available with optical character recognition (OCR), ranging from 11/24/1993 to 7/2/94 (just over 4 months before the shooting down of Habyarimana's plane to about 2 weeks before the capturing of Kigali by RPF forces). The materials were then separated by word, sorted alphabetically by their date of usage, and finally calculated by date (as well as by their overall occurrence). Given the predominance of particular pronouns, prepositions, adverbs and conjunctions in the English language (such as "the," "to," "that," "and," etc.), it was necessary to isolate key terms and term "classifications" that stood out as particularly relevant to the discussion of discourse and identity. While many of these common words were removed from further analysis (though they remain in the overall data in terms of the percentage of overall term usage), others stood out as relevant due to their characterization of ethnic identity, gender, oppositional construction ("us" versus "them"), and derogatory terminology. Those terms that were not translated for these transcripts (particularly *Inkotanyi* and *Inyenzi*) were also given careful attention, particularly as those terms occurred with considerable frequency during the programs. Those terms that occurred in larger quantities over the breadth of the data were also given greater consideration, as they indicated a larger discursive shift towards the ideology that

underpinned their usage. These different “classes” of terminology were then compiled as data sets in order to ascertain their relevance to one another. For instance, there are a large number of terms used that indicate gender (he, she, boy, girl, males, females, etc.), but they were compiled as a common terminology group in order to ascertain the larger statistical relevance of the reference to gender (i.e. is there a significance to whether masculine or feminine terminology is predominant).

### *Results and Analysis*

It is critical to view these data sets as distinct before drawing relational conclusions, due to the stark contrast between their source formats (audio files versus OCR translated transcripts) and the data collection methodologies that may result in discrepancies. There are a number of studies looking at hate media in Rwanda leading up to, and continuing throughout, the genocide. RTLM is just one of the most visible examples because of its overarching popularity, as well as the ferocity with which it endorsed and aided in the facilitating of genocide. By utilizing dehumanizing ethnic slurs, as well as aiding in the strategy of genocide by notifying local militia of the location hiding Tutsi survivors, RTLM put itself into a position that led to its symbolic dismantling and eventual castigation (in addition to the conviction of a number of its administrators and on-air personalities before the ICTR).

What was most interesting, then, about the RTLM data set was the complex utilization of ethnic identifiers. The basic ethnic identifiers, Hutu, Tutsi, and (to a far lesser extent) Twa, are common terms, with “Hutu” (as well as “Hutus” and “Bahutu”) consisting of 0.26% of all terms (246 occurrences, 67<sup>th</sup> most overall) and “Tutsi” (as well as “Tutsiland,” “Gatutsi,” and “Tutsi’s”) consisting of 0.23% of all terms (221 occurrences, 74<sup>th</sup> most common overall), compared to “Twa” (as well as “Twass”) consisting of 0.01% of all terms (5 occurrences, 1,434<sup>th</sup>

most common overall). (See Table 2: RTLM Radio Ethnic Identifier Usage - by occurrence)

While this would seem to indicate that the use of the terms Hutu and Tutsi is consistent, and even balanced, these numbers ignore the large number of alternate terms implemented to reference identity. For instance, the term “*Inkotanyi*” is one of the most common overall terms, yet it appears in the available media texts without a definition or translation to contextualize it.

*Inkotanyi*, defined as “invincible warrior,”<sup>98</sup> is the historical name for the militia of the Tutsi feudal kings of Rwanda during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The use of the term during the programs, though, is meant to parallel the political oppression of Hutu during this time period and the current “invasion” by the RPF. As a result, the term has somewhat of an oscillatory meaning in that it is drawing on ethnic identity politics, but it is not meant as a strict identifier for Tutsi (at times it seems only to refer to Tutsi combatants and their active sympathizers). As it appears in the broadcasts, *Inkotanyi* is a derogatory term, rooted in the relationship between Tutsi ethnic identity, class warfare, and taxation in Rwanda. In fact, the implementation of this particular term in research on the genocide has been a bit problematic, due to its dual, and interchangeable meaning. For instance, Mary Kimani’s study of RTLM<sup>99</sup> differentiates the word from other derogatory terminology, such as “*Inyenzi*” (meaning “cockroaches”), as not being explicitly ethnic, but instead it is seen as an overarching term for those attempting to undermine the government. And yet, in Jean-Marie Biju-Duval’s analysis of media and the ICTR proceedings,<sup>100</sup> *Inkotanyi* is used in tandem with *Inyenzi* as inflammatory and identificatory terminology.

Based on readings of the actual transcripts of the RTLM programs (even if there is room for interpreting the use of the term *Inkotanyi* as referencing general enemy combatants), the very root of the word calls upon the larger symbolic correlation of the oppression of Hutu in the 19<sup>th</sup>

century under Tutsi rule with the invasion of the RPF as an “alien” Tutsi entity. The RPF has more recently coopted the term *Inkotanyi* as a means of positive self-identification (“RPF-Inkotanyi”), drawing upon the idea of the “invincible warrior.” For the purposes of this analysis, terms such as “Inkotanyi” or “Inyenzi” (or even political entities that draw upon ethnic identity as their source, such as the RPF, PARMEHUTU, and MRND), are key members of the identificatory data set.

When taken in relation to all identificatory terminology, ethnic identity is actually a major element of total content. For instance, in looking at all Hutu identifiers (such as Hutu/s, Bahutu, and even ethnically oriented political entities such as PARMEHUTU and MRND), they represent only 16.71% (283 references) of the overall number of ethnically specific identificatory terms (out of 1694 references). (See “Table 3: RTLM Identificatory Terminology”) Such a point is quite striking in comparison to the use of Tutsi specific identificatory terminology (such as “Inkotanyi/s,” “Inyenzi,” “Intutsi’s,” “Tutsi/s,” “Tutsiland,” “Gatutsi,” and “RPF/s”), which constitutes 83.29% (1411 references) of ethnically specific terminology. Treated as a single term, Hutu/Tutsi ethnically specific identificatory terminology represents 1.76% of all term occurrences, making it the 10<sup>th</sup> most common in term occurrence. Expanding that out to include references to ethnicity (such as “ethnic” or “ethnicity,” “interethnic,” and “Twa/s”), national identity (such as “Rwanda/n/ns” and “Rwandese”), other political and military institutions (such as “UN,” “UNAMIR,” “CDR/s” - the Coalition for the Defence of the Republic, a far-right political party - “PSD” – the Social Democratic Party - “MDR/s” – the Republican Democratic Movement - “OAU/s” – the Organization of African Unity - and “RAF” – Rwandan defense forces), race (such as “white men/s”), as well as the names of radio stations (“RTLM/s” and “Radio Muhabura”) as composing a category of “identificatory terminology,” this constitutes

2.72% of total word usage (2620 references), which would make it the 3<sup>rd</sup> most common in terms of occurrence.

What is immediately striking is that the preponderance of identificatory references pertain to defining Tutsi identity appear through dehumanizing metaphor (e.g. “Inyenzi”) and invasion (e.g. “Inkotanyi,” “RPF” and “Radio Muhabura”). Additionally, references to Tutsi identity occur far more often than those pertaining to Hutu identity, and even appear more than all other identificatory terminologies combined. References to Tutsi identity constitute 53.86% of all identificatory references, compared to 10.8% for Hutu references, and 35.34% for all others. No doubt, some of this phenomenon stems from the necessity, during a time of conflict, to identify the enemy and dehumanize them. The larger battleground, though, is what it means to be a “Rwandan.” As the epigraphs for this case study suggest, Rwandan national identity is a dynamic and contested space. The data suggests that during the genocide national identity was defined in only the most exclusionary terms, and as a result Hutu and Rwandan national identity merged into one.

To support such a position, it was necessary to link the RPF forces and Tutsi combatants (and the Tutsi population in general) through derogatory and dehumanizing terminology. The most obvious of these is the *Inkotanyi/Inyenzi* dynamic. The active deployment of derogatory terminology during RTLM broadcasts appears in a number of different contexts, and with a number of different end goals in mind. These break down into three primary categories. The first addresses the RPF and enemy combatants as outsiders that represent a previous age (“Inkotanyi”) or paints their leadership as cruel or backward. One example of this is the repeated references to the leader of the RPF (and current President of Rwanda) Paul Kagame as “General Kagame, alias KAGOME.” The play on words here is that *Kagome* is meant as a stand in for the

Kinyarwandan word for “wicked.” Additionally, hosts often comment on General Kagame as having a propensity for consulting with “Sorcerers,” “Soothsayers,” and “Wizards.” The claims here of Kagame’s use of “Witchcraft” are often used as an example of his backwardness, but also the dark powers claimed to have been surrounding the RPF invasion of Rwanda. The goal is to paint the RPF incursion as being demonic, thus the conflict is painted as one in which every Rwandan has a mortal and spiritual need to fend off the invaders, because of the dark forces the RPF is associated with, but also their perceived desire to return to the days of Tutsi domination and archaic beliefs.

The second category of derogatory terminology involves the general diminution of all those participating in the invasion, alongside their responsibility for the assassination of President Habyarimana. In this case, hosts often reference some unspecified/underground force or group (often described as homeless men and children), as being “Wicked” or as a group of “Tricksters” or “Traitors.” The intent in using this terminology is to underline how those that were aiding the incoming RPF forces didn’t even realize that this was what they were doing, and that they didn’t have the training to “pull it off” (often hosts comment that these forces are ill equipped to do more than occupy some rural village or unpopulated piece of land). The goal in this case is to endorse hyper vigilance, but also to quell fears of the incoming RPF forces; after all they are little more than untrained and homeless itinerants.

The final category of derogatory terminology are animalistic and dehumanizing terms used, generally, to refer to all those responsible for the assassination of the President, but also for their lack of loyalty to the state. These terms refer to a wide range of Rwandan demographics, but primarily refer to Tutsi and Tutsi-sympathizers. The most common of these terms, such as “Inyenzi” (“cockroaches”), “Bitches/Son-of-a-bitch,” “Guttersnipes,” and “Hyenas” all employ

some degree of animalism as a means of distinguishing between “Us” (the “real Rwandans”) and “Them” (those “creatures” that are no longer loyal to the government”). The goal in the use of these terms is to reduce the population’s resistance to acting violently upon those that are aiding the RPF.

The meaning behind the implementation of derogatory terminology is to engage with a kind of dehumanized perception of reality. As argued by Lasana T. Harris and Susan T. Fiske, though humans tend towards anthropomorphism, this is contrasted by our innate “cognitive bias characterized by spontaneous failure to think about [...] thoughts and feelings in a target’s mind.”<sup>101</sup> The process of dehumanization is one of producing a sense of psychological “disgust.”<sup>102</sup> The implementation of dehumanizing metaphors, such as those employed by RTLM (and addressed much earlier in social psychology<sup>103</sup>), aid in the facilitation of distantiation between individuals and the targets of dehumanization, because it becomes more difficult for the receiver/listener to understand the feelings and thought processes of these individuals and groups. At a physiological level, the social-cognition neural network actually tends to be less active when we feel “disgust,” thus we are unable to take into account the thoughts and feelings of dehumanized targets.

At a statistical level, then, the repeated use of derogatory and dehumanizing terminology is relevant in the process of producing “disgust.” If we are to view these terms one at a time, the most common among them, “Inkotanyi” and “Inyenzi,” represent 0.62% (592 references) and 0.29% (276 references) of the total number of terms, making them the 25<sup>th</sup> and 57<sup>th</sup> most common terms. (See “Table 4: RTLM Derogatory Terminology Usage”) These are, no doubt, a considerable statistical phenomenon on their own, but if we view all derogatory terminology as a group they represent a more considerable 1.01% (967 references) of total term occurrence,

making them the 16th most common term overall. These terms are also aided by the repeated and systematic use of “othering” terminology which more subtly differentiates between “true” and “false” Rwandans. The repeated use of oppositional terminology such as *they/we* and *our/their* sets up a dualism that distinguishes those that are “within” the ideological/political construct of Rwanda, and those that are “alien” to it. What is interesting about this address, though, is the degree to which it calls for active relationship between the media and the listener. The repeated invocation of the word “you” or “yourselves” is indicative of the call to arms the stations were signaling, but it is also a key element in the rhetorical approach many stations implemented. For example, this is repeatedly illuminated in statements such as “Dear friends, listeners, we are here for *you*, during war we don’t give *you* up (emphasis mine).”<sup>104</sup> In this case, the appeal for the closeness of the relationship between program and listener, but it also correlates the process of listening/broadcasting with that of fighting in the war. In another excerpt, the host states that “*You* understand the problem, as is it *us*, the inhabitants of Kigali who are suffering (emphasis mine).”<sup>105</sup> Here, the host begins with a similar appeal as that seen in the previous example. But then, through the use of the word “us,” the statement emphasizes both the link between themselves and the audience, but also to the “inhabitants of Kigali” - a spatial arrangement that suggests that it is the “true” residents of Kigali/Rwanda that suffer from the attacks of the “other.”

The statistical relevance of the “us” versus “them” arrangement is difficult to overstate. When looking at the overall occurrence of terms that infer an “us” versus “them” alignment (including but not limited to “they,” “we,” “their,” “you,” etc.), such terms represent 8.73% (8397 references) of all terminology. (See “Table 5: RTLM “Us” vs. “Them” Terminology Usage”) If treated as a single term, “us” versus “them” terminology would be the most common



term by a rather wide margin. This is hardly surprising given the previous conclusions we have drawn regarding the implementation of dehumanizing perception, but what is quite interesting is the rather close ratio of “us” versus “them” terms in regards to their overall occurrence. In contrast to what one might assume, given the degree to which the RTLM broadcasts operated to define the “other,” there is actually a higher rate of occurrence of “us” terminology (54.1%, 4543 references) in comparison to “them” terminology (45.9%, 3854 references). (See “Table 6: RTLM “Us” vs. “Them” Terminology Summary”) Likely, this tendency toward “us” terminology relates to the need for a constant dialogue to reinforce post-1959 notions of Rwandan nationalism (built around the idea that it is “you” the residents of Rwanda that are “now” the true Rwandans), driven by the fact that the RPF was composed of Rwandan Tutsi living in exile in Uganda.

Given the drastic socio-political shift of the Rwandan genocide (and the implied “rift” that we have already critiqued), a far different rhetorical and discursive slant from that of contemporary Rwandan radio was necessary. The contemporary radio analysis of Radiyo Rwanda yielded a number of important results in terms of understanding the shift in representational practice (as well as those practices that remain quite the same) since the de facto end of the genocide in mid-July of 1994, particularly along the lines of ethnic identification. Out of 81 distinct news stories within the sample set, reference to the term “Tutsi” occurred at least once in 18.52% (15 occurrences) of news stories, making it the 3<sup>rd</sup> most common term overall. (See “Table 7: Radiyo Rwanda Term Usage Summary”) This trend would appear in congruence with the extensive use of the term “Tutsi” and Tutsi identifiers seen during the period of the genocide on RTLM, but what is even more interesting is the absolute dearth of reference to Hutu ethnic identifiers. In fact, across the entire sample set there is not a single a mention of the word “Hutu.” While this statistical gap is quite large, the methodology employed in mining this data

set inhibits its larger ramifications. Though there is a clear indication that the ethnic identifier "Tutsi" is prevalent during broadcasts, the data hardly does justice to the repeated usage of the term in the complete absence of references to the "Hutu" ethnic identifier. Given the methodology, the invocation of the term "Tutsi" only counts in terms of a clip containing its use at least once. In actuality, this term (unlike the vast majority of the other high occurrence terms) appears an inordinate number of times in many of the clips - sometimes on the order of 6 or 7 times in a single news story.

The reasons for this are tied to trends in the relevance of particular news topics over the time frame encompassed by the sample set. If we split the sample set into two even halves (with the first group running from 8/27/12-1/31/13 and the second from 4/11/13-5/2/13), there is a clear separation between the major thematic points of emphasis in the news covered. Those in the first group pertain to major conflict in the DRC, vis-à-vis the Rwandan military's continued role as armed combatants within the country. The second group of programs is much more focused on the 2013 commemoration of the anniversary of the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

The data reflects this in the fact that, within the first time period, key terms such as "Violence" (28.89%, 13 references), "DRC" (24.44%, 11 references), and "Conflict" (20.00%, 9 references) are dominant, while in the latter grouping terms such as "Genocide" (44.44%, 16 references), "Commemoration" (38.89%, 14 references), and "Tutsi" (27.78%, 10 references) are most prominent. (See "Table 8: Radiyo Rwanda Terms Summary 8-27-12 to 1-31-13," "Table 9: Radiyo Rwanda Analysis Terms Summary 4-11-12 to 5-2-13" and "Chart B: Radiyo Rwanda Term Use Comparison") While this seems hardly worth bringing up at face value (given the temporal proximity between these events and their coverage), what is quite fascinating is the relative statistical similarities during the latter period regarding the frequency of the utilization of

terms such as "Peace," "Violence," and "Tutsi." Within the sample set, "Peace" and "Violence" operate as bookends for a discursive/rhetorical phenomenon that is identifiable throughout all programming. Take, for example, one news story covering a visit from the Belgian Prime Minister to discuss the conflict within the Democratic Republic of the Congo. While "conflict" is the overlying theme of the piece (e.g. that "there are many problems in Congo"), this is always immediately resolved through the interjection of "Peace" - often situating Rwanda as the broker of said peace ("Rwanda, though, is part of the solution").<sup>106</sup> This implementation shifts in broadcasts between 4/11/13 and 5/2/13. For instance, a story covering a statement by a Rwandan justice, that the "International War Crimes Tribunals are likely to lose their credibility for failing to address justice issues in war torn countries,"<sup>107</sup> offers a variation on this rhetorical construction - that violence does not work in tandem with peace, but rather with victim identity. As a result, it is Tutsi identity, itself, that offers the resolution of violence, as the legitimacy of the ICTR is in question because of its failures in confronting perpetrators; instead true justice for the victims is necessary.

It is the stark contrast in the political acceptability of violence and conflict in the region that makes these two rhetorical structures so interesting. Part of this is predicated on the central role of memory in constituting the new Rwandan identity ("forgive, but don't forget"), but there is also a great deal of posturing in the construction of this argumentation. For the Rwandan government, the failures of the past are not only a necessary and unchangeable reality; they serve as a means of reconstituting communal identity so as to avert similar disasters in the future. As a result, the invocation and construction of a national memory built around Tutsi victimhood serves as a very real and present political tool in massaging acceptable public/private discourse.

The split between these two periods has also had a clear impact on the use of the term “Tutsi” during the programs. If we recompile the term usage statistics based on time period, the rate of occurrence of the term “Tutsi” drops during the first period to 11.11% (5 occurrences), though it remains the 6<sup>th</sup> most common term overall. Perhaps more interesting, though, is how the term “Tutsi” appears during the programs. Beginning with the 1/31/13 broadcasts, the preponderance of references to Tutsi identity appear as part of a single repeated phrase: “the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi.” While the systematic extermination initiated within Rwanda beginning in April of 1994 was directed at the country’s ethnic Tutsi population, this phrase (and its frequent and precise repetition) suggests a concerted effort to define and control acceptable public discourse about how to discuss the upcoming commemoration. This repetition underlines the particular difference in the treatment of ethnic identity between RTLM and Radiyo Rwanda. It does seem conspicuous that the word “Hutu” does not appear within the sample set, particularly given the heavy emphasis of news coverage on the anniversary of the genocide.

The reason for this lies in fact that the deployment of the current discursive strategy by Rwanda state media has been designed to reconstitute and recode Hutu ethnic identity as a historical and ideological phenomenon. A key example of this occurs during a Radiyo Rwanda segment that discusses the arrest of 42 citizens “for harboring the genocide ideology during the genocide commemoration week” and for “inflammatory speech.”<sup>108</sup> Based on Articles 2 and 3 of Law 18/2008, these arrests occurred on the grounds that the perpetrators were participating in a public display of divisionism that threatened or marginalized the victims of the genocide. Though the government has actually stated that “Rwanda does not have a particular law defining divisionism” (the basis of these arrests), the larger result of Law 18/2008 has been to suppress any “speech, written statement or action that is likely to divide people or spark conflicts among

people.”<sup>109</sup> Given the vagueness of the law (which leaves it wide open to political abuse), there is little doubt as to the necessity on the part of media producers and distributors to tread very carefully in matters related to ethnic identity. An additional ramification of these arrests, and their legal definition, is that discourse that would normally be "pro-Hutu" or oriented toward "Hutu Power" is instead replaced with the phrase "harboring genocide ideology." As a result, the ethnic identifier “Hutu” becomes relegated to the past; the byproduct of a historical genocidal moment, not a contemporary means of ethnic identification. More to the point, it remains wholly an ideological and hate based construct, not a means of self-identification.

And yet, the statistical prominence of the term “Tutsi” suggests that it has not been de-ethnicized, and that it remains a continued means of ethnic identification. In using the phrase “the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi<sup>110</sup>,” Tutsi ethnic identity becomes historical (a moment when a group of people had a genocide perpetrated against them), but it also remains contemporary since the victimization of an ethnic group remains overtly identified. This is a dual process that serves to outline an acceptable application of ethnic identity in a contemporary context. As a result, to be “Tutsi” transcends the historical moment of genocide, entering into the space of personal and group trauma, because an act was perpetrated against either yourself (as survivor) or against the group with which you self identify. The phrase also causes some degree of difficulty in distinguishing between Tutsi ethnic identity and the historical post-1959 pattern of Hutu-Tutsi victimization, through the definition of genocide as “against the Tutsi.” The repeated implementations of Tutsi identity as synonymous with victimhood reinforces public sympathies that appear as quite distinct from the genocide and continue to this day (even as a large number of Rwandan Tutsi were either in exile during the genocide, or are too young to have been present). In combination with the statistical gap between references to “Tutsi” and

“Hutu,” the clear indication is that Tutsi identity remains acceptable in public discourse while Hutu identity (given its absolute absence within the data set) is now coded as being genocidal and ideological.

The imprisonment of these 42 people based on their "harboring genocide ideology" suggests a binary between those that are participants in the new Rwandan order (those that identify as Tutsi, or that accept the conceptualized victimhood of the Tutsi population) and those that are not allowed to be (those that question the state in relation to the issue of victimhood). As a result, the use of the phrase “the genocide against the Tutsi” comes with its own agenda. There is little doubt that arguing this point could, itself, likely be considered “harboring genocide ideology” (since the point of the genocide ideology law, in President Kagame's words, is that it should fight “against those who continue to deny or trivialize the Genocide against the Tutsi”<sup>111</sup>).

In comparison to the massive utilization of derogatory terminology within RTLTM broadcasts, contemporary Rwandan state radio is nonthreatening. There are, though, clear rhetorical strategies being used in the service of “othering” – particularly in terms of the relationship between Rwanda and the International Community. Of the top ten terms in overall occurrence, "UN" (13.58%, 11 references, 7<sup>th</sup> overall), "International Community" (8.64%, 7 references, 9<sup>th</sup> overall), and "France" (6.17%, 5 references, 12<sup>th</sup> overall) appear in the top twelve (while "Belgium" and "UK" tied for twenty-ninth, and the "US" tied for fifty-first). For the most part, references to the United Nations mostly appear in the later broadcast period and are generally negative. For example, there are stories covering the genocide commemoration that state that: “today thousands of Tutsi's that were abandoned by UN forces [...] are being remembered.”<sup>112</sup> In fact, the tone of references to the U.N., across all broadcasts, can be characterized as one of abandonment (as this quote suggests) and unwitting obstructionism.

During part of the weekly news round up, one broadcast references a *New Times* story that refers to U.N. attempts to facilitate peace in the DRC, but that such attempts need to recognize the necessary role of Rwanda in this process since violence in region “represents a direct threat to our own national interest.”<sup>113</sup> In such a way, the U.N. appears to be a roadblock between Rwanda and its attempts to protect itself by fulfilling what it deems to be its role in quelling the violence in the DRC.

The DRC, is a centerpiece for “us”/“them” rhetorical strategies within the sample set. Given the complex history of Rwanda and the DRC (with former Rwandan government forces responsible for much of the violence within the DRC<sup>114</sup>) it is difficult to parse legitimate interest in regional stability from possible revenge, but the public response in Rwanda offers important insights into how public discourse has been set on the issue. For instance, though many programs call on listeners to text in their comments via cell phone, the only occasion that seems to have been used was to discuss the conflict in the DRC. Only two texts were read on the air, and both of them contain very interesting insights into how Rwandans could potentially see the conflict (as well as what ideas the state is sanctioning through their inclusion in the broadcast). While it is possible that these texts were both spontaneously composed by listeners, they remain carefully worded endorsements of the state. The first text read: "The Belgian government has made positive steps in helping to find a solution to the crisis in Congo without dwelling on baseless allegations against Rwanda."<sup>115</sup> The important discursive element in this text is the invocation of "baseless allegations against Rwanda." The current regime has faced a wide range of accusations regarding not only its role in the DRC (such as exacerbating the conflict in the DRC by training Congolese rebels<sup>116</sup>), but also political corruption (particularly in the intimidation of political dissenters<sup>117</sup>), and even crimes against humanity (not only during the

Civil War and RPF actions, but also in the purported “disappearing” of political opponents<sup>118</sup>).

The strategy employed in this text message is to identify all allegations, no matter their factual backing, as baseless. The positive elements of the statement (“The Belgian government has made positive steps...”) are eradicated by the implicit negativity of the more common response: “baseless allegations.”

The other text message states that the "Congo should closely seek the help of its neighboring countries in the region to find a meaningful path to peace and stability." While this is a nice sentiment, the call for regional peace and stability is as altruistic as it is simplistic. What is in the best interest for Rwanda may very well be what is in the best interest of the DRC (though it also may not be), but such mutual interests may not be the only reason for Rwanda's incursions into the DRC. From a geographical perspective, Rwanda not only borders the DRC, it is very much dwarfed by the comparatively immense country. As a result, fears of violence spilling over the border are hardly misplaced. The prominent role of Rwandan *génocidaires* in the conflict within the DRC has made such concerns all the more relevant. The implicit rhetorical slant of the text message is that the DRC needs to work with its neighbors (particularly Rwanda) in solving its problems, in contrast to the U.N. or European countries that may have a vested interest in perpetuating conflict in the region.

### *Conclusions*

Though these are hardly comprehensive sample sets, and more analysis is necessary to draw large scale conclusions, the data collected for this case study serves as a starting point for further research. What is prevalent within the sample set analyzed, at least at the anecdotal level, is the necessity during both the para- and post-genocide periods for Rwandan radio to serve as a major source for the distribution of acceptable public discourse (though the character of this



discourse has shifted). During the period of the 1994 genocide, radio reinforced hegemonic “Hutu Power” ideology through the dehumanization of Tutsi, and the systematic implementation of derogatory terminology. The installation of the new, RPF led, government has changed the message, but the purpose of state radio remains the same. “Tutsi Power” ideology has not supplanted “Hutu Power,” but statistical evidence suggests that the state continues to exert control over the dissemination of information on the radio.

The diminution and dehumanization of ethnic identity found in RTLM programs is gone, but what has come in to replace it needs to be critically engaged with as well. Political conditions in the early 1990s dictated the discursive and rhetorical slant employed by RTLM (given its strong links to President Habyarimana’s ruling MRND Party, as well as his family), but this has not exactly changed in the interim. The current Kagame administration, particularly through speech laws, has defined acceptable public discourse around a notion of new Rwandan nationalism. It seems rather important that there are a number of discursive parallels between the para- and post-genocide periods, no more so than the implementation of the term “Inkotanyi.” Though it was originally utilized as a slur, a call back to a forgotten age of Tutsi oppression, the RPF has embraced it as a symbol of power. While the repurposing makes sense from a historical point of view, since the word means “invincible warrior,” in some sense is appropriation seems paradoxical: how does Rwanda rebuild itself as a de-ethnicized state, while still embracing the accouterments of ethnic identity?

If “we are all Rwandans,” then why have the attempts to efface identity politics in Rwanda resulted in an environment that continues to implement the ghosts of the past as the foundation for its future (“forgive, but don’t forget”)? The construction of this new identity, around the invocation of victimhood and the condemnation of “harboring genocidal ideology,”

posits a new paradigm that, though it does not prescribe the overt demonization of one ethnic group more than another, does limit the acceptability of the demonstration of ethnic identity. In some sense, it seems likely that such a construct actually reinforces ethnic division, in that the limitation of public discourse may have a limited effect on private discourse. Reconciliation following the Rwandan genocide has had a major impact on public perspectives of ethnic division, but to suggest that private discourse has drastically changed may be a difficult position to defend. What is amazing is the degree to which Rwanda has managed to hold itself together given the massive complicity of its population in the 1994 genocide. Still, generations of ideological conditioning do not disappear overnight. Unificatory discourse is an important element in superficially easing these tensions, but genocidal ideology laws represent a problematic trend in limiting discourse and imposing particular standards on acceptable and unacceptable forms of identity.

The purpose of this line of inquiry is not to suggest that, somehow, hate speech is an unavoidable element of ethnic identity. Rather, it is important to recognize the attempts made by the Rwandan government in the areas of media and education that have limited the exposure of the population (youth in particular) to the history of the genocide. The moratorium on teaching Rwandan history (which ended in 1999), as well as the lack of a cohesive curriculum, has made this particular issue apparent, and it remains a problem to this day.<sup>119</sup> Where, then, have Rwandan youth received information about the history and causations of the 1994 genocide? Media has played a role in the process, as cultural programming and news content provide state sponsored positions on these issues (especially in the build-up to the genocide victim commemorations). But, just as it has always been, domestic discourse (framed by the political, social, and cultural predispositions of family members) is likely to play a huge role in the future

of this process. The Hutu-Tutsi divide remains an important element for consideration in looking at the role and responsibilities of contemporary Rwandan media, particularly in the formation of a new national identity.

Perhaps the simplest way to think about this discursive transition is in the comparison of the characterization of Rwandan nationalism seen in the RTLM on-air comments (and that appear in the epigraph of this case study - that “we are Rwandans”) and the contemporary mantra that “we are *all* Rwandans.” Of prime importance is the unificatory nature of this shift, particularly given what we have already isolated as a rather complex split in the formulation of ethnic identity within Rwanda. The implication here, though, is not that there ceases to be an “us” versus “them” arrangement to Rwandan national identity. In fact, a major shared element between RTLM and Radiyo Rwanda content is the perceived distrust of outsiders. In the examples culled from 1993 and 1994, this expresses itself in the repeated references to “KAGOME” and “Inkotanyi” as labels indicating the wickedness and the oppressive nature of the “alien” RPF forces. In the contemporary era, the characterization of the U.N. as those that “abandoned Rwanda,” and as a source of “baseless claims” leveled by the International community against governmental leadership, has displaced this. The diametric opposition, between Rwanda, as the defenders of their own interests, and the International Community, as the exogenous obstructionists, ties into the problematic representation of violence in contemporary media content. While both sample sets focus on violence, Radiyo Rwanda bifurcates its approach between justifying violence within the DRC, and condemning violence in the case of commemorating the 1994 Rwanda genocide. This split is all the more problematic given the complex relationship between Rwanda and the former Rwandan forces operating in DRC.

Even larger, and unanswerable, questions persist. What will the results be on Rwanda's socio-political climate if current conditions continue? Can the push toward de-ethnicization be successful given the complex and variegated politics within Rwandan homes? Will the paradoxical relationship between current Rwandan ethno-politics and its expressed unificatory ideology continue? Only time will tell, but these are worthwhile avenues for critical inquiry as the mediascape in Rwanda is rapidly changing. The greatest error, though, is to suggest that contemporary Rwandan media is completely separate from its past (in terms of production, infrastructure, ideology, and consumption); quite the contrary. The larger point argued here has been that the period of political changeover is one characterized by discursive transition, not ideological "rift." As a result, the common narrative of media instigating violence, followed by a gap between the removal of the old guard "Hutu power" regime and the emergence of the new Rwanda state radio, ignores the shared infrastructure of genocide era stations such as RTLM and post-genocide stations such as Radiyo Rwanda (not to mention the temporal and geographic overlap of RPF Radio Muhabura that operated throughout the genocide, broadcast from Uganda). The evidence seems to suggest that, while much of the "bite" of genocidal ideology has been removed from Rwandan airwaves, the discursive *role* of radio remains much the same. While contemporary state radio condemns ethnic conflict, concerted efforts to homogenize acceptable public discourse behind mantras, such as "we are all Rwandans" or "forgive, but don't forget," are broadcast using the same infrastructure that disseminated genocidal ideology for quite a different purpose.

Radio did not cause the genocide; generations of ideological conditioning, perceived and real socio-economic oppression, and the catalyzing of violence through the shooting down of the President's plane were largely responsible for this. Radio, though, did play an important role in

disseminating and acclimatizing social conditions to be receptive to violence. It would be quite easy to dismiss the importance of contemporary radio, particularly given the diversification of media forms within Rwanda (including the introduction of the Internet and satellite Television/communication). The role of radio in the daily lives of many Rwandans ties into its larger historical position as a democratizing force, as well as the central means of disseminating crucial civic information (e.g. “cleaning day”). As a result, to suggest the diminution of its current importance in the face of “new media” is to ignore the severe obstacles faced by other media forms in Rwanda (“old” and “new” alike). The reasons for the historical embrace of radio in Rwanda (low cost of adoption, not needing to be literate, central attachment to the state and its funding structures) still remain in place today.

## **Connections**

Why, then, is it necessary to view Rwandan radio in relation to other media? In a country where less than 1 in 10 households have electricity,<sup>120</sup> mobile media, including radio and cellular phones, have become particularly important means of disseminating key civic information. There are numerous reasons that the limitation of the adoption of other media forms has persisted; many of which go far beyond the access to electricity. While this chapter has gone to great lengths to explain the cultural significance of radio, particularly in its links to hate speech and acceptable public discourse, the development of the medium hardly occurred in isolation. Just as RTLM emerged as an organ of the Hutu Power state alongside print publications such as *Kangura*, Radiyo Rwanda shares an affinity with numerous contemporary print publication (as well as Television, Film, and other media industries). There are many reasons for these particular affinities, but they primarily revolve around the introduction of print mass media, alongside Catholicism, at the end of the 19th century.

The supplanting of newspapers social function (as a publically distributed and consumed media) by radio, due to high illiteracy rates, links these media. It's not just that radio "replaced" newspapers, the social relevance, discursive slant, and political import of print media *informed* radio production and consumption since its first broadcast. It is important, to understand the continued relevance of print media, even as its centrality to the dissemination of state endorsed discourse is diminishing. Chapter 2 will look at these particular issues as well as address how regulatory practice (including self-regulation and free speech laws) had a profound on the development of print news media in post-genocide Rwanda. While the radio and print media industries have very different trajectories of development, is it important to understand how they have operated within the differentiated contemporary media regulatory environment to participate in the formulation of acceptable public discourse.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Tharcisse Gatwa, "Ethnic Conflict and the Media: The Case of Rwanda," *Media Development* (Vol. 3, 1995), p.20.

<sup>2</sup> David Welch, *The Third Reich: Politics and Propaganda* (London: Routledge, 1993), p.39.

<sup>3</sup> Linda Melvern, *Conspiracy to Murder: The Rwandan Genocide* (London: Verso Books, 2004), p.134.

<sup>4</sup> Russell Smith, "The Impact of Hate Media in Rwanda," *BBC.com* (Web. 3 December 2003, Accessed 15 June 2014). <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3257748.stm>>

<sup>5</sup> There is actually a wide variation in the death statistics of the Rwanda genocide, as evidenced by the complex statistical shifts including the uncertainty of the global population of surviving Tutsi, the inclusion of individuals that were not killed as part of the conflict, as well as the drastic difference in the assumed dead from site to site (Des Forges, 1999), but 800,000 is the generally accepted number (Verwimp, 2004 and Prunier, 1997).

<sup>6</sup> Arthur Asiiimwe, "'Hotel Rwanda' hero in bitter controversy," *Reuters* (Web. 4 April 2007, Accessed 16 August 2014). <<http://www.reuters.com/article/2007/04/04/us-rwanda-genocide-film-idUSL0420968620070404>>

<sup>7</sup> Chris McGreal, "French politicians accused of assisting Rwandan genocide," *The Guardian* (Web. 5 August 2008, Accessed 2 February 2014). <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/aug/06/rwanda.france>>

<sup>8</sup> "West 'guilty' over Rwanda genocide," *CNN.com* (Web. 6 April 2004, Accessed 21 October 2014) <<http://www.cnn.com/2004/WORLD/africa/04/06/rwanda.dallaire/>>

<sup>9</sup> *CBS Evening News* (June 23, 1994).

<sup>10</sup> "54 Rwandan Refugees Are Reported Massacred," *New York Times* (26 October 1994), p.A6.

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- <sup>11</sup> Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families*, p.59.
- <sup>12</sup> David Yanagizawa-Drott, *Propaganda and Conflict: Theory and Evidence from the Rwandan Genocide* (Web August 2012, Accessed 4 October 2014), p.5.  
<<http://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/dyanagi/Research/RwandaDYD.pdf>>
- <sup>13</sup> Yanagizawa-Drott's bases much of his research on *Gacaca* prosecution data that does not appear to take into account a number of variables and larger media effects. He does point out that the large number of Tutsi casualties would tend to make the bulk of the data tend toward Hutu prosecutions, but does not address many of the suppositions inherent in the construction of the perpetrating population as proportional to the prosecution data. In fact, given the inordinate number of government forces that left Rwanda and were not prosecuted, prosecutions would hardly serve as a proxy for actual collective/individual violence ratios. Additionally, there appears to be little data regarding mercy killings or the proportional responsibility of collective and individual violence for the total death toll (i.e. an individual prosecuted for collective violence may be responsible for several dozen murders). There is also a certain tendency toward a hypodermic conceptualization of media messaging present in his analysis that does not take into account resistant readings or the variable understanding of media information. The ownership of radios, and access to RTLM broadcasts, does not necessarily correlate with the degree of media influence, based either on education level or geographic location. Finally, the reference by defendants to RTLM in *Gacaca* proceedings does not necessarily indicate the actual degree to which media messages influenced perpetrators of violence. In fact, given the flexible nature of *Gacaca* proceedings and sentencing, it would be likely that some defendants would reference the influence of RTLM as a means of reducing their sentences, even if they were not listeners.
- <sup>14</sup> Joan Casoliva and Joan Carrero, *The African Great Lakes: Ten Years of Suffering, Destruction and Death* (Barcelona: Cristianisme i Justícia, 2000)p.3.
- <sup>15</sup> Gérard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide*, pp.47-48.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p.48.
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p.49.
- <sup>18</sup> Arthur S. Banks, Thomas C. Muller, and William Overstreet, *Political Handbook of the World 2008* (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2008), p.1,103.
- <sup>19</sup> "Rwanda's Shifting Media Policy," *The Chronicles* (Web. 18 November 2011, Accessed 3 March 2014). <<http://the-chronicles.net/index.php/news/81-rwandas-shifting-media-policy.html>>
- <sup>20</sup> Alison Des Forges, Ed. Allan Thompson, "Call to Genocide," *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide* (London: Pluto Press, 2007), p.42.
- <sup>21</sup> David Yanagizawa-Drott, *Propaganda and Conflict*, p.4.
- <sup>22</sup> Michael Curtin, "Thinking Globally," *Media Industries*, p.116.
- <sup>23</sup> "Rwanda's Shifting Media Policy," *The Chronicles*.
- <sup>24</sup> Monique Alexis and Ines Mpambara, "IMS Assessment Mission: The Rwanda Media Experience From The Genocide," *International Media Support* (Web. March 2003, Accessed 20 November 2011), p.6. <<http://www.rwandainitiative.ca/resources/pdfs/RwandamediaexperiencereportJune03.pdf>>
- <sup>25</sup> Gerald Caplan, Ed. Allan Thompson, "Rwanda: Walking the Road to Genocide," *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide* (London: Pluto Press, 2007), p.21.
- <sup>26</sup> Darryl Li, Ed. Allan Thompson, "Echoes of Violence: Considerations on Radio and Genocide in Rwanda," *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide* (London: Pluto Press, 2007), p.96.
- <sup>27</sup> Charles Mironko, Ed. Allan Thompson, "The Effect of RTLM's Rhetoric of Ethnic Hatred in Rural Rwanda," *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide* (London: Pluto Press, 2007), p.130.
- <sup>28</sup> Michael Curtin, "Thinking Globally," *Media Industries*, p.115.
- <sup>29</sup> "Rwanda's Shifting Media Policy," *The Chronicles*.
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>32</sup> Dina Temple-Raston, *Justice on the Grass*, p.2.
- <sup>33</sup> Dina Temple-Raston, *Justice on the Grass*, pp.2-3.

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- <sup>34</sup> Alison Des Forges, "Call to Genocide," *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, p.42.
- <sup>35</sup> Nick Couldry, *Media Rituals*, p.28.
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p.29.
- <sup>37</sup> Mary Kimani, Ed. Allan Thompson, "RTLM: the Medium that Became a Tool for Mass Murder," *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide* (London: Pluto Press, 2007), p.110.
- <sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>39</sup> Nick Couldry, *Media Rituals*, p.35.
- <sup>40</sup> Darryl Li, Ed. Allan Thompson, "Echoes of Violence," *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, p.96.
- <sup>41</sup> Tharcisse Gatwa, *The Churches and Ethnic Ideology in the Rwandan Crises 1900-1994* (Waynesboro, GA: Regnum Books International, 2005), p.154.
- <sup>42</sup> Gerard Prunier, *Africa's World War*, p.465.
- <sup>43</sup> Alex J. Bellamy, *Massacres and Morality*, p.345.
- <sup>44</sup> Waldorf discusses this extensively in "Censorship and Propaganda in Post-Genocide Rwanda" from *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, though given more recent trends in the democratization of media in Rwanda, we should revisit the parallels drawn between the pre-genocide regime and the kinds of policies implemented by the Kagame administration.
- <sup>45</sup> "Rwanda's Shifting Media Policy," *The Chronicles*.
- <sup>46</sup> "Rwanda at a Glance," *Republic of Rwanda Embassy Website* (Web. 18 November 2011, Accessed 21 July 2014). <<http://www.rwandaembassy.org/discover-rwanda/rwanda-at-a-glance.html>>
- <sup>47</sup> Michael Curtin, "Thinking Globally," *Media Industries*, p.116.
- <sup>48</sup> Michele Hilmes, Ed. Michele Hilmes and Jason Jacobs "Introduction to Programming: New Venues, New Forms," *The Television History Book* (London: British Film Institute Press, 2003), p.95.
- <sup>49</sup> "Hip Hop Dominating Rwanda's Music Industry," *The New Times* Web. 2 December 2011. <<http://www.newtimes.co.rw/print.php?issue=14178&print&article=6255>>
- <sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>51</sup> Lars Waldorf, in "Censorship and Propaganda in Post-Genocide Rwanda," does an excellent job outlining the numerous cases where journalists and politicians have been detained, harassed, arrested, attacked, and even killed due to their criticism of the government. Though his analysis does take on a harsh tone, the realities of repeated incursions upon the rights of journalists (even assuming that some of the examples he cites may not be exactly as they seem) are troubling to say the least.
- <sup>52</sup> Lars Waldorf, "Censorship and Propaganda in Post-Genocide Rwanda," *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide* (London: Pluto Press, 2007), p.404.
- <sup>53</sup> Scott Straus, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda*, p.141.
- <sup>54</sup> Lars Waldorf, "Censorship and Propaganda," *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, p.404.
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p.405.
- <sup>56</sup> One such example of this is the murder of Jean-Léonard Rugambage, the editor of the suspended publication *Umuwugizi*, who was shot and killed just as he was planning to leave Rwanda and work in exile (see Committee to Protect Journalists, 2010).
- <sup>57</sup> Josh Kron, "Grenade Strikes Rwanda's Capital Two Days After Election," *New York Times* (Web 11 August 2010, Accessed 2 November 2014). <[http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/12/world/africa/12rwanda.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/12/world/africa/12rwanda.html?_r=0)>
- <sup>58</sup> André Sibomana *Hope for Rwanda: Conversations with Laure Guilbert and Harve Deguine* (London, UK: Pluto Press, 1999), p.144.
- <sup>59</sup> This does not even to mention the inordinate amount of bias an endeavor to quantify distrust of the state would likely encounter, either through the suggested overt influence of the government over Rwandan citizens or a subtler, though no less important, process of self censorship. In any context in which free speech is limited, data gathering would need to take such limitations into account.
- <sup>60</sup> *Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey 2010* (Calverton, Maryland, USA: National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, Rwanda Ministry of Health, and ICF International, 2012), p.23.
- <sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p.24.



- <sup>62</sup> “Enabling Poor Rural People to Overcome Poverty in Rwanda,” *IFAD.org* (Web 11 January 2014, Accessed 20 June 2014). <[http://www.ifad.org/operations/projects/regions/Pf/factsheets/rwanda\\_e.pdf](http://www.ifad.org/operations/projects/regions/Pf/factsheets/rwanda_e.pdf)>
- <sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>64</sup> *Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009* (Kigali, Rwanda: High Council of the Press, Incisive Research, 2009), pp.9.
- <sup>65</sup> *Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey 2010*, p.21.
- <sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p.xxi.
- <sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>68</sup> “Social Media Powers Grassroots Democracy in Rwanda,” [www.gov.rw](http://www.gov.rw) (Web 11 January 2014, Accessed 14 December 2014). <<http://www.gov.rw/Social-Media-Powers-Grassroots-Democracy-in-Rwanda>>
- <sup>69</sup> Infrastructural discrepancies between urban and rural communities, as well as fundamental disparities in wealth accumulation, have served to buttress this gap in media adoption.
- <sup>70</sup> *Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey 2010*, p.25.
- <sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p.xxi.
- <sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p.24.
- <sup>73</sup> *Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009*, pp.7-8.
- <sup>74</sup> Philip Briggs and Janice Booth, *Rwanda, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.: The Bradt Travel Guide* (Guilford, CT: The Globe Pequot Press, 2006), p.62.
- <sup>75</sup> “Rwandan Media Today,” *Graduate Studies: Ryerson* (Web 11 January 2014, Accessed 16 August 2014). <<http://www.journalism.ryerson.ca/grad/3715/3/>>
- <sup>76</sup> The utilization of *Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009* as a source poses a number of issues, particularly pertaining to the conflict of interests present when a governmental agency, even when working through a non-governmental entity such as the RMHC, is attempting to gauge the efficacy of its own programming. A number of objections have been lodged against the survey by private media owners in Rwanda who have strongly objected to the rating of public media so highly in relation to private stations and programs (see: <http://www.journalism.co.za/index.php/codes-&-guidelines/164-news/media-business/3026-private-media-dispute-rwanda-audience-survey.html>). With this in mind, though, there is limited data to proceed with in attempting to gauge the growth, acceptance, awareness, and popularity of Rwandan media thus, in the absence of concrete evidence to contradict the survey, this data is intended to at least offer insights into media usage (many of which are supported by numerous census documents completed independently of this report. At the very least, this document should be seen as an insight, no matter how flawed it may potentially be, into the nature of how the Rwandan government perceives its role in media.
- <sup>77</sup> *Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009*, pp.14, 16.
- <sup>78</sup> For instance, the films of Gilbert Ndahayo and Ayuub Kasasa Mago focus heavily on community and autobiographical trauma, but also characterize Rwanda as a hub of commerce and as “post-ethnic” (suggested by the title and themes of Mago’s film *We Are All Rwandans*).
- <sup>79</sup> Joshua Hirsch, *Afterimage: Film, Trauma, and the Holocaust*, p.9.
- <sup>80</sup> J.C. Alexander, “Towards a Theory,” *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, p.7.
- <sup>81</sup> Sigmund Freud, Trans. James Strachey, “Beyond the Pleasure Principle,” *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 1961), p.21.
- <sup>82</sup> Maureen Turim, “The Trauma of History: Flashbacks Upon Flashbacks,” *Screen* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, Vol. 42 no. 2, Summer, 2001), p.207.
- <sup>83</sup> This is intended to be used in the same manner that Kirby Farrell (via Rosanne Kennedy in “Constructing Shared Histories: Stolen Generations and Testimony”) views communal trauma as a dynamic between “physical distress” and “psychocultural trauma,” a key framework for researchers in media studies.
- <sup>84</sup> J.C. Alexander, “Towards a Theory,” *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, p.8.
- <sup>85</sup> A good example of this is the well publicized reaction of the US Department of Veteran Affairs to the theatrical release of *Saving Private Ryan* (1998) in the form of a release warning of a return of symptoms

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of PTSD in older veterans through the film's summoning of memory's of past experience.

<sup>86</sup> Joshua Hirsch, *Afterimage: Film, Trauma, and the Holocaust*, p.xi.

<sup>87</sup> Lisa Saltzman and Eric Rosenberg, "Introduction," *Trauma and Visuality*, p.xii.

<sup>88</sup> Though many have discussed the topic, Hayden White's discussion of historiography and the narrativity of reality offers the most succinct explanation of the problem at hand (paraphrasing Benedetto Croce): "where there is no narrative [...] there is no history" ("The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality," *Critical Inquiry*, 7:1, Autumn 1980, p.10).

<sup>89</sup> Isabelle Wallace, "Trauma as Representation," *Trauma and Visuality*, p.13.

<sup>90</sup> Allen Meek, "Introduction," *Trauma and Media*, pp.10-11.

<sup>91</sup> Ann Kaplan and Ban Wang, "Introduction," *Trauma and Cinema*, p.17.

<sup>92</sup> Andrew Slade, "'Hiroshima, mon amour,'" *Trauma and Cinema*, p.168.

<sup>93</sup> Sarah L. Lincoln, "This is my History," *Trauma and Cinema*, p.27.

<sup>94</sup> RTLM Transcript 5/29/1994 (MIGS Archive, trans. 6 September 1996), p.2.

<[http://migs.concordia.ca/links/documents/RTLM\\_29May94\\_eng\\_tape0014.pdf](http://migs.concordia.ca/links/documents/RTLM_29May94_eng_tape0014.pdf)>

<sup>95</sup> RTLM Transcript 6/13/1994 (MIGS Archive, trans. 23 March 2000), p.1.

<[http://migs.concordia.ca/links/documents/RTLM\\_13Jun94\\_eng\\_tape0109.pdf](http://migs.concordia.ca/links/documents/RTLM_13Jun94_eng_tape0109.pdf)>

<sup>96</sup> Jean-Pierre Chrétien, et al. *Rwanda, les médias du génocide*, Christine L. Kellow and H. Leslie Steeves "The Role of Radio in the Rwanda Genocide" (*Journal of Communication*, 48:3), and L. Nkusi and B. Rwigamba's *The Kinyarwanda Language: It's Use and Impact in the Various Media During the Period 1990-1994: A Sociolinguistic Study* (UNICTR report), are all key examples of the various approaches used to this end.

<sup>97</sup> As part of the "rebranding" of state run media that has been taking place over the last several years, the Rwanda Broadcasting Agency (RBA) has taken over many of the responsibilities previously held by the Rwanda Bureau of Information and Broadcasting (ORINFOR) – essentially the same entity under a new title. As part of this shift, though, many of the archived programs that had been available were made unavailable on the new site. For the purposes of this project, copies of the audio files downloaded from the ORINFOR site in 2013 were utilized. While these files may become available through the RBA audio archive, at the time of this writing they were not currently.

<sup>98</sup> "Inkotanyi," *Kinyarwanda.net* (Web 24 February 2014, Accessed 21 September 2014).

<<http://kinyarwanda.net/index.php?q=inkotanyi&start=0>>

<sup>99</sup> Mary Kimani, "RTLM," *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, p.115.

<sup>100</sup> Jean-Marie Biju-Duval, Ed. Allan Thompson, "'Hate Media' – Crimes Against Humanity and Genocide: Opportunities Missed by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda," *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide* (London: Pluto Press, 2007), p.350.

<sup>101</sup> Lasana T. Harris and Susan Fiske, "Dehumanized Perception: A Psychological Means to Facilitate Atrocities, Torture, and Genocide?" *Zeitschrift für Psychologie/Journal of Psychology* (Vol.219:3, 2011), p.175.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, p.180.

<sup>103</sup> A great deal of work exists in the field of social psychology on the causes and effects of dehumanization, even as early as Floyd Henry Allport's work on group thought, but this is one incarnation of research into the process of dehumanization that exists in a number of other fields, with crowd theory being one other example.

<sup>104</sup> Valerie BEMERIKI, trans. Yves-Florent NDIRUKUNDO, "Loose tape – RTLM22-04-94," *MIGS Archive* (Kigali, Rwanda, 22 April 1994), Radio, Transcript, p.2.

<[http://migs.concordia.ca/links/documents/RTLM\\_22Apr94\\_eng\\_tape0115.pdf](http://migs.concordia.ca/links/documents/RTLM_22Apr94_eng_tape0115.pdf)>

<sup>105</sup> Bernard Hategikimana MUKINGO, trans. M. Vianney UWAMAHORO, "17/5/94 RTLM 18/5/94 0009 (Side A)," *MIGS Archive* (Kigali, Rwanda, May 18 1994), Radio, Transcript, p.7.

<sup>106</sup> *Radiyo Rwanda News – in English*, Radiyo Rwanda (27 August 2012).

<sup>107</sup> *Radiyo Rwanda News – in English*, Radiyo Rwanda (11 April 2013).

<sup>108</sup> *Radiyo Rwanda News – in English*, Radiyo Rwanda (15 April 2013).

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<sup>109</sup> Rwandan Republic, Ministry of Justice, *The 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Periodic Report of the Republic of Rwanda Under the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, Period Covered by the Report 2005-July 2009*, p.22.

<sup>110</sup> This phrasing even more interesting when you note that it also appears six times in the Rwandan constitution (see *Rwanda's Constitution of 2003 with Amendments Through 2010* <[https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Rwanda\\_2010.pdf](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Rwanda_2010.pdf)>)

<sup>111</sup> Jane Nishmwe, "Rwanda: Controversial 'Genocide Ideology' Law to Send More Rwandans Behind Bars," *JamboNews.net* (25 April 2013). <http://www.jambonews.net/en/news/20130425-rwanda-controversial-genocide-ideology-law-to-send-more-rwandans-behind-bars/>

<sup>112</sup> *Radiyo Rwanda News – in English*, Radiyo Rwanda (11 April 2013).

<sup>113</sup> *Radiyo Rwanda News – in English*, Radiyo Rwanda (1 September 2012).

<sup>114</sup> The relationship between Rwanda and the DRC is complicated, to the extent that recently there were mass celebrations in Goma that sprang from the false rumor that Rwandan President Paul Kagame had died (See "The False Rumour of President Kagame's Death," #BBCTrending, 10 January 2014 <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs-trending-25682683>>)

<sup>115</sup> *Radiyo Rwanda News – in English*, Radiyo Rwanda (27 August 2012).

<sup>116</sup> "Rwanda Helped Launch DR Congo Rebels, Say UN Experts," *BBC.com* (27 June 2012). <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-18612612>>

<sup>117</sup> Timothy P. Longman, "After Genocide, Stifled Dissent," *The New York Times* (29 June 2012). <[http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/30/opinion/stifled-dissent-in-rwanda.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/30/opinion/stifled-dissent-in-rwanda.html?_r=0)>

<sup>118</sup> Marc Sommers, "The Darling Dictator of the Day," *The New York Times* (27 May 2012). <<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/28/opinion/Paul-Kagame-The-Darling-Dictator-of-the-day.html>>

<sup>119</sup> Harvey M. Weinstein, et al., "School Voices," *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, p.55.

<sup>120</sup> *Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey 2010*, p.21.

## Chapter 2: The *Kinyamateka* Paradox and The New Times - Catholicism, Regulation, and the Post-Genocidal Turn

“The legacy of RTLM and *Kangura* casts a long shadow over the current debate [...] [but we must] interrogate freedom of the press in Rwanda, bearing in mind the historical truth of the independent journalists who lost their lives during the genocide, courageously speaking out against tyranny.” - Chi Mgbako<sup>1</sup>

“I take the liberal view where the media is allowed to operate freely [...] they should be allowed to criticize but the criticism should be constructive for our development and not harm any member of the society.” - President Paul Kagame<sup>2</sup>

### **Censorship and the Church**

On April 7, 1994, the day following the attack on the President’s plane, much of life in Ntarama (located in the Bugesera District) remained the same. The teachers continued teaching their classes at the local school but, out of fear of attack, “slept far from [their] homes in the bush at night.”<sup>3</sup> Such fears were well placed as violence escalated over the next few days, with local militia (then military forces) systematically killing local residents, leading residents in the area to seek sanctuary. As in many Rwandan villages, Ntarama’s local churches and convents were one of the first destinations that endangered civilians turned to. According to Rwandan filmmaker and genocide survivor Gilbert Ndahayo, during the 1959 Rwandan Civil War many had flocked to churches and were, for the most part, protected by the priests and nuns (as well as the sense that “the killers couldn’t really storm into a very holy place”).<sup>4</sup> Since 1959, though, conditions had changed. Priests and nuns were not only unable to protect their (largely Catholic) followers, many were active participants in carrying out the genocide. In Nyange Parish, one priest, Athanase Seromba, even went so far as to order that his church be set on fire and bulldozed with 2,000 victims still trapped inside.<sup>5</sup> This is hardly the only, or even the most grotesque, example of the role played by members and leaders of the Church in carrying out the genocide, but it does pose a rather unavoidable question: how have such events altered the relationship between

Rwandans and religious authority?

Far more than forcing a crisis of faith, the events of 1994 were devastating to both the Catholic Church within Rwanda and the relationship between Rwandans and religion. For many, including Ndahayo, attempting to reconcile their beliefs with the acts carried out against their communities and their families, runs parallel with asking how God might allow such a thing to happen in the first place. Though Protestant churches participated in endorsing the genocide, the overwhelming majority (about 62.6%<sup>6</sup>) of Rwandans in 1994 were members of the Catholic Church. This number has diminished since then<sup>7</sup> (45.12% Catholic, compared to 51.12% of the population identifying themselves as Protestant/Adventist). Overall Christian religious affiliation has only increased since the genocide (from 90%<sup>8</sup> to 96.22%), largely at the expense of those religiously unaffiliated (which decreased from 6.8%<sup>9</sup> to 2.19%). The larger trend has been a statistical shift from Catholicism and religious un-affiliation towards Islam (which increased from 1.2%<sup>10</sup> to 1.6%, alongside vows from Rwandan Muslims that “we have our own jihad, and that is our war against ignorance between Hutu and Tutsi”<sup>11</sup>) and Protestant Christianity (particularly Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Evangelical Church).<sup>12</sup> The continued affiliation with Christianity, given the events of the genocide, is remarkable. But the actual *increase* in overall religious affiliation is nothing short of staggering.

Such a point is no less astounding considering the constant reminders of the 1994 genocide in the daily lives of contemporary Rwandans. Homes, schools, churches, street corners, corner shops; these are all places where neighbors, family, and friends lost their lives. Though thanatourism (or “Death Tourism”<sup>13</sup>) remains a rather large component of Rwanda’s economy, it is the constant reminders of what happened that would seem the largest challenge to the dominance of Christianity in Rwanda. “Forgive but don’t forget” seems an apt phrase in the

face of reconciling the personal experience of the genocide with a contemporary world that seems to want to “move on.” But how could any Rwandan move on? Ndahayo, like many Rwandans, returned to his family home and found it destroyed. The remains of much of his family now lay in a burial pit (along with 153 other victims, marched there from a nearby convent) that sat in the garden that he played in as a child. How does one return home, or go to a Church, after what happened? How can anyone move on with his or her life?

Now, nearly twenty years later, the Ntarama genocide memorial is a quiet sanctuary just about an hour’s drive south of Kigali. Located a short walk up a bending dirt road, and bathed in the shadows of acacia trees, it is difficult to imagine the absolute brutality that took place there. Five thousand victims lost their lives inside this small church house, now strewn with caskets, belongings (including clothing and children’s school books), and human skeletal remains. Ntarama is not that unlike a number of memorials scattered across Rwanda in small rural communities, suburbs, and even urban centers. They serve as pronounced reminders of what happened, but they are just the most public expressions of a persistent tension that seems contradictory to the contemporary impulse toward, not away from, religion. Perhaps the increase in religious affiliation is the result of a need to find meaning in a past that seems inexplicable?

Whatever the reason, these shifts have not proportionally impacted the consumption of religiously oriented Rwandan print media. The most overt example of this is the continued popularity of the Catholic publication, *Kinyamateka*, in spite of the dwindling numbers of those Rwandans that identify themselves as Catholic. It is a mistake to assume that *Kinyamateka*’s continued popularity is the result of its characterization as a religious publication (though could be part of it). Instead, the publication’s historical relationship to national politics, as well as to censorship and the Rwandan government (not to mention the fragmentation of the print media

marketplace which has limited legitimate competition), appear as important elements to consider.

These conditions signal the need for a more complex socio-historical assessment of the relationship between print media and the state. For instance, what social or cultural function does the Church play in contemporary Rwandan life (particularly for those that have converted from Catholicism)? Given the extreme regulatory interference that print media has faced since 1994, what role has (self) censorship played in formulating the acceptability of Catholic discourse in relation to the perceived role of the Church in the genocide? How is the transition from the pre-/para-genocidal periods to the contemporary era (the “Post-Genocidal Turn”) reflected in print media production?

The conditions that led to the heavy regulation of media after the genocide were not just the result of the need to suppress ethnic ideology. Censorship (and self censorship) in Rwanda is about controlling the “message” of acceptable state endorsed discourse, but it also ties into a larger historical trend regarding religious media and its affiliation with the state. The Catholic Church and its media organs have always had a complex relationship with the Rwandan government, largely due to the political and social changes that occurred in the early colonial period (1893-1922) and in the years building up to the 1994 genocide. While much of this was the result of the missionary impulse to convert (beginning with those populations most easily converted, then moving on to the larger populations/communities, etc.), the expansion of Catholicism and its relationship to ethnic identity is also related to the shifting balances of political power and changes in media consumption experienced throughout the colonial era. One avenue by which to approach this subject is to think about how the shift in media adoption towards radio (particularly with the rise of “Hutu Power” media) was an important factor in defining how the Church attempted to navigate the ethnic shift in Rwanda. To do so offers us a

means of understanding the continuing popularity of Catholic organs even in light of perceived Church complicity in the genocide.

The political nature of *Kinyamateka* and its contemporaries in their relationship to the state (as both supportive and resistant) serves as a foundation for the contemporary state/Church dynamic. Church organs were active and unabashed political publications that simultaneously supported political action during the 1950s and questioned divisionary tactics employed by the state in the 1990s. As a result, the analysis of publications like *Kinyamateka* needs to take into account the role that regulatory entities and self-censorship played in formulating the acceptability of certain avenues of discourse, while also allowing “wiggle room” for forms of political resistance.

How has Catholicism, then, been able to navigate such a socio-political minefield? In what ways has regulation (and deregulation) impacted acceptable public discourse? What is the relationship between print media and the “repurposing” of pre- and para-genocidal media infrastructure (as in the case of radio)? The goal here is to navigate this complex history so as to formulate some notion of contemporary Rwandan censorship that extends beyond the simple “oppressive regime”/“benevolent dictatorship” dualism that has come to dominate contemporary scholarship on, and critique of, Rwandan media.<sup>14</sup> Though the emphasis here is on print media, such issues remain connected to Rwandan mass media as a whole. To reveal the larger machinations that govern the content of print media in Rwanda, it is necessary for us to navigate further into larger issues of free speech and state regulation whose ramifications ripple into every facet of contemporary Rwandan media. The first concern, then, is whether there is some basis in law (even following deregulation) for state censorship, but no less important is the need to identify whether or not self-censorship remains a sizeable concern. Such a project will require a



great deal of quantitative and qualitative evidence, but such a discussion (contextualized within the larger history of print media in Rwanda) will no doubt reveal a great deal about Rwanda's mediascape.

### **Literacy and Print Media**

It is quite complicated to build a chronology of print media in Rwanda because, by beginning this history with the introduction of mass media, such a history “colonializes” our understanding of it. From the emergence of the numerous kingdoms of the region in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, until the consolidation of these kingdoms under *Mwami* Rwabugiri in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, oral media was important to preserving the historical and cultural history of the Rwandan people. These early forms of media also aid in our understanding of why print media and the Catholic Church had such a close affinity. More to the point, it seems a grave error to ignore the necessary role that small-scale public conveyance of media messages played (and continue to play) in the process of audience/reader consumption. For a country that has historically been so reliant on the dissemination of information through oral transmission (public reading, the pulpit, etc.), to conceptualize of newspapers as a “read” but not publicly consumed media is an oversight.

Given the violence of the 1994 genocide, it is tempting to think about hate print media (such as the magazine *Kangura*) and its radio counterparts (such as RTLM) in relation to the propaganda machine of Nazi Germany. It is important, though, to recognize that all media operate in ways that are often quite different from one another based on not only institutional factors and the characteristics of their particular medium, but also on geographic, historical, and cultural context as well. For instance, *The New York Times* in the 1990s operated quite differently from the *Volkischer Beobachter* in Nazi Germany during the 1940s, not only in terms

of their target audiences, discursive composition, and consumptive paradigms, but also their overarching role within particular contexts (in short media means different things to different people in varying spaces and times). Media also does not operate within a vacuum. We must recognize variegated production, distribution, and consumption of media is dependent on the larger mediascape as a whole. For instance, the role of radio in Rwanda, as a central hub for social and political engagement, took over for the restricted distribution space of print media, but it also adopted a number of important discursive and structural components of oral literature and history.<sup>15</sup> This process of remediation, in Bolter and Grusin's terms, is at play in that radio, as a new media, refashions the forms of earlier media (a process mirrored between oral and print cultural forms as well).<sup>16</sup>

At an institutional level, print media development in Rwanda “refashioned” pre-colonial oral culture and para-colonial religious discourse in the service of a new media model. Though the specifics of cultural consumption during the pre-colonial period remain somewhat vague, many of the practices developed during this time have continued on in various forms throughout the intervening years. This is apparent in the creation and utilization of *gacaca* grass courts (a hybrid of traditional legal systems and international criminal tribunals). The *gacaca* utilizes a judicial process that relies on naming hierarchies (of perpetrators and victims identifying other perpetrators) and oral narratives that, to a limited extent, mirror older forms of the “cyclical” cataloguing of history. These are not exactly the same, but what they do point to is a desire on the part of President Paul Kagame’s administration, to repurpose the traditional as a means of legitimating the present through a vocabulary of the past.<sup>17</sup>

Moving into the colonial period, these forms of oral literature no doubt continue, but the introduction of print media has displaced them somewhat (though this transition took some

time). Perhaps the most important of the publications of the early colonial period was *Kinyamateka*, a weekly organ of the Catholic Church that, by the late 1950s and early 1960s, was the most read paper in the entire country.<sup>18</sup> *Kinyamateka*'s popularity underscores the importance of the Catholic Church to the socio-political makeup of Rwanda during the para- and post-colonial period (up to, and including, the 1994 genocide and the backlash against the Church in the genocide's aftermath), but it also exposes the shifting cultural currency associated with media consumption. As general literacy rates were low during this period (particularly among Hutu, whose access to education was commensurate with their economic marginalization under the waning Tutsi monarchy), *Kinyamateka* would, theoretically, have directed its content toward the country's power brokers.<sup>19</sup>

Though literacy in Rwanda has increased (from 66% in 1999<sup>20</sup> to 71.1% in 2010<sup>21</sup>), oral transmission of media remains an integral element of Rwandan media consumption. As pointed out by Alison Des Forges, the level of literacy was not the sole determinant in print media consumption, as “those who knew how to read were accustomed to reading for others.”<sup>22</sup> Often times, the use in newspapers of visuals or cartoons, “most of which were so graphic that they could not be misinterpreted,”<sup>23</sup> aided in this process. This dynamic has also been impacted by the considerable education gap between urban and rural populations, with only 7.4% of rural women and 9.7% of rural men having progressed beyond primary school (compared to 26.4% of urban women and 27.3% of urban men).<sup>24</sup> More to the point, 23.5% of rural women and 16.7% of rural men have received no education at all (compared to 12.3% of urban women and 9% of urban men).<sup>25</sup> The byproduct of this education gap is that the literacy rate in urban environments (where there is a much greater variety of media choices but a smaller percentage of total population) is far higher (76.7%) than that in rural areas (56.7%).<sup>26</sup> The implementation of

mobile media (radio) alongside oral communication (the public reading of newspapers) is of far greater impact in rural environments that, in addition to the education gap, are at a far greater infrastructural disadvantage due to limited access to electricity. As a result, it is necessary to expand our thinking as to how print media operates within the public sphere.

If illiteracy was common among such a large contingent of the population, how was information, and the requisite power that accompanies it, disseminated? There is no single answer to this question, but public and semi-private transmittance (such as readings within the home, between neighbors, as well as in public “street corner” formats) play a part. It seems particularly important that it would be a Catholic publication that would play such a prominent role in media production given the history of print media. According to Benedict Anderson, the original importance of print-capitalism was to unify language practices. This was carried out *through* the mobilization of media consumers for politico-religious purposes.<sup>27</sup> Though Anderson's example focuses on the Protestant Church, which was using the press in order to openly reject the central positioning of Latin (and by proxy the Catholic Church) as the primary written language, the early church press in Rwanda actually operated to define and delineate the elite/literate from the public/illiterate, rather than unify them through language. Of far greater importance in the Rwandan context is the role of the pulpit, which wielded a great deal of power (assuming that the Church as a structural entity could dictatorially direct the messages communicated in diocese across the country).

At first, this structure benefitted the educated Tutsi minority, particularly as the Belgian colonial authority granted a limited continuance of their political rule (assuming their support of colonial governance, of course). By the late 1950s, there was a considerable push within the Church, as well as within the colonial government, to support the emerging Hutu political class,

an elite that often acquired their educations through Catholic parochial programs. The reasons for this change are numerous, but primary among them was the fear of what was becoming defined as “socialist” tendencies among Tutsi leaders, who were pushing for self governance and were “contesting the colonial social order.”<sup>28</sup> Political support marshaled by the Church, including *Kinyamateka*, thus became an important tool in terms of political reform as well as in reinforcing the relationship between the Church, media, and the new government.

Literacy had even deeper cultural relevance to Rwandans during the colonial period, since the basis for the rejection of many candidates for conversion to Catholicism was their inability to read.<sup>29</sup> In such a way, the bifurcation of Rwandan society under colonial rule (German and Belgian alike) was more than just ethnic: it was socio-educational and religious as well. The systematic delineations of ethnic identity (Hutu/Tutsi/Twa), education (literate/illiterate), and class (elite/lower) all served as primary components in an overarching colonial policy intended to “organize space, representation, and identity,” what Ravi Sundaram refers to as “social cartography.”<sup>30</sup> By the late 1950s, the emergence of a Hutu political class (taught in Catholic parochial programs) in combination with colonial fears surrounding the political pressuring by Tutsi leaders for self-governance (characterized as “contesting the colonial social order”<sup>31</sup>) led to a realignment of colonial and Church support away from the Tutsi political elite.

The transition into the colonial period had an enormous impact on cultural production and consumption, including the rise to prominence of the Catholic Church. In a country without the primary forms of mass media that had become, or were becoming, prevalent throughout the world during the period from 1890 to 1962 (most notably radio and television), the primary mediums for the dissemination of day-to-day information in Rwanda were newspapers (even as

language and literacy barriers limited their reach) and word of mouth. As a result, the most organized forms of public speech would have been political activism (which was limited and discouraged under colonial rule) and the public politico-religious space of the church<sup>32</sup> (extended through church organs such as *Kinyamateka* that would have been at least referred to from the pulpit). As a result, public and semi-private transmittance was, and remains, an important element in Rwandan cultural consumption patterns.

It seems beneficial to view the pulpit, given its centrality within social and political spheres, as a ritualized mass media device. The complexities presented by the introduction of Christianity in Rwanda, in addition to the ushering in of clear cultural binaries that came with it, mean that we should view this period as an initial stage in the modernization (or “western imperialization,” depending on your perspective) of Rwandan media discourse. As part and parcel of this process, ritualistic media consumption was not something introduced to Rwanda by the Catholic Church, rather it was something already present that adapted to changes in cultural production practice. The production of popular literature continued throughout the colonial period in various forms. Political discourse and the consumption of politically oriented media transitioned to a large degree from the court setting into another ritualistic public religio-political space: The Church. In thinking about Church space as a media environment, we should not construe ritualistic consumption practice as pertaining to the religious ceremony itself, as “it is generally agreed that 'ritual' extends beyond religious ritual.”<sup>33</sup> Instead, what is of interest is the role of the Church as an organizational and ideological body in disseminating information and catalyzing action through the pulpit as a media device.

The sphere of public discourse within the Church relevant given its seeming dictatorial control over mass public speech through a fractured communal ideology (small collectives

centered around local church houses). The values disseminated from the pulpit centered on concerns of reform and conversion (regulated through the interpersonal discourse of the confessional). Their reach, though, was far greater than the walls of the Church house. In fact, missionaries employed a similar “divide and conquer” policy to that of the colonial regime, which first created clear demarcations between the Christians (*Bakritsu*) and the pagans (*Bapagani-Bashenzi*).<sup>34</sup> This strategy meant that followers needed to renounce traditional and secular values and traditions (to reduce the formation of syncretic practices), that converts needed to geographically relocate away from the “non-baptized,” and the introduction of “new symbols and rites such as the wearing of rosaries or religious medallions.”<sup>35</sup> Religious identity became an ideological and geographic ritual action “whose latent significance is much wider than its manifest form.”<sup>36</sup> Discussions of ethics and morality, couched in the day to day terminology of the lives of Rwandans, had large scale implications for church goers whose bifurcated identity, between believer/non-believer, was later translated by the Church into an enunciation of ethnic division between Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa.<sup>37</sup>

Attempting to argue for the ideological supremacy of the Catholic Church in Rwanda presents severe challenges, not only in the fact that it is reductive, but that it ignores important historical issues. For one, it assumes that the periods of political transition, particularly in the early twentieth century, were occurring in a political vacuum. In reality, there was at least some degree of political interdependency between the shifting governments of pre- and para-colonial Rwanda. In the late 1800s, the Church was not acting as an autonomous entity, distinct from the government; rather their continued relationship to the community was dependent on the support, or at least tolerance, of the state. During the colonial period, the policies of the Church were also reliant upon the interests of the European governments. We can find evidence of this in their

initial endorsement of Tutsi leadership and their transition to supporting Hutu elites (with Tutsi now “enemies of the Church”) near the end of the colonial period,<sup>38</sup> as well the deposing of King Muringa by the colonial authority following the transition from German to Belgian authority under the United Nations Rwanda-Urundi mandate at the end of World War I (an act carried out largely due to his distaste for missionaries<sup>39</sup>). Additionally, religious hybridism remained in the wake of forced renunciations of religious traditions, either through syncretic or underground religious practice. By arguing for the preeminence of Catholic ideology one also assumes a homogeneity of beliefs that, while reasonable to assume given the control that Bishop's had over their given Diocese, requires more consideration. Finally, it is important to note that, just as in the case of *Kinyamateka*, the pulpit represents a largely one-way conversation, though the confessional offered opportunity for a limited dialogue and there were occasions for independent public comment within the public church space.

The Church was important in transposing the religious ritual onto the public space, thus bringing it into the sphere of public action. As Couldry points out, “in ritual action, we often have a sense that wider issues are somehow at stake [...] because we are aware of that frequent connection, ritual form is one important way in which the legitimacy of assumed wider values can be confirmed and communicated.”<sup>40</sup> The Church was then aiding in the manufacture of religious and ethnic difference as a means of undermining an overt sense of national unity (in support of the colonial authority), through the “wider issue” of traditional social, political and cultural marginalization. Just as in the majority of colonial contexts (particularly in India), the goal was to play the majority off of the minority, and vice-versa, in order to maintain control. But the Church was attempting to participate in this process utilizing religious identity, through a Catholic/non-Catholic binary, via the religio-public discourse of the church space.



Such goals, though, were subtle in their implementation. As a result, the Church has managed over the last several decades to keep itself to the interstitial space between overt sponsorship of the state, and a sense of populism that allows for some degree of dissent. Secular private publications have also struggled with the balance between political alignment and dissent (though the path of least resistance – alignment – has in many cases won out, particularly in the case of *The New Times*). For those publications that have chosen to position themselves in opposition to the government, the retribution has been both swift and severe. As a result, it has been easiest to characterize Rwanda’s contemporary print media space as one of extreme contestation. In actuality, the available data on media consumption suggests that marginally read publications represent the most publicized examples of state intimidation of the press (with two of the more high profile publication suspensions, *Umuseso* and *Umuwugizi*, holding a combined 7.31% share of overall readership<sup>41</sup>). In fact, of the 11 publications with more than 1% of overall print market share, 9 are pro-government, state run, or government leaning religious publications that total 82.99% of total market share (while the remaining two independent publications, *Umuseso* and *Umuwezi*, total a meager 9.1% of market share).<sup>42</sup> While such a disparity signals the marginalization of dissenting voices within Rwandan print media, available data hardly communicates the much larger “climate of fear and self-censorship”<sup>43</sup> that international media watch groups have suggested pervades the contemporary mediascape.

### **Trauma and State Endorsed Narratives**

Any attempt to understand the disposition of contemporary Rwandan print media towards self-censorship and affinity with pro-state ideology begins with the transition between the para- and post-genocidal periods of media production. The marginalization and intimidation of the Rwandan press is hardly a new phenomenon, but what has changed is the acceptable discourse

endorsed by the state and how it emerges in media texts. Though ethno-centrism played an immense role in formulating the relationship between the Rwandan state and the population during the pre- and para-genocidal periods, a much more complex system that seeks to efface ethnic identity, while also constricting acceptable discourse, has replaced it.

For Rwandan print media this has made approaching the topic of genocide quite difficult, in that the events of 1994 operate to affirm the centrality of ethnic identity that the contemporary media space seeks to avoid (after all, “we are *all* Rwandans”). Additionally, the increased lack of specificity in Rwanda’s laws governing free speech has forced a much more cautious approach on the part of print journalists in discussing the historical and political significance of the genocide; a position that has led to widespread self-censorship. Though the Rwandan government may not explicitly state what is, and what is not, acceptable as news content, the repeated incarceration of journalists based on charges of genocide denial, “endangering national security,” and libel (particularly when critiquing government policy or President Kagame<sup>44</sup>) has signaled where the boundaries lie. Public and private regulatory entities, particularly the MHC, have played a role in this process by warning media members and publications to avoid criticism and “inaccuracy,” or face suspension or worse. But with more recent changes to the law that lessen state control over media regulation, and the implementation of another layer of self oversight (including the creation of the Rwanda Journalists Association), the uncertainty in the minds of journalists has only increased.

What we are interested in here is how media representations of trauma appear as latent within texts in order to aid in the creation (intentionally or otherwise) of a new post-genocidal narrative. Perhaps more than any other publication, *Kinyamateka* (the third most circulated newspaper in Rwanda<sup>45</sup>) has exemplified the confusing and complicated relationship between

media entities and regulation. Though *Kinyamateka* has been a key player in the development of Rwanda's contemporary post-traumatic narrative over the last several years, this was not always the case. From the end of the initial violence of the genocide, between late-1994 until about September of 1997, *Kinyamateka* remained one of the only voices of opposition to the RPF government within the press.<sup>46</sup> Following the death of Andre Sibomana, *Kinyamateka*'s outspoken editor, when the government denied his passport request to seek medical treatment in Europe<sup>47</sup> (along with takeover of the paper's editorial staff), much of the publication's content has been supportive of President Paul Kagame's administration. For example, one article dated August 2003, reporting on the Presidential election, attributes the 95% landslide victory for President Kagame to the fact that he "succeeded in stopping the genocide [...] by replacing the troops of the United Nations (MINUAR) who were cowardly fleeing their responsibility [and] integrating members of the old Rwandan army FAR into the new Patriotic Rwandan army."<sup>48</sup> There are a number of issues with this report, but one fundamental omission is the fact that political opposition to Kagame's candidacy was minimal, to say the least (all the candidates that ran against the President in 2010 had backed him in 2003<sup>49</sup>), and that election fraud seemed to be running rampant (such as the stuffing of ballot boxes and voter intimidation), causing international observers and the EU to be critical of the validity of the results.<sup>50</sup>

These omissions aside, what is most interesting is the manner by which the article refers to the genocide, and how this narrative expresses some of the key components of post-traumatic representation. The first line of the article states that, "the genocide and the massacres in Rwanda in 1994 instilled in Rwandans the courage to strive to overcome all difficult situations at any price."<sup>51</sup> While this is, no doubt, the preferred post-genocidal narrative of contemporary Rwanda, it elides the role of continued ethnic and political conflict within the country (such as

the murder of journalists in Kigali<sup>52</sup>). It invokes the horror of the past in a way that ignores the massive human cost of the genocide (in paying lip service to the event as a means of unifying the people) and, perhaps more to the point, effaces the perpetrators (after all it is *all* Rwandans that have learned to overcome). Even in its most abstract sense, the rhetorical and linguistic components of this sentence appear antithetical to some theories of post-traumatic media,<sup>53</sup> but it is representative of the repetitive implementation of trauma in Rwandan media.

Across a broad spectrum of cultural production, genocide is a key social touchstone both within the country (seen in the oft repeated phrase “forgive, but don't forget”) and internationally. In fact, aside from ecotourism, thanatourism is one of Rwanda's key draws for international tourists. What this effacement does is partake in a form of what Eric Santer calls “narrative fetishism,” in that it utilizes textual strategies that are “consciously or unconsciously designed to expunge the traces of the trauma or loss that called that narrative into being in the first place.”<sup>54</sup> The repeated recollection of the trauma of genocide is, on the one hand, a completely understandable response given the extent to which it was a shared experience that permeates all levels of socio-cultural consciousness, but it is also a common characteristic of dealing with the trauma (particularly in flashbacks). Repetition is not, itself, a reproduction of the trauma, rather it is trying “to move the trauma 'outside' by iterating toward, but never reaching, the mastery promised by signification, or lapsing from that very iterative operation into a stuttering, yet nevertheless signifying, failure of mastery: both referential and simulacral.”<sup>55</sup>

The question, though, is whether the goal in cultural repetition is the attempt to reconcile some traumatic experience, or if it is instead part of a conscious attempt to use genocide as a gathering point for a new, inclusive, Rwandan identity? This is something far different from the more common phenomenon of “silencing” or “forgetting” that can occur in some perpetrator

oriented post-traumatic contexts<sup>56</sup> (though this could be useful in looking at the erasure of the victims of the RPF from national genocide discourse). Instead, this seems more a function of national self-preservation than an attempt to disallow trauma. Given the involvement of such a large percentage of the population in the genocide (as perpetrator, victim, bystander, etc.), how else could it be possible to move on from such an unthinkable event?

Perhaps this is the great unspoken legacy of the 1994 Rwanda genocide, that the trauma of that event has become a symbolic reference point; a muted abstraction meant to unify in public discourse what remains, within the confines of the family home, a somewhat divided country. No doubt ethnic ideology has been heavily impacted by the public discursive shift toward unification, but it is difficult to believe that all ethnic hatred has ceased to exist.

In a number of ways, the aforementioned *Kinyamateka* article outlines the character of Rwanda's new state sponsored political discourse. Any discussion of the role of the RPF or General Kagame in the events of the genocide must be couched in their role as saviors, rather than perpetrators of violence (though there is considerable evidence to suggest that the collateral damage in the fighting between RPF and the fleeing Rwandan Army was significant - not to mention claims by human rights groups of systematized attacks on Hutu civilians by the RPF<sup>57</sup>). It is also important that all wings of the U.N. are identified as being cowards, or acting cowardly, in large part because of the continued oppositional stance taken by the Rwandan government toward the U.N. This has particularly been the case given attempts by UNAMIR forces to create a safe zone in Rwanda during the genocide, and inflamed by the common perception in Rwanda that the U.N. was covering up its own - and member nations - complicity in the genocide. This discourse is embedded with notions of "responsibility" directed primarily at some sort of outsider or perceived guilty party (such as Hutu extremism or ethnic ideology), which

symbolically acts to discredit any opposition as being “sympathizers” or “deniers” by equating questioning the government with denying responsibility. Finally, state sponsored political discourse is focused on the issues of reconciliation, but even more with those of “integration.”

The *Kinyamateka* article brings in the integration of the *Forces armées rwandaises* (FAR) soldiers to promote Kagame and the RPF’s role in maintaining order through the reconfiguration of the old authority apparatus as part of the new Rwandan superstructure. This statement symbolically links the “old Rwanda” with the FAR forces, and the “new Rwanda” with the RPF and Kagame himself. In such a way, the integration of the civilian population into the new Rwandan nation means that the integration of FAR forces is both political and social.

Perhaps these issues of integration and reconciliation are the most intriguing legacies of the RPF and Kagame administration in Rwanda. While there is little doubt of the great ease with which one can criticize the unilateral decision-making by the Kagame administration (particularly in regards to military actions in the DRC), it is difficult not to be amazed by the degree to which the government has overseen what can only be characterized as a largely successful move towards social and cultural reconciliation. This discussion of discourse isolates some of the more problematic components of *how* this shift has been taking place (particularly through “othering” and the rhetorical silencing of opposition), but at a practical level it is quite difficult not to be impressed with the relative functionality of Rwandan society given the immense social and political upheaval that the country has experienced.

This does not excuse or mitigate the problematic nature of state endorsed narratives that largely ignore many of the remaining issues of ethnic identity or social difference within Rwanda, but it should be understood as one means of explaining why the Kagame administration operates in the ways that it does. The larger prize in contemporary Rwanda is political stability,

which is dependent upon a shared sense of identity, rather than division. This push toward unity is more readily expressed by the inclusion in the preamble of the Rwandan constitution of the statement that “[it is] resolved to fight the ideology of genocide and all its manifestations and to eradicate ethnic, regional and any other form of divisions.”<sup>58</sup> Political opposition is not the larger threat identified by the government, it is division (whether that be political, social, cultural, or ethnic). In such a way, trauma is perhaps the greatest tool that can be brought to bear in order to unify the nation behind a shared experience, even as it represents a history that many would prefer to forget. This has been only a brief discussion of one particular example of post-traumatic reconciliatory discourse, but hopefully it has gestured towards the necessity for a much larger look at this phenomenon along a wide spectrum of media in Rwanda.

### **Charting Print Media Regulation**

Contemporary print media in Rwanda remains a highly contested ideological space. Aside from the massive changes undergone by Rwandan radio, print media has faced some of the stiffest regulatory interference from the government. Though hardly a definitive source, Reporters Without Borders (RWB) has listed Rwanda as one of the world’s worst offenders in its “Press Freedom Index” since 2002. In 2010, Rwanda dropped into the bottom 10 countries (out of 178) in the RWB index,<sup>59</sup> largely due to press conditions leading up to the presidential election. According to the RWB, Rwanda has been trending towards an overall decrease in press freedom. And yet, from a regulatory perspective there has been a general shift *away* from explicit control by the government over print media that over the last several years has caused a serious rift with many of the country’s allies. In fact, just as Rwanda has received an immense amount of funding from a number of countries, including the United States and Great Britain, restrictions of press freedom, as well as the country’s actions in the DRC,<sup>60</sup> have led many of

these same countries to restrict and even pull funding.

Even as there has been a deregulation of the press, many in the human rights community have openly stated that there is a continued lack of freedom for journalists in Rwanda. Ben Rawlence, of Human Rights Watch, has succinctly stated “there is no free press in Rwanda.”<sup>61</sup> And yet how can there be no “free press” while the government is systematically deconstructing their oversight of the country’s print news media? The answer largely lies in what one thinks should constitute a “free press” (by some measures the United Kingdom and the United States, though considered to be bastions of press freedom, barely crack the top 30 nations in the world<sup>62</sup>), but it also speaks to the particularities of the transition that has taken place within Rwanda’s regulatory institutions. Just as the Rwandan media ecosystem is unique, so too are its approaches to regulation and censorship. It is particularly useful to consider, first, why regulatory shifts were necessary, second, what these shifts actually were, and finally, what their larger purpose was.

As previously stated, the larger goal of state endorsed discourse and ideology lies in the maintenance of political stability. To view media, even independent media, as entities whose interests and goals are separate from this process is to ignore the relationship between the state and the press. If we understand that, regardless of the wide range of diversity of thought and opinion in a prototypical media environment, the sources for the bulk of daily press content are public officials<sup>63</sup> (a point that both restricts the diversity of message as well as emphasizes the transactional nature of the state-press relationship<sup>64</sup>), then we must understand media content as reliant upon the very system that it reports on - whether in support or critique. This is even more relevant in looking at Rwanda’s print media because of the rather substantial hurdles posed by receiving and maintaining access to public officials. As pointed out by media critic Ben



Bagdikian,<sup>65</sup> mass media is governed by a system of economics reliant upon advertising, no doubt, but also upon a set of “professional decisions” within which “corporate values and the central aims of the owners are embedded.”<sup>66</sup> Professional decisions are not solely predicated on traditional economic concerns (advertising, corporate branding, etc.), but also “transactional relationships” between producers and sources. Though the maintenance of access is one of those concerns, continued favorability between outlets and the governing regime is certainly no less important. Even in political environments with a severe power gap between the state and the press (such as in an autocracy), as long as there is a legitimate independent media, there still remains a symbiotic relationship between the state and the press. These relationships, though, are made much more complex when there is a transition in government (particularly in the case of Rwanda where the old government was largely replaced).

State sponsorship or resistance has largely characterized the history of Rwandan media, particularly between 1970 and 1994. State sponsored media certainly fits within Bagdikian’s media economy, but cultural resistance necessitates an even more complex view of media and its relationship to the state (even as former outlets of resistance become the new wave of mainstream media producers). During the late 1980s and early 1990s, a number of pro-RPF newspapers sprung up in Rwanda, including *Kanguka*, *Kanyarwanda*, and *Le Tribune du Peuple* (whose chief editor eventually fled Rwanda and joined Radio Muhabura). These publications reported on the RPF and denounced the government, even going so far as to include cartoons and articles that utilized many of the same hate speech tactics being used by the Hutu Power media.<sup>67</sup> Additionally, there were many other newspapers being published within the Rwandan Tutsi diaspora, including *Impuruza*, published from 1984 to 1994 in the United States.<sup>68</sup> Though the reach of many of these outlets was limited, they still offered up symbolic resistance to the

monolithic Hutu Power media system.<sup>69</sup> The importance of these newspapers, in addition to the numerous other RPF aligned media that were produced during these years, was certainly not lost on Kagame's administration, as they have sought to reduce similar forms of dissident voices in the post-genocide mediascape.

In 2010, the political space surrounding the national election for president of Rwanda intensified, particularly as the MHC shut down several opposition papers just prior to the vote.<sup>70</sup> Though the council stated that they were simply enforcing the 2009 media laws surrounding outlet registration, many press organizations saw this as an excuse to undermine and exclude oppositional voices within the industry.<sup>71</sup> Violent attacks perpetrated during the August elections, including grenade attacks in Kigali,<sup>72</sup> as well as the murders of a journalist<sup>73</sup> and one of Kagame's political opponents,<sup>74</sup> drew even more attention to tensions developing around these issues (not to mention prompting a suspension of funds from the United Kingdom<sup>75</sup>). For the UK's part, the Department for International Development (DFID) has symbolized the problematic position that international donors have found themselves in when supporting Rwanda as, "the DFID suspended, reinstated, and then suspended again budgetary support."<sup>76</sup> This oscillation between support and condemnation has continued to characterize the relationship between Rwanda and the international community, largely driven by the particularities of Rwandan international policy over the last few years. Importantly, these events left many in the international community questioning whether one form of violent government had not simply been replaced by another. Such a notion is ultimately not only unfair, but ignores a much more complex history of ethnic conflict, media (de)regulation, political economy, and cultural expression at play in contemporary Rwanda. Pressures by the international community to promote freedom of the press, as well as frustrations regarding the closing down of the BBC

Kinyarwanda-Kirundi Service (this time surrounding the denial of the 1994 genocide on the air),<sup>77</sup> resulted in drastic regulatory changes in early 2011.

By February, new revisions to the Media Law were introduced, in addition to suggested changes to the role of MHC.<sup>78</sup> As part of this proposed legislation, ORINFOR's public broadcasting responsibilities would become fully privatized (changing their name to the Rwanda Broadcasting Agency – RBA).<sup>79</sup> Then, in a move surprising to many, on March 30, 2011 the President's cabinet announced that the regulatory powers of the MHC would be completely stripped, that new regulations would be put in place to differentiate between media members and journalists (along with other changes to the media law), and that the press would now be fully self-regulated.<sup>80</sup> Many have seen the stripping of the MHC's regulatory powers (leaving them primarily as a unit of the government's industrial development sector), as a sign, not that the MHC had performed incorrectly, but rather that it was a “political not technical decision”; necessary as punishment “because it annoyed powerful ‘development’ partners.”<sup>81</sup> The initial fallout of this decision has been threefold. First, just as the Ministry of Information's (MININFOR) power had been stripped, the MHC now faces a similar weakening, not only in terms of funding (as in the case of the DFID) but also in terms of their role within the government at large. Secondly, the new media law now differentiates between journalism and “other media” in such a way that, while one will be entirely self-regulated, the other (encompassing film and scripted television) would need an entirely new set of laws to regulate them. And thirdly, this differentiation has necessitated the development of an independent regulatory body for journalistic media (one that faces its own internal challenges) as well as a transition of regulatory duties away from the MHC to the Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Agency (RURA). Beyond these initial changes, many of the long-term implications of this process

remain unknown.

At face value, these changes were wide reaching and, for all intents and purposes, should have been seen as a fundamental and positive change in opening up Rwandan journalists to feel comfortable critiquing the regime. In practice, though, there is quite a bit more to these changes than simplifying the states position on freedom of the press, and the state has hardly relinquished regulatory control. To better clarify this point, one need only look at the trajectory of change within Rwanda's media law to understand how questions regarding freedom of speech have largely replaced those of press freedom.

In essence, the bulk of media law in Rwanda is comprised of 6 primary legal texts: Law no.18/2002, Law no.22/2009, Law no.2/2013, Law no.3/2013, Presidential Order No. 99/01, and the Rwandan constitution. The first of these, Law no.18/2002 governing the press, was written prior to the ratification of the Rwandan constitution and largely serves as a precursor to many of the major concepts that would eventually be included, in particular that (emphasis mine):

“Article: 10 *The Press is free*. Freedom to express one's opinion through the Press in Rwanda is to take place within the provisions of this law.

Article: 11 Freedom of press includes the, right to publish opinions and together, receive, broadcast information or opinions by the means of press.  
*Censorship is not allowed.*

Freedom of press is but subject to restrictions expressly provided for by this law and international conventions for the protection of human rights to which Rwanda is a party.”<sup>82</sup>

As the first salvo in Rwanda's attempts to reform what is known as the “Fundamental Law” (including the 1991 Constitution, the Arusha Peace Accord, the RPF Declaration of 1994, and the Political Parties Agreement of 1994<sup>83</sup>), Law no.18/2002 was sufficiently wide reaching in its support of almost complete freedom of the press (though in practice such freedoms were largely overridden by the interests of the government). Law no.18/2002 also makes a specific

point of emphasizing the unacceptability of censorship, but links the limitations of the free press to concerns regarding human rights. In doing so, the law protects the major (and persistent) loophole within Rwanda's press laws by making the regulation of the press a human rights, rather than censorship, issue. As a result, the missing component within Law no.18/2002 is a clear delineation of what does, and what does not, constitute a conflict with international human rights conventions.

Such an omission was quickly dealt with in the Constitution of Rwanda, adopted in 2003, but it was written with more than enough ambiguity to allow leeway for rather wide interpretation. As a precursor to the Constitution, Presidential Order No. 99/01 set up the MHC as an independent regulatory body in order to “guarantee and ensure freedom and protection of the press” as well as to issue press cards and to “ensure respect for press ethics [...] [by giving] advice on decisions to suspend, to ban [a] publication.”<sup>84</sup> The actual “independence” of the council is somewhat suspect, since of the nine seats of the MHC, only four are reserved for actual members of the press.<sup>85</sup> The remaining seats are set-aside for government officials (three) and representatives of civil society (two). Interestingly, as an independent regulatory body, the MHC only offers “advice” regarding the suspension of publications based on ethical standards. Under the initial Presidential Order, the MHC operated to consult the government on what situations would warrant intervention. Much of this consultation could potentially benefit board members whose own businesses receive public funding for media production (a de facto conflict of interest). This is not to say that there is overt evidence of any such situations occurring, rather that such a conflict was certainly possible, and such an environment would only promote industrial self-censorship.

The larger emphasis of early media regulatory law, as seen in our earlier discussion of the

fight against division and difference by the Rwandan government, was on removing ethnic identity as an element of tension in the construction of the new nation. This is reflected in Article 9 of the Rwandan Constitution, which states that:

“The State of Rwanda commits itself to conform to the following fundamental principles and to promote and enforce the respect thereof:

1. fighting the ideology of genocide and all its manifestations;
2. eradication of ethnic, regional and other divisions and promotion of national unity”<sup>86</sup>

There are very real and practical concerns regarding the persistence of ethnic ideology that could potentially lead to violence in Rwanda, but the reasons for the inclusion of “genocide ideology” and its eradication in the Constitution fulfills a set of less obvious functions. One of the reasons for the genocide-centric nature of the Constitution is that many members of the international community, particularly countries that historically had a vested interest in Rwanda, were shut out of its development. According to Wellars Gasamagera, in the case of Rwanda “offers for technical assistance in drafting the constitution [...] were rapidly rejected on the grounds that a constitution is the law of the people and the people should be given the opportunity to draft it on their own.”<sup>87</sup> While self-determination is undoubtedly important, particularly given the complex colonial history of Rwanda, this secluded approach to drafting the Constitution also means that it serves as a clear reflection of the interests of the incoming administration.

Of utmost importance was the need to combat the “ideology of genocide,” as well as to define the genocide as one “against the Tutsi” (this phrase appears six times in the body of the Rwandan Constitution). The addition of point two in Article 9, that there needs to be a removal of ethnic difference to promote national unity, raises a problematic paradox within the document itself. Though the removal of difference (problematic in itself) is a central goal for the

government, the definition of the genocide as “against the Tutsi” emphasizes ethnic difference, and defines the nation state in relation to the experience of genocide. Herein lies the central issue at the heart of censorship issues within Rwanda, that there is an unclear and even paradoxical standard for Rwanda’s citizens and press to uphold: to remember ethnic difference as a way of negotiating the genocidal past, while simultaneously obliterating difference as a means of promoting unity.

Such ambiguities and confusions are made even more complicated due *how* the Constitution defines Rwandan speech rights. According to Article 13 of the Constitution, “revisionism, negationism and trivialisation of genocide are punishable by the Law,”<sup>88</sup> but a clear definition of what qualifies as a violation of these terms is not given. Would an article discussing Rwandan civilians killed by RPF soldiers as collateral damage during the war qualify as revisionism? What about discussing the Hutu victims of genocide? How about general critique of President Kagame’s leadership, given his prominent role leading the RPF? In many ways, Article 13 has served as a catch all for government claims of irresponsible journalism and as justification for the closure, suspension, and banning of publications. This was particularly the case during the period from the adoption of the Constitution in 2003 until the end of 2009, with the creation of what would become known as “the Media Law”: Law no.22/2009.

Under the Law no.22/2009, the MHC was now able to withdraw press cards based on “divisionism and discrimination of any form.”<sup>89</sup> But there was also a key change in terms of how journalists were to approach issues of ethics. In place of the vague “ethical standards” that were in place under the Constitution, the MHC was now given a much clearer mandate in terms of what would be considered acceptable journalistic practice. According to Article 83: Penalties for particular crimes committed through the press:

“The following crimes committed through the media are punishable with penalties provided for by the Criminal Law, and so notwithstanding their suspension by the Media High Council:

1° apology for the crime of genocide and genocide ideology, crimes against humanity and war crimes;

[...]

3° Contempt of the Head of State of Rwanda, the Head of a foreign State, Ambassadors and representatives of countries and international organizations accredited to Rwanda;”<sup>90</sup>

Article 83 largely clarifies and nuances the finer points of how the free speech laws were being used, by outlining the concerns that likely caused tension with legislators (namely the potential use of the “divisionism” component of Article 9 of the Constitution to suppress political opposition). In its place, Article 83 specifies both the outlawing of genocide “apologism” as well as attacks on government officials, effectively differentiating acts that were being combined under previous application of Constitutional free speech laws. More importantly, what Law no.22/2009 did was to essentially extend the power to censor or ban publications from the government itself, to the independent body of the MHC (who had previously only served in an advisory capacity).

The transformation of the MHC as a regulatory entity was a major catalyst in rising tensions between the Rwandan government, the domestic press, and the international community. In combination with Rwanda’s military action in the DRC, the strong language condemning dissent within Law no.22/2009 led to many governments pulling funding and aid for the Rwandan state, which necessitated a fundamental change in the government’s approach to media regulation. Following the 2010 national election, the major concern among those in the international community was the systematic cracking down by the government and the MHC on Rwanda’s print journalists. To alleviate these concerns, Law no.02/2013 and Law no.03/2013 (known as “the MHC law”) actuated major changes away from overt governmental regulation.



As an answer to the many criticisms of government overreach, Law no.02/2013 introduced an independent “Media Self Regulatory Body” (MSRB) composed of members of the print press, responsible for overseeing “the daily functioning of media and the conduct of journalists.”<sup>91</sup> As part of Law no.03/2013 the MHC was also converted from being an “independent” regulator, to “an independent institution responsible for media capacity building.”<sup>92</sup> The result was that the MHC had its responsibilities dispersed among a few different governmental and private entities. While the MSRB is meant to operate as a fully independent entity for enforcing journalistic ethics, as well as suspending publications and press passes, the overarching power of the Constitution in isolating particular speech as inflammatory has resulted in a largely unchanged production climate for journalists. For other regulated media (namely radio, television, and the internet), the new law has made it so that they are now fully under the purview of the “national utilities statutory regulator.”<sup>93</sup>

By replacing freedom of the press with concerns regarding freedom of speech and ethnic ideology, the current period of deregulation has successfully undercut some of the concerns of international donors, largely because they are more readily able to argue that by censoring ethnic ideology the Rwandan state is responsibly preventing future violence. Evidence seems to suggest that there has been at least some overreach by the state under the guise of Constitutional law.<sup>94</sup> Though the press is now self-regulated, journalists remain in very real danger of persecution based on Constitutional speech laws.

The divergence between the treatment of print media and online media is particularly interesting, as online publications have faced rather intense oversight (including the six month suspension of online publication *Umuwugizi* in 2010). Given the seeming disparity in the regulatory treatment of the print press and online journalists, several issues remain. Are press

publications regulating content in order to avoid conflict with the government? Would it seem likely that there would be a much greater pro-government tone in online publications given their continued reliance on the goodwill of the national utilities statutory regulator? What role does self-censorship play in how Rwandan journalists approach discussions of the government and the genocide?

### **Case Study: Print/Online Journalism and Systems of Self-Regulation**

“Self-censorship is flowing like blood in the arteries and veins. There is no [direct] censorship, but there are things that journalists don’t do because they are not confident of what will happen.”

- Fred Muvunyi, chairman of Rwanda Media Commission<sup>95</sup>

“There are still some challenges, but in general there is political will. We have laws that are flexible, so anyone can open a website, for example. And we have laws of access to information—one of the few African countries to have that. And now journalists are regulating themselves—and that is a positive thing.”

- Maurice Munyentwari, Media High Council legal officer<sup>96</sup>

Attempting to identify the specific nature of self-censorship is a rather difficult process. This is not only because those that participate in self-censorship are hardly interested in exposing their own complicity, but also because it is a practice that, by definition, is largely invisible (to the extent that many might not even realize that they are self-censoring). Media bias is similarly difficult to pin down, particularly in an environment where censorship or self-censorship has reached the point that all dissident voices have been silenced or sent into exile. Anecdotally speaking, there is a wealth of evidence to be brought to bear in discussing potential incursions on freedom of the press in Rwanda (many of which have been previously mentioned), but to simply take all of these claims at face value is to ignore the rather considerable and variegated motivations at play in Rwanda’s socio-political sphere. Though the strides made toward eliminating ethnic hatred in Rwanda have been considerable, it would be irresponsible to assume

that such feelings have vanished from the domestic space. Fears of inciting further violence are hardly unfounded.

The question here is whether resistance or dissidence expresses itself in contemporary print journalism? At the root of this query is the seeming incongruity between the freedom of the press stated in the constitution and claims of intimidation and oppression of journalists.

Quantifying such a phenomenon is a bit trickier, largely due to the predominance of print and online media being in Kinyarwanda (such as state run *Imvaho Nshya* and the aforementioned *Kinyamateka*, which are two of the most read publications) and the lack of accessibility for those that are only printed and distributed locally. This language barrier has meant that a great deal of material remains to be researched, which should be seen as an opportunity for future study in censorship. The hope is that the methodology utilized here spurs further research into how state endorsed discourse appears in these particular texts.

One of the more interesting issues run into in the process of selecting publications for this case study was the realization that, in looking through those texts that are readily accessible, a rather clear distinction needs to be made between those private publications that operate domestically and those that operate abroad. This is largely the result of rather distinct relationships between, and reliance upon, domestic publications and the government. For those operating within Rwanda, the stakes are quite clear when publishing articles “denying” the genocide or questioning the administration (including suspension, banning, and potential jail time). We can view these domestic publications as distinct types of texts based on their funding structures, as well as the degree to which they would theoretically be tied to the government. State funded publications, such as *Imvaho Nshya*, would clearly be the most aligned with the interests of the state based on the fact that their continued financial support would be reliant upon

ideological resonance. Additionally, they would also be more apt to experience direct editorial interference from the government. Of the private publications available, some have more clearly aligned themselves with the administration (such as *The New Times*, which President Kagame has stated to be sycophantic and “servile” to him<sup>97</sup>). One reason for such an alignment has been the historically close-knit relationship between these publications and the state, as “pro-government newspapers [...] subsist on advertising revenues from government agencies, parastatals and private monopolies [...] By contrast, newspapers critical of the government have had difficulty in attracting and retaining their advertisers.”<sup>98</sup> Other publications have maintained a much more neutral journalistic stance, but appear to still be careful with the tone they take toward President Kagame’s government.

Journalists operating outside of Rwanda, though, are often working under the conditions of exile, meaning that they are not only more readily able to critique the Rwandan government, they have a particular predisposition toward attacking the administration. In some cases, such as the newspaper *Umuwugizi*, the tone of articles is regularly antagonistic toward the current government and tends toward heavy editorialization. The reasons for this tone are rather obvious, given that the editors and authors are operating in exile and returning to Rwanda would likely result in their imprisonment, or worse. This is particularly the case for *Umuwugizi* who had both an author, Jean-Leonard Rugambage, shot and killed in 2010<sup>99</sup> and their online editor, Jean Bosco Gasasira, convicted by the Rwandan Supreme Court for “insulting the President” in 2011 (resulting in a two and a half year sentence).<sup>100</sup>

One must view the actions of the Rwandan government through a regional, not a national, lens. Print media, though perhaps less ubiquitous than radio, is still a very important socio-political tool (particularly given the infrastructural limitations of online media, television,

and film due to limited access to electricity). As this case study remains linked to issues of self-censorship, it is important to interrogate the discursive elements of print coverage across the spectrum of publication types, with a particular emphasis on how domestic media reflects similarities in discussing the government.

### *Methodology*

Given the increasing literacy rate in Rwanda (71.1%<sup>101</sup> as of 2010), print media has become all the more important. The education gap between urban and rural communities has somewhat driven the popularity of particular publications. A lack of network availability and electricity, has also created a scenario in which online (and “dual” online and print) publications have become very popular in urban centers, while traditional print publications (such as *Kinyamateka*) continue to be prevalent in rural communities. With only a 56.7% rural literacy rate (compared to 76.7% urban rate),<sup>102</sup> the predominant popularity of online and dual publications makes sense, and such circumstances have driven urban focused production and distribution conditions. In fact, of the 38 total Rwandan print publications, only 2 have a readership composed of greater than 50% in rural communities (*Kinyamateka* at 64.67% and *Izuba-rirashe* at 51.64%).<sup>103</sup> In fact, 23 of the 38 publications are online-only,<sup>104</sup> though they constitute only 5.42% of total print-share.<sup>105</sup>

Due to the rather wide variety of print and online news publications, it was very important to select texts that would represent the different kinds of options available in Rwanda’s mediascape (in addition to their linguistic and online accessibility). In looking through the various types of news publications, there are four primary categories: public/state owned, private and pro-government, private and neutral, and private in exile. In theory, each of these publication types represents one extra level of distance from the regulatory control of the state,

though the actual impact of this distance needs to be analyzed further.

Due to linguistic barriers, this case study looks at publications that appear in either English or French (though further research with publications in Kinyarwanda would certainly be welcome). An unsurprising statistical phenomenon, given the dominance of Radiyo Rwanda, is that the state owned paper *Imvaho Nshya* was the number one news publication in both audience awareness and readership (33.02%<sup>106</sup>). Though *Imvaho Nshya* would be an excellent test case for looking at state endorsed discourse, it is unfortunately only currently available in Kinyarwanda. This is also the case for the second and third most read news publications, *Kinyamateka* (9.74%<sup>107</sup>) and *Umuseso* (6.79%<sup>108</sup>). The language issue is worth further mention because, in contradiction to much of the programming found on Rwandan television and radio, Kinyarwanda-only media dominates the print publication sphere (including magazines), with the top five publications all being Kinyarwanda-only (nearly 74.55%<sup>109</sup> of all print share readership). Another interesting fact is that the third most read news publication, *Umuseso* (a magazine printed and distributed from exile in Uganda), has been critical of the Kagame administration.

In terms of fulfilling the requirements for this study, three publications fit all of the accessibility requirements: *The New Times*, *The Rwanda Focus*, and *Umuwugizi*. The fourth most read news publication, *The New Times* (5.75%<sup>110</sup>), is a good selection for this study given the fact that it is a print and online publication that is readily available in English. More to the point, it is an excellent example of a private publication that is overtly pro-government (as President Kagame's calls against sycophantism indicate<sup>111</sup>). The eleventh most read publication, *The Rwanda Focus* (1.1%<sup>112</sup>), is notable as a private English language paper identified by the MIGS Archive as being independent from the government.<sup>113</sup> Finally, the sixteenth most read publication, *Umuwugizi* (0.52%<sup>114</sup>), is the highest rated publication in exile, in English, and that

is readily available.

The most striking methodological issue posed by analyzing the sample sets from *The New Times*, *The Rwanda Focus*, and *Umuwugizi* is their different publication rates. While *The New Times* is regularly publishing articles, smaller papers such as *The Rwanda Focus* and *Umuwugizi* are much more irregular in the release rate and quantity of articles through their online portals. The time frame for article selection also needed to take into account the limited accessibility of archived articles on some of the sites. In searching through *The Rwanda Focus* site, it was apparent that there were limitations to accessing articles published before November 12, 2014. As a result, the available sample set for researched publications limited itself to articles that ran through the end of that year. Additionally, the search terms needed to be restrictive enough that they interrogate the primary issue (in this case censorship), but broad enough that the data sets include a wide swath of different article types and topics. Since the primary goal of this case study is to isolate issues of self-censorship, particularly in press discussions of the president and his administration, the criteria for selection was that articles selected for inclusion should include one or more of the following terms: President, Kagame, or Government. Additional terms were then identified, searched for, and calculated in the final database, but all articles were selected based on their inclusion of the three primary terms, as well as their publication falling between November 12th and December 31st of 2014.

This resulted in the identifying of 382 total articles between the three publications: 335 in *The New Times*, 42 in *The Rwanda Focus*, and 5 in *Umuwugizi*. (See “Table 10: Print-Online Publication Overall Story Frequency”) Given the rather substantial difference in sample set size between the three publications, *The New Times* sample had to be reduced to fit more in line with that of *The Rwanda Focus*: fifty articles were randomly selected from the group across a wide

range of dates. Additionally, while *The New Times* and *The Rwanda Focus* generally publish articles of similar length (averaging 561 and 509.76 words per article), *Umuwugizi* articles are generally much shorter (167.4 words per article). (See “Table 11: Print-Online Publication Compiled Article Length Average – by publication”) The smaller sample size of the *Umuwugizi* data set is much less a concern given the consistency of the tone and subject matter of the articles across a wide date range. In analysis it will be necessary to take this difference into account. The final sample set, then, consists of 97 total articles, within which the three primary terms were analyzed based on their total occurrence within each article, as well as whether the terms appeared in a positive, negative, or neutral context. Additionally, eleven other terms were calculated based on their total quantity of occurrence within each article and were selected based on their relevance to particular news stories (such as human rights violations) as well as their relevance to the discussion of censorship (such as the use and framing of the word “genocide”).

In looking at the results of the randomization of *The New Times* articles, there seems to be some degree of congruity with those examples selected from *The Rwanda Focus*, as there is an alignment between the topics of the articles in both publications. Due to the emphasis on the three search terms, the topics of the isolated articles focus on government/civic stories (40.21%), the economy (28.87%), and general infrastructural issues (20.62%). (See “Table 12: Print-Online Publication Topics Summary”) While *The New Times* articles focused more on the government than those in *The Rwanda Focus* (48% of stories, compared to 23.81%), they also swapped emphasis in discussing the economy (24% of stories, compared to 38.1%). The topic of articles in *Umuwugizi* selected for inclusion were quite different, with 100% of all stories selected covering the government. This was quite predictable given the likelihood that, since *Umuwugizi* has a contentious relationship with the current Rwandan government, the majority of articles in



which the primary search terms would appear would have been looking at and critiquing the government.

### *Results and Analysis*

Perhaps one of the larger issues in attempting to analyze censorship and self-censorship is the fact that there is no true control test case for looking at bias in media content. As a result, this endeavor is comparative in nature. Given the limited sample size of some of the publications (particularly *Umuvugizi* which only had a few articles that fit within the search criteria), it is important to not rely too much on quantified data and delve a bit deeper into the actual content. This point is all the more important given the tone and agenda driven nature of *Umuvugizi* articles, though the data does provide quite a bit of insight into how the publication constructs its content. As stated above, the selection of these particular publications is somewhat a practical matter (availability and language), but their relationship to one another is also important to the main goal of this case study: to identify the proximity of the publications, both geographically and ideologically, to Kigali and the government.

Based on our discussion of Rwandan regulatory law, it would seem obvious that, rather than a steady loosening of regulatory control in each print press “sphere” based on the “distance” the government (from state funded, to independent pro-government, to independent, and finally independent publications “in exile”), there should be a great deal of consistency in the content and tone for all of the domestic press. There should also be a rather substantial shift in content found in those papers not subject to Rwanda’s constitutional speech laws (those published in exile). To prove such a point, it is necessary to correlate evidence across a wide range of discursive registers, beginning with the primary search terms.

Given their central role in determining the sample set, it should come as no surprise that

“President” (15.95%), “Kagame” (12.41%), and “Government” (19.58%) represent three of the top four most commonly identified terms in analysis. (See “Table 13: Print-Online Publication Overall Term Occurrence”) The usage of these terms changes considerably from publication to publication. For instance, “Government” is the most used term overall, with a good portion of that being in *The New Times* articles (21.64%). But “Government” is only the second most used term in *The Rwanda Focus* (17.23%) articles, and a distant fourth in *Umuwugizi* articles (10.26%). (See “Chart C: Print-Online Publication Term Occurrence - by Publication” and “Chart D: Print-Online Publication Term Frequency – per article”) Also, “Government” is never directly identified as being positive; instead the three publications refer to the term as being neutral (98.35%), with a very small number of negative mentions (1.65%).

Breaking it down even further, treatment of the term “Government” appears to be based on the type of publication. While *The New Times* and *The Rwanda Focus* are neutral in terms of their use of the term “Government” (99.36% and 100% respectively), *Umuwugizi* is largely negative in its use of the term (75%). (See “Table 14: Print Online Publication Key Term Disposition Percentage - by publication”) While it is a known issue that the limited sample set of *Umuwugizi* articles serves to “hide” the statistical relevance of this negative usage, breaking term usage down by publication offers evidence that indicates a differentiation in the use of the term based on the domestic/exile status of the publication. The reasons for this overwhelming neutrality are quite different for each paper. For *The Rwanda Focus*, this is likely due to the balance they need to maintain as an independent publication, as well as the overall neutral tone they tend to maintain in all of their articles. For the other two publications, as we will see in looking at the other key terms, their quantified stance on the government is due to their focus on the role of the president in domestic and foreign affairs.

In looking at the data for “President” and “Kagame,” similar results seem to bear out a degree of neutrality across the domestic publications, with *Umuwugizi* expectedly treating the terms as negative. The term “President” (15.95%) appears more often than “Kagame” (12.41%) across all publications, and both terms are neutral in their usage (89.39% for “President” and 86.36% for “Kagame”). While the negative disposition of term usage in *Umuwugizi* articles was hardly a surprise (66.67% for “President” and 91.67% for “Kagame”), what was interesting was that *The New Times* treated the terms as positive (7.86% and 9.17%). While this is not an overwhelming indicator of deviation from previous assumptions that domestic publications would tend toward neutrality in discussing the government and its administration, it is interesting statistical evidence of *The New Times* and its propensity for supporting the Kagame administration. Additionally, the overall positive/negative disposition of both “President” and “Kagame” across all publications, even though the *Umuwugizi* sample set is much smaller than the other two, is almost even (with 5.56% positive and 5.06% negative for “President,” and 6.49% positive and 7.14% negative for “Kagame”). These results would seem to correspond with a slight statistical support for Rwanda’s President in *The New Times*, and his universal condemnation in *Umuwugizi* articles.

Between *The New Times* and *Umuwugizi*, there is another substantial difference in terms of the way that they treat articles that appear as either positive or negative in this case study. *Umuwugizi* articles that appear as having negative occurrences of the terms “President” or “Kagame” are treated as news articles, in that there is no differentiation between them and any other articles on the site. *The New Times* articles with positive mentions of these terms are differentiated as opinion pieces, or as “letters” to the editor. Though there is little difference in terms of the final content of these articles,<sup>115</sup> their identification as different in *The New Times*

legitimizes their position as journalists (one that *Umuwugizi* appears disinterested in embracing). For instance, *The New Times* piece titled “Why Rwandans are Grateful to Kagame” positions itself as a response, written by a reader, regarding a previous pro-Kagame article published by the paper, lauding the President for his role in “recovering [a] sense of national consciousness [...] growing our feelings of self-confidence [and] helping us to recognise the need to wean ourselves from dependence.”<sup>116</sup> There is little doubt that this is an opinion piece, particularly given its overall use of first person pronouns, but it is also differentiated from other *The New Times* articles discussing the role of the president in more neutral terms.

In contrast, *Umuwugizi* articles are much more informal, in journalistic terms, and often relate Rwanda to topics that have little or nothing to do with country. For example, in the article “Obama Warns Burma’s Tyranny,” a report on U.S. President Barack Obama’s visit to Myanmar in order to discuss the need for reforms, the article ends by saying: “Burma is another republic more less the same as Rwanda where Generals determine the weather of the day. Like Rwanda no human rights activists and dissidents are allowed to exercise their duties freely.”<sup>117</sup> In this case, the author is correlating two unrelated topics as part of what is (structurally speaking) a news story. Even in looking at the headlines of the stories that form the *Umuwugizi* sample set (such as “Rwanda’s strong man has afforded to crack down the Image of Britain in Rwanda” and “Rwandan Intelligence uses artists Kizito to Blackmail the Opposition”) the authors lack of objectivity is apparent.

In looking at the other search terms, it is striking that the preponderance of overall occurrence tends toward terms that are nation and future driven. For instance, the second most common term overall (even more than the primary search terms “President” and “Kagame”) is “Growth/Development” (with 19.02% of total term occurrence). In context, the use of

“Growth/Development” appears in discussions of Rwanda’s potential. In one article from *The Rwanda Focus* reporting on attempts to combat youth unemployment, the author states that “according to the Minister, the program will optimize the impact of employment interventions by equipping the workforce with vital skills and attitude for increased productivity that are needed for the private sector growth and creating jobs that are adequately remunerative and sustainable across the economy.”<sup>118</sup> In this case, the negative discussion of the effects of unemployment appears couched in the need for change, so as to promote continued growth and development in Rwanda. In breaking usage of the term down by publication, we can also see that while “Growth/Development” was the term with the highest occurrence rate for *The Rwanda Focus* (26.89%), it was only the fourth highest for *The New Times* (14.88%), and did not even appear once in *Umuwugizi*. Such a difference is somewhat indicative of the different foci of the publications: with *The New Times* interested in the importance of the President as a positive figure in Rwandan politics, and *The Rwanda Focus* more interested in practical issues of governmental and economic sustainability.

A similar statistical trend is present with the fifth most common term in overall occurrence, “Nation” (11.85%). Broken down by publication, “Nation” is the third most common term in *The Rwanda Focus* (14.71%) articles, fifth in *The New Times* (10.47%), and barely appears in the *Umuwugizi* data set (2.56%). Here, too, the condition of the nation appears more central to the message of *The Rwanda Focus* than *The New Times*. The overall statistical breakdown would tend to support the notion that domestic newspapers are concerned with the growth and development of the nation (as evidenced by their emphasis on these terms, the positioning of the President as a positive contributor in this process, as well as their more diverse article topics). Meanwhile, private newspapers in exile tend to focus more on critiquing

leadership, thus emphasizing the negative role of the president.

Looking further into the individual publications, it is striking the degree to which “Kagame” and “President” were far and away the most common terms in *Umuwugizi* articles, and had a high rate of occurrence in *The New Times* articles as well. Though it is hardly surprising that these terms would yield high occurrence rates, as they are primary search terms, their appearance rates in *Umuwugizi* and *The New Times* articles dwarf those in *The Rwanda Focus*. In fact, “Kagame” and “President” appear, on average, 5.4 times per *Umuwugizi* article and 4.98 times per *The New Times* article (in comparison to only 1.81 times per *The Rwanda Focus* article). (See “Table 15: Print-Online Publication “President” and “Kagame” Term Occurrence Comparison – by publication”) The high rate of these terms in *Umuwugizi* articles is all the more important given the fact that these texts are so much shorter. Thus a more accurate comparison (based on average repetition of these terms to the average total words per article) would likely yield an even higher rate of term repetition. The reasons for these statistical similarities between *The New Times* and *Umuwugizi*, largely revolve around the centrality of the president in both publications (while *The Rwanda Focus* is neutral in its treatment of the President). Since *The New Times* is often supportive of the nation’s administration under President Kagame, its positive term usage appears dedicated to presenting the President in a positive light, rather than, say, focusing on the government as a whole. *Umuwugizi*, on the other hand, is negative about the President, as he is often the primary target of their articles, so their ire generally does not extend to the government. As a result, an equal amount of credit (both positive and negative) is designated to Paul Kagame as the President within these publications.

Based on the different postures taken by each newspaper toward President Kagame, one would expect that (in looking at the individual publication data) *Umuwugizi* and *The New Times*

would be more apt to refer to the President by his last name, as a means of personalizing him, or using an informal moniker as a means of diminution. This expectation was not born out in the data, as all publication tended to use the term “President” more often than the surname “Kagame,” and the ratio of their usage was almost identical across all publications as well. (See “Table 16: Print-Online Publication President/Kagame Usage Ratio”) The frequency of their occurrence, though, was once again split between the neutral paper *The Rwanda Focus* (on average the terms appeared 1.81 times per article) and the other publications, *The New Times* (4.98 times per article) and *Umuwugizi* (5.4 times per article). While there was consistency in terms of the proportional usage of the two terms (an average ratio of 1.28 mentions of “President” for every 1 of “Kagame”), *Umuwugizi* and *The New Times* were both much more apt to mention both terms on average. This particular point once again seems to support the notion that these papers do represent three distinct points along a discursive spectrum (with *The New Times* being pro-Kagame, *The Rwanda Focus* being neutral, and *Umuwugizi* being anti-Kagame).

It is important to note that the statistical proportionality seen between *The Rwandan Focus* and *Umuwugizi* must be understood to be based on the disparity between the two publications in terms of the average length of their articles. When calculating the term occurrence frequency based on the average number of words per article, the emphasis on “President” and “Kagame” in *Umuwugizi* is even more pronounced. In fact, when adjusted for average article length, the two terms in *Umuwugizi* (3.2 out of every 100 words) appear more than 3.5 times as often as they do in *The New Times* (0.9 out of every 100) and 8 times as often as in *The Rwanda Focus* (0.4 out of every 100). (See “Table 17: Print-Online Publication “President” vs. “Kagame” Per Average Word Count – by publication”) Based on this data, one could argue that the degree to which *The New Times* (often positively) and *Umuwugizi* (often

negatively) reference President Kagame is not proportional. In combination with the fact that *The New Times* often differentiates their editorial articles (where the bulk of positive mentions occur) from general news articles, it would seem that the two publications are not just two sides of the same journalistic coin, but are instead occupying different spaces in terms of their journalistic and ideological posture.

Following the top five terms in overall occurrence (“Government,” “Growth/Development,” “President,” “Kagame,” and “Nation”) there is a substantial drop off in term usage (with the sixth term, “International,” appearing less than half as much as the fifth term “Nation”). Of the remaining nine terms, only three appear with more than a 2% occurrence rate: “International” (5.16%), “Right/s” (4.83%), and “Genocide” (4.83%). The use of the term “International” is interesting due to its dual purpose as a posturing tool (in relating the importance of Rwanda to the world) as well as a means of defining the relationship of the nation to communities that lay outside of its borders (in terms of the international community either aiding, or impeding, the autonomy of the Rwandan government). For instance, in one *The New Times* article, the term “International” appears both in the context of “international partners” (implying the relationship between Rwanda and the international community), as well as that of the “international war” of terrorism (referencing the *external* threat posed by international crises).<sup>119</sup> Though this difference is quite subtle, and a far cry from the more overt criticisms of the international community seen in other Rwandan media, it remains an important illustration of the dual process of legitimization and differentiation that remains central to Rwanda’s post-genocide socio-political environment. The difficulty is that continued reliance by the government on international donors and business interests necessitates some degree of response to the pressures brought to bear by the international community. At the same time, the



government (through domestic media) is attempting to define the nation as an “us/them” binary that both consolidates the nationalist base, but that also seeks to circumvent the complexities of Rwanda’s colonial past. As a result, many of the stories that utilize the term “international” also discuss, or allude to, East African or pan-African solidarity. In this way, they walk a middle ground between neo-colonialist and xenophobic ideologies, by latching onto regional or continental identities as an extension of nationalism.

Perhaps the most interesting point isolated during data collection was the treatment of terminology that is either directly or contextually related to the genocide (including “Genocide,” “Minimize/Deny,” and “Tutsi”). When taken in isolation, these terms do not appear to be statistically significant (constituting only 7.98% of total terms), but when related to one another, and placed into context, they offer a potential marker of self-censorship. As expected, due to the publication’s stance toward the Rwandan government, none of the terms (“Genocide,” “Minimize/Deny,” or “Tutsi”) appear in any of the *Umuwugizi* articles. Perhaps this says more about the political sentiments of *Umuwugizi* than it does about issues of censorship, but it does differentiate the publication from the Rwandan domestic press. The term “Genocide” was the eighth most commonly used (4.83%), and appears in the context of discussions of Rwanda’s rights as an autonomous government, and government decisions that were the result of the 1994 genocide. For instance, one article discusses resolutions supported by the government calling for Rwandans to address “compensation for Genocide survivors, tackling trauma cases related to the Genocide, and sustaining the fight against genocide ideology and denial.”<sup>120</sup> In such a way, genocide and ethnic identity appear more as logistical dilemmas, than continuing social issues. Though the invocation of “genocide ideology and denial” does suggest that the genocide does persist as a social ill, it ignores the ingrained nature of such ideology, as well as the role that state

endorsed discourse may play in its perpetuation (such as in the minimization of ethnic identity in service of promoting nationalism). Additionally, the phrase once again brings into play lingering questions about how to define “genocide ideology and denial,” particularly in relation to constitutional speech laws.

The eleventh most commonly occurring term, “Tutsi” (1.37%), while statistically insignificant, was very interesting in terms of its placement in relation to the other genocide related terms. As seen in research on contemporary Rwandan radio, a prominent phrase used in discussing genocide is to refer to it as “The 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.” While there are numerous issues with this label, it is the mass uniformity in the implementation of this phrase, as well as its overt utilization of ethnic identity, that is particularly fascinating. In fact, in all of the articles included in this case study, the term “Tutsi” only appears within the body of the articles as part of this phrase. While the term “Genocide” was less reliant on the implementation of this phrase (only 28.33% of all mentions of genocide were as part of this phrase), the term often appears in close proximity within the articles to it. (See “Table 18: Print-Online Publication “Genocide” vs. “Genocide against the Tutsi” Comparison – by publication”) For articles in which the term “Genocide” appears, the phrase “The 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi” also appears 76.47% of the time. (See “Table 19: “Genocide” and “Genocide against the Tutsi” Comparison – by publication”)

At the risk of being redundant, the repetition of this phrase is important to getting at *how* the formulation of acceptable public discourse in Rwanda takes place, because it hints at the inherent paradox of constructing a post-genocide nation-state upon the traumatic memory of ethnic cleansing (“forgive but don’t forget”), while also eliminating ethnic identity from acceptable social and cultural discourse. While there is somewhat of a difference between

publications in terms of their inclusion of both the term “Genocide” and the phrase “the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi” (*The Rwanda Focus* includes the phrase in 100% of all articles that include the word “Genocide,” and *The New Times* only has it appear in 55.56% of such articles), and the percentage of total term occurrence for “Genocide” shows a slight statistical variation between *The Rwanda Focus* and *The New Times* (with it appearing in 19.05% and 18% of articles), the ratio of total occurrences of “Genocide” and those of the phrase are almost identical between the two publications (28.13% for *The Rwanda Focus* and 28.57% for *The New Times*).

The only other particularly noticeable trend within the data set was the significant difference between the domestic publications and *Umuwugizi* in regards to term inclusion. While both domestic publications focused their news coverage on issues of growth and development, these terms were completely missing in the *Umuwugizi* articles. Additionally, the terms “Genocide,” “Journalist,” “Minimize/Deny,” “Tutsi,” “Inclusive,” and “Refugee” never appeared in the selections from *Umuwugizi*. While these omissions are as much a statement about *Umuwugizi*’s agenda as what topics the publication deems unimportant to write about, they are also indicators of difference in terms of what is “acceptable” and what is “desired” speech based on context. For instance, acceptable topics for publication in domestic print media in Rwanda and “exile” publications such as *Umuwugizi* is different, with the latter condemning and attacking Rwanda’s President based on “injustices [...] arbitrary arrests and murders committed by the government of President Kagame.”<sup>121</sup> Such a critical statement regarding the President and government of Rwanda would be unacceptable if produced within the country’s borders, particularly as it infringes upon the nation’s free speech laws. The other element of this discussion is how such a statement fits within the “desired” speech and nationalist discourse of Rwanda. Is this particularly critical point of view, espoused in this case by *Umuwugizi*, saleable

or widely accepted within Rwanda? In the absence of any alternative data, the publications lack of readership (0.52%<sup>122</sup>) would seem to indicate that, at the very least, the adoption of such an ideological stance has not overcome the logistics of bringing such ideology into the marketplace.

While a great deal of energy, even in these pages, has gone into critiquing Rwanda's government and its relationship with domestic media in terms of the problematic interpretation of speech laws and ideological homogenization, a similar effort should go into analyzing the ideological slant of exile media, such as *Umuwugizi*. The complexities of ethnic politics in the Great Lakes region of central Africa ought not be the only means by which we interrogate the reasons for continued limitations of free speech in Rwanda, but the should play an important role. For regulators and politicians in Rwanda, *Umuwugizi* would seem an apt example of why the government has been pushing for controls over speech. In looking at the discursive tenor of the articles included for this case study, it is striking that *Umuwugizi* does not at all address many of the social and political issues that would interest even an impartial journalistic entity. As the self described "Voice of Rwanda,"<sup>123</sup> it seems interesting that there is little to no mention of economic growth or development, the after effects of genocide, or even the role of journalists in Rwanda.

While the constant repetition of the phrase "the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi" is conspicuous in domestic articles, so is the complete absence of discussing the social implications of genocide in *Umuwugizi*. As a publication, *Umuwugizi* has a very clear anti-Kagame agenda. It is interesting, though, that all three publications avoid the issue of ethnic identity. In fact, the use of the term "Tutsi" represents on 1.37% of overall occurrence, but its use across all publications is quite similar as it represents no more than 1.89% of overall term occurrence in any single publication (and the terms "Hutu" and "Twa" do not appear in any article). For *The New Times*

and *The Rwanda Focus*, the limited reference to ethnic identifiers is likely the result of the state mandate against divisionism, in addition to internal industry pressures to avoid violating speech laws. For *Umuwugizi*, attempting to pin down the reasons for this absence is a bit more difficult. It seems strange, given the complex relationship between former RPF General and current Rwandan President Paul Kagame and the 1994 genocide (particularly claims that RPF forces participated in revenge killings<sup>124</sup>), that there would be no mention of it in *Umuwugizi*'s numerous editorial asides. While it may seem advantageous for authors in exile to play upon this as a means of discrediting the administration, the memory of the genocide is problematic for all involved.

To bring up genocide runs the risk of admitting some complicity in “genocide ideology,” designated by the state as unacceptable. While this is unlikely to be a primary concern for exiled publishers, it also recalls a brutal past that does little in the way of rallying support in a country still navigating the complex post-genocide socio-political landscape. That is not to suggest that the authors of *Umuwugizi*, or any similar publications, are *génocidaires* or are somehow trying to foment anti-Tutsi sentiment. Instead, the emphasis in *Umuwugizi* articles towards critique of the state has the side effect of limiting their discourse in terms of discussions of contemporary Rwanda.

This relies on the notion that the distribution model for such publications is domestic to begin with. Other publications intended for wider distribution and consumption could be more likely to delve into more sordid histories and fictions of Rwanda's recent past, based upon the particular audiences they are attempting to cater to. It seems likely, based on audience survey data, that any such articles would be likely to have limited public appeal in most corners of Rwanda. Without data to the contrary, though, the acceptability of such ideas might indeed be

more flexible within Rwanda's domestic sphere than is apparent.

### *Conclusions*

In looking at the potential limitations of this particular case study, it is important to note that one needs to differentiate between distribution methods (online and print) and translation practice in analyzing journalistic discourse. With increased Internet adoption, there has been somewhat of a transition toward online readership, particularly as the demand for constant information has begun to outstrip the capabilities of traditional print media. Though there are some variations in content between online and print media, these are bypassed by the necessity for the quick dissemination of information. This need for immediacy, in tandem with the inherent cost efficiencies at play in repurposing the labor of one work force in the service of producing content for the other, has only reinforced this transition toward online publication. As the labor force is likely to be initially more divided between online and print spheres, the increased adoption of online media has led producers to either reduce/eradicate print operations or, the more likely scenario, to pool resources and deploy them across both platforms in the most efficient way possible. The result is a great deal of contiguity in the content between print and online publications.

Translation poses its own set of issues that are a bit more difficult to delve into. Without some basis for comparison, one assumes some degree of difference, both in tone and intentionality, between content in Kinyarwanda and that in English (less so in French due to its relatively high rate of adoption). One could also assume that some words or phrases may be more apt to appear as a kind of "stand-in" for more diverse and complex concepts, so as to ease the process of translation. Still, phrases with high repetition rates, such as "the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi," remain interesting largely because they are so conspicuously identical across

multiple media, some of which does not appear in translation (not to mention the appearance of such phrases in common conversation).

In terms of the larger discussion of the relationship between media and the state in the construction of a new notion of Rwandan nationalism, is self-censorship expressing itself in Rwanda's print press? There are interesting data points that would indicate some degree of discursive homogeneity, as well as consistency in regards to how the domestic press handles news stories that pertain to the government. Whether discursive homogeneity alone constitutes censorship, or self-censorship, is much more debatable (particularly given the variances in emphasis between publications in terms of discussing the President and the Government), but the constitutional history of Rwanda offers a much clearer view into some of the pressures that have helped to form the content of Rwanda's media. Given the vagueness and the wide-reaching powers of Rwanda's free speech laws, there is little doubt that many journalists have had to curtail at least some of the content of their articles in order to avoid serious consequences. The short answer would be that, yes, there is some degree of self-censorship in Rwanda's press, even following the recent period of media deregulation. The data collected for this case study, though, only glances the surface of larger discursive trends in Rwanda's print press.

If we are to discuss the major differences between the publications included for analysis, we would be remiss not to comment on the striking emphasis on "Growth/Development" in *The Rwanda Focus* (26.89% of total terminology occurrence) as indicative of a trend in news coverage that is positive, but that also tends to avoid some of the more dangerous terms (particularly "President"). The reasons for this are apparent, but it seems too simplistic to portray such trends as an attempt to maintain amicability between the state and the media. Instead, we need to go much further in recognizing the distinctiveness of Rwanda in trying to

understand how and why such trends exist.

It would also be a mistake to assume that all Rwandan journalists feel oppressed and are limiting their speech on a daily basis out of fear of the consequences. Instead, it would be more accurate to conceptualize of Rwanda's media community as a rather diverse collective of figures with varying relationships to, and thoughts about, the government and its leadership. For those that are critical about President Kagame and his administration, it is likely that they do contend, more often than not, with questions of censorship and self-censorship. For others, even those that may not wholly agree with the government agenda, ideological affinity can take on different characteristics. According to Shyaka Kanuma, the editor of *The Rwanda Focus*, the representation of President Kagame as a repressive figure in the international press is mystifying because: "he has won our admiration in Rwanda, because we don't want Rwanda to go the way other African countries have gone."<sup>125</sup> Even as the editor of one of the more neutral domestic papers, Kanuma is expressing in this statement, at least anecdotally, a shared sentiment among many Rwandans. It is not so much that President Kagame represents the lesser of two evils, rather he serves as a battlement from which Rwanda defends itself from both the dangers of the past ("genocide ideology") and those of the uncertain future (framed by the difficulties other African nations have faced in forming governments following violent events).

Behind closed doors, it is likely that there are many Rwandans that would be critical of the actions of President Kagame and his government, but in framing our larger discussion of Rwandan nationalist discourse the issue at hand is how the laws have limited open dialogue to voice such criticisms. Based on the data, as well as the inherent restrictions of Rwanda's speech laws, the progressive concept of regulatory proximity discussed earlier (wherein those publications "closer," geographically and ideologically, to the state would be more in line with



the endorsed discourse, while those further removed from Kigali would be more apt to deviate from said discourse) hardly seems accurate. There are variations in terms of press coverage within Rwanda, but it seems as though there is a clear geographical delineation between the domestic press, which is pro-government or neutral, and press in exile, which is more apt to criticize the government. This dual geography is similar to that which governed radio in the para-genocide period, with RPF sponsored media criticizing the state from outside the country's borders.

### **Connections**

Apart from universal concerns regarding free speech and human rights, why do we care about any of this? To some extent, the supplanting of ethnic identity with nationalism, just as it was with Rwandan radio, remains a particularly troubling issue. Speech laws control public discourse, not thought (though there is little doubt that they can influence that as well). Rwanda continues to contend with the sizable issue of trying to move on from a trauma, while trying not to forget it. What Rwanda's speech laws do, though, is open up only a very narrow corridor of discussion about the past, in which state endorsed discourse is the only acceptable means of constructing history. As seen now in both the radio and journalism studies, the larger issue is that this act of limitation exhibits itself in ways that extend beyond understandable attempts to promote unity. Instead, speech is constitutionally limited in such a way that governmental critique, or discussions of potential inequality in the treatment of Rwandan Hutu, runs the risk of veering into the realm of "genocide denial" or "genocide ideology." This is one excellent reason for viewing print and online media in relation to radio, film and television. If the goal here is to isolate how the post-genocidal nation is being imagined across Rwanda's media, then the nature of censorship and self-censorship must be an important element in such an analysis.

As Chapter 2 has suggested, print media, just like radio, does not operate within a bubble; instead we must view the mediascape of Rwanda as industries and content producers (along with distributors, etc.) that influence one another. For radio and print media in Rwanda, this began with the revolution in the 1950s, when mass adoption of radio became a means overcoming limited literacy in the push for national independence (though print publications, such as *Kinyamateka* also played an important role in this process). Into the late 1980s, print and radio were once again important players in disseminating and maintaining the messages that helped to foster ethnic hate and division (though the history of this ideology is much older, and linked with country's colonial history). The shared element of these two very different moments in Rwandan history is the consistency and repetition of the ideological impulse and endorsed public discourse: at first this message was one of independence, but later it became ethnic difference. The contemporary media environment, though variegated, continues to be one of shared endorsed public discourse. This does not make Rwanda completely unique, but it does force us to raise questions about how acceptable public discourse may change, and what role media may continue to play in this process.

Chapter 3, which focuses on the Film and Television industries in Rwanda, will build upon these same concerns (regulation, religion, and acceptable public discourse) and problematize them by comparing and contrasting the rather tight regulation of T.V. with the loose oversight of Cinema by the government. As growing industries, the following research will discuss how the historical trajectories of print and radio have impacted the content and discursive practices of “newer” media as well as how infrastructural barriers have limited their adoption.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Chi Mgbako, "Rwanda: Media Censorship Will Breed Resentment," *School of Law Newsroom*, Fordham University Website, 11 August, 2010. Web. 21 November 2011.

<<http://law.fordham.edu/faculty/19842.htm>>

<sup>2</sup> "General Paul Kagame Speaks Out On Elections," *Rwandainfo\_ENG*, Web. 20 November 2011.

<<http://rwandainfo.com/eng/general-paul-kagame-speaks-out-on-elections/>>

<sup>3</sup> "The Ntarama Church Massacre," *Rwandan Stories* (Web. 3 March 2014).

<[http://www.rwandanstories.org/genocide/ntarama\\_church.html](http://www.rwandanstories.org/genocide/ntarama_church.html)>

<sup>4</sup> Andrew Young, *Kigali100*, Film (2008).

<sup>5</sup> Sukhdev Chhatbar, "Catholic Priest Guilty in Rwanda Genocide," *The Washington Post* (14 December 2006).

<<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/13/AR2006121301948.html>>

<sup>6</sup> Elisée Rutagambwa, S.J., "The Rwandan Church," *The Catholic Church and the Nation-State*, p.174.

<sup>7</sup> The available statistical data on this subject is a bit contradictory. For instance, the U.S. Department of State Religious Freedom Report cites the numbers included in 2002 Rwanda General Census and Housing Report, but in correlating this data I found that these numbers do not match the current information available in the population summary section of the 2002 report. As a result the contemporary numbers that I use here are the product of a recalculation of population (based on gender), religious affiliation, and the projected population of Rwanda (which appears to align with population forecasts by the International Futures Program <[http://www.ifs.du.edu/ifs/fram\\_CountryProfile.aspx?Country=RW#Population](http://www.ifs.du.edu/ifs/fram_CountryProfile.aspx?Country=RW#Population)>). As the census data did not include an overall breakdown of religious affiliation (and it distinguishes between "Protestant Affiliation" and "Adventist Affiliation"), this data was recalculated by applying current affiliation percentages (by gender), calculating the approximate number of people based on current governmental population projections, the compiling that to give what the likely 2010 total numbers would be for religious affiliation.

<sup>8</sup> *Rwanda – Demographic and Health Survey 2010*, pp.3.

<sup>9</sup> *Rwanda – Demographic and Health Survey 2010*, pp.3.

<sup>10</sup> *Rwanda – Demographic and Health Survey 2010*, pp.3.

<sup>11</sup> Emily Wax, "Islam Attracting Many Survivors of Rwanda Genocide," *The Washington Post* (23 September 2002 Web. 24 April 2013).

<<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A53018-2002Sep22.html>>

<sup>12</sup> "International Religious Freedom Report 2007," *U.S. Department of State* (Web. 24 April 2013).

<<http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2007/90115.htm>>

<sup>13</sup> In Rwanda, thanatourism centers on the national genocide memorial and small multi-purpose sites, such as schools and churches that act as the primary meeting places for a wide range of social groups. These buildings hold the remains and belongings of victims and act as spaces of remembrance. Though these sites are maintained with what appears to be the greatest of intentions, international visitors often arrive in Kigali and take an identical "tour" to the same set of sites, speaking to the same group of "guides." The result of this is that visitors often come out of the experience with an identical perspective and narrative of the genocide.

<sup>14</sup> Such positions are repeatedly echoed by human rights and journalistic entities as a sort of continuity between the role of media during the genocide and the contemporary "domination" of media by regulatory and political entities – most often as it relates to the build up towards the 2010 elections (See the BBC's "Rwanda Profile," or Reporters Without Borders "Offensive Against Media Continues with Arrest of Fortnightly's Editor" for good examples). Such a historiographic approach is problematic because, though the infrastructure remains, the para- and post-genocide governments aims are somewhat different. Additionally, the more recent deregulation of Rwandan print media suggests that the larger concerns of the state are not so much to regulate media, but rather to regulate speech as a whole (as seen

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in the recent arrests based upon the “harbouring of genocidal ideology”).

<sup>15</sup> Debra Spitulnik's “The Social Circulation of Media Discourse and the Mediation of Communities” goes into great detail describing words, phrases and discourse styles in Zambian radio that, while transitioning from the one-way discourse of newspapers or the pulpit, mirror many of the social functions of public readings and recitals.

<sup>16</sup> Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media*.

<sup>17</sup> Jan Vansina in *Antecedents to Modern Rwanda: The Nyirinyira Kingdom* describes how pre-colonial cyclical narratives operated as the “ultimate form of legitimation” because they were seen as tools of prognostication. While in quite a different context, it is arguable that pro-government sentiment media messages have sought to similarly construct a post-genocide history that glosses over very real social tensions and reinforce the position of the administration. The mythological component of these contemporary narratives also seems indicative of the “glossing” propensities of the poems during the reign of Rujigira that discussed infighting between the military and court ritualists.

<sup>18</sup> Monique Alexis and Ines Mpambara, “IMS Assessment,” *International Media Support*, p.6.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p.6.

<sup>20</sup> Alison Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, p.58.

<sup>21</sup> “Field Listing: Literacy,” *CIA World Fact Book* (Web. 11 March 2014).

<<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2103.html>>

<sup>22</sup> Alison Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, p.58.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey 2010*, p.14.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *3<sup>rd</sup> Census of Population and Housing of Rwanda on August 15<sup>th</sup> 2002* (Kigali, Rwanda: National Census Service, 2002), p.46.

<sup>27</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p.42.

<sup>28</sup> Monique Alexis and Ines Mpambara, “IMS Assessment,” *International Media Support*, p.6.

<sup>29</sup> Ian Linden, *Church and Revolution in Rwanda* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1977), p.189.

<sup>30</sup> Ravi Sundaram, Ed. John Caldwell, “Beyond the Nationalist Panopticon: The Experience of Cyberpublics in India,” *Electronic Media and Technoculture* (Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000), p.272.

<sup>31</sup> Monique Alexis and Ines Mpambara, “IMS Assessment,” *International Media Support*, p.6.

<sup>32</sup> This connects with Benedict Anderson's discussion in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* of the use of print-capitalism to unify language. In Anderson's example, though, it was the Protestant, not the Catholic, Church, that used the press in order to openly reject the central positioning of Latin (and by proxy the Catholic Church) as the primary written language. The early church press in Rwanda actually operated to define and delineate the elite/literate from the public/illiterate, rather than unify them through language.

<sup>33</sup> Nick Couldry, *Media Rituals*, p.23.

<sup>34</sup> Elisée Rutagambwa, S.J., “The Rwandan Church,” *The Catholic Church and the Nation-State*, p.175.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Nick Couldry, *Media Rituals*, p.24.

<sup>37</sup> Elisée Rutagambwa, S.J., “The Rwandan Church,” *The Catholic Church and the Nation-State*, p.175.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p.176.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p.174.

<sup>40</sup> Nick Couldry, *Media Rituals*, p.25.

<sup>41</sup> *Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009*, p.37.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p.37.

<sup>43</sup> “Wave of Intimidation of Kigali Media,” *Reporters Without Borders* (28 April 2014 Web. 2 June 2014). <<http://en.rsf.org/rwanda-wave-of-intimidation-of-kigali-28-04-2014,46184.html>>

- <sup>44</sup> Peter Noorlander, "Rwandan Media Under Attack Despite New Press Laws," *The Guardian* (Web. 20 March 2013 Accessed 5 Jun 2014). <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/mar/20/rwanda-journalists-attack-media>>
- <sup>45</sup> *Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009*, p.37.
- <sup>46</sup> Lars Waldorf, "Censorship and Propaganda in Post-Genocide Rwanda," *IDRC Archive* (Accessed 11 November 2012) <[http://ghri.gc.ca/waterdemand/ev-108305-201-1-DO\\_TOPIC.html](http://ghri.gc.ca/waterdemand/ev-108305-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html)>
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>48</sup> "Kinyamateka Catholic Paper Comments on Recent Presidential Elections," *Agenzia Fides* (Accessed 12 November 2012) <[http://www.fides.org/eng/news/2003/0309/08\\_653.html](http://www.fides.org/eng/news/2003/0309/08_653.html)>
- <sup>49</sup> Gaja Pellegrini, "The Observers - Rwandan Elections: 'Voters had no real choice,'" *France 24* (Web. 23 August 2010, Accessed 11 November 2012) <<http://observers.france24.com/content/20100823-rwanda-elections-voters-had-no-real-choice>>
- <sup>50</sup> "EU Criticism of Rwanda Election," *Information (via willum.com)* (Web. 4 October 2003, Accessed 11 November 2012). <<http://www.willum.com/articles/information04oct2003/index.htm>>
- <sup>51</sup> "Kinyamateka Catholic Paper," *Agenzia Fides*.
- <sup>52</sup> "Newspaper's Deputy Editor Gunned Down Outside Home in Kigali," *Reporters Without Borders* (Web. 26 June 2010, Accessed 1 December 2012). <<http://en.rsf.org/rwanda-newspaper-s-deputy-editor-gunned-25-06-2010,37812.html>>
- <sup>53</sup> Particularly Joshua Hirsch's notions in *Afterimage: Film, Trauma, and the Holocaust* of post-traumatic cinema as "not only represent[ing] traumatic historical events, but also attempt[ing] to embody and reproduce the trauma for the spectator through its form of narration." (p.xi)
- <sup>54</sup> Joshua Hirsch, *Afterimage: Film, Trauma, and the Holocaust*, p.25.
- <sup>55</sup> Judith F. Rodenbeck, Ed. Lisa Saltzman and Eric Rosenberg, "Car Crash, 1960," *Trauma and Visuality in Modernity* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth Press, 2006), p.112.
- <sup>56</sup> Such as in cases when perpetrators act to escape accountability, a point that Judith Lewis Herman discusses thoroughly in "A Forgotten History," and is important in its bringing into play issues of forgetting or discrediting victims.
- <sup>57</sup> "Rwanda Genocide: 100 Days of Slaughter," *BBC.com* (Web 6 April 2014, Accessed 12 December 2014). <<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-26875506>>
- <sup>58</sup> *The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda* (26 May 2003), p.1.
- <sup>59</sup> "Press Freedom Index 2010," *Reporters Without Borders* (Accessed 14 May 2014). <[http://en.rsf.org/spip.php?page=classement&id\\_rubrique=1034](http://en.rsf.org/spip.php?page=classement&id_rubrique=1034)>
- <sup>60</sup> David Smith, "US blocks military aid to Rwanda over alleged backing of M23 child soldiers," *The Guardian* (Web. 4 October 2013, Accessed 12 December 2014). <<http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2013/oct/04/us-military-aid-rwanda-m23-child-soldiers>>
- <sup>61</sup> Jonathan Miller, "Britain's aid to Rwanda is funding a 'repressive regime' says former Kagame official," *The Telegraph* (Web. 24 November 2012, Accessed 14 December 2014). <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/rwanda/9700913/Britains-aid-to-Rwanda-is-funding-a-repressive-regime-says-former-Kagame-official.html>>
- <sup>62</sup> "2013 World Press Freedom Index: Dashed Hopes After the Spring," *Reporters Without Borders* (Accessed 13 December 2014). <<http://en.rsf.org/press-freedom-index-2013,1054.html>>
- <sup>63</sup> Though in W. Lance Bennett's case, he was largely concerned with the nature of the relationship between the Press and the State within the U.S., his larger points about the potentiality for State-Press symbiosis are more than a little relevant given the long history of state run media in Rwanda (as well as the long reach of the state into private media through censorship).
- <sup>64</sup> W. Lance Bennett, "Toward a Theory of Press-State Relations in the United States," *Journal of Communication* (June 1990, Vol. 40, Issue 2), p. 103.
- <sup>65</sup> Though Bagdikian is interrogating the issue of corporate conglomeration that have heavily impacted ideological diversity with the U.S. media marketplace, "professional decisions" remain important in many media ecosystems largely because, even in circumstances where press freedom are less urgent, there

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remains a transactional relationship between media producers and their sources that necessarily skews reporting (if only to maintain access to sources).

<sup>66</sup> Ben H. Bagdikian, "The U.S. Media: Supermarket or Assembly Line?" *Journal of Communication* (September 1985, Volume 35, Issue 3), p.104.

<sup>67</sup> Jean-Marie Vianney Higiro, Ed. Allan Thompson, "Rwandan Private Print Media on the Eve of the Genocide," *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide* (London: Pluto Press, 2007), pp.75-76.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> Charles Mironko, "The Effect of RTLM," *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, p.130.

<sup>70</sup> "Around 30 News Media Closed a Few Days Ahead of Presidential Election," *UNHCR: The UN Refugee Agency*, 2 August 2010, Web. 19 November 2011.

<<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/publisher,RSF,RWA,4c5ab4f5c,0.html>>

<sup>71</sup> "Attacks on the Press 2010: Rwanda," *CPJ – Committee to Protect Journalists Website*, 15 February 2011. Web. 16 November 2011. <<http://www.cpj.org/2011/02/attacks-on-the-press-2010-rwanda.php>>

<sup>72</sup> Josh Kron, "Grenade Strikes Rwanda's Capital Two Days After Election," *New York Times*.

<sup>73</sup> "Rwandan 'Assassins' Kill Reporter Jean Leonard Rugambage," *BBC.com*, 25 June 2010. Web. 17 November 2011. <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10413793>>

<sup>74</sup> Josh Kron, "Rwanda Opposition Figure Found Dead," *New York Times*, 14 July 2010. Web. 21 November 2011.

<sup>75</sup> "House of Commons Transcript," *UK Parliament Website*, 7 July 2010. Web. 26 November 2011.

<<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm100707/debtext/100707-0001.htm>>

<sup>76</sup> "To Aid or Not to Aid? The Case of Rwanda," *United Nations University* (Web. 29 April 2013, Accessed 14 May 2014). <<http://unu.edu/publications/articles/to-aid-or-not-to-aid-the-case-of-rwanda.html>>

<sup>77</sup> "BBC Back On Air Under Strict Conditions," *IFEX*, 26 June 2009. Web. 27 November 2011.

<[http://www.ifex.org/rwanda/2009/06/26/bbc\\_back\\_on\\_air/](http://www.ifex.org/rwanda/2009/06/26/bbc_back_on_air/)>

<sup>78</sup> Flora Kaiteesi, "Parliament Endorses 3 Media-Related Laws," *ORINFOR: Rwanda Bureau of Information and Broadcasting Website*, 8 February 2011. Web. 22 November 2011.

<<http://www.orinfor.gov.rw/printmedia/topstory.php?id=3547>>

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> "Move to Self Regulation in Media," *Rwanda Governance Advisory Council*, Web. 22 November 2011. <<http://www.rwanda-gac.org/news-pages/news-details/article/move-to-self-regulation-in-media.html>>

<sup>81</sup> "Rwanda's Shifting Media Policy," *The Chronicles*.

<sup>82</sup> "11/05/2002 - Law n° 18/2002 governing the press," *Legal Information Portal: Republic of Rwanda* (Web. 11 May 2002, Accessed 7 September 2014). <<http://lip.alfa-xp.com/lip/AmategekoDB.aspx?Mode=r&pid=7799&iid=724&rid=3068659>>

<sup>83</sup> Wellars Gasamagera, "The Constitution Making Process in Rwanda: Lessons to be Learned," *United Nations 7<sup>th</sup> Global Forum for Reinventing Government, Vienna, Austria* (22 June 2007), p.1.

<sup>84</sup> "11/05/2002 - Law n° 18/2002 governing the press," *Legal Information Portal: Republic of Rwanda*.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> *The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda*, p.4.

<sup>87</sup> Wellars Gasamagera, "The Constitution Making Process," *United Nations*, pp.6-7.

<sup>88</sup> *The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda*, p.9.

<sup>89</sup> "Media Law of 12.08.09," *Official Gazette of the Republic of Rwanda* (17 August 2009), p.32.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p.74.

<sup>91</sup> "Official Gazette n° 10 of 11 March 2013," *Official Gazette of the Republic of Rwanda* (11 March 2013), p.39.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, p.54.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p.39.

<sup>94</sup> A number of individuals have been imprisoned based on "harboring genocide ideology" or genocide

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denial, even as there is little evidence of their actual offense (a good example of this was the imprisonment of U.S. lawyer Peter Erlinder for genocide denial, even though the Chief Prosecutor could not immediately cite any examples: see Hereward Holland, "Rwanda arrests U.S. lawyer for genocide denial," *Reuters.com* 28 May 2010).

<sup>95</sup> Matrin Matthaei, "Rwanda: Censorship or self-censorship," *Deutsche Welle* (12 August 2014). <<http://www.dw.de/rwanda-censorship-or-self-censorship/a-18118956>>

<sup>96</sup> Anton Harber, "Legacy of Rwanda genocide includes media restrictions, self-censorship," *Committee to Protect Journalists* (Web. 8 December 2014, Accessed 5 December 2015). <<https://cpj.org/reports/2014/12/legacy-of-rwanda-genocide-includes-media-restricti.php>>

<sup>97</sup> "Rwanda's Election: President Paul Kagame under scrutiny," *The Economist* (Web. 5 August 2010, Accessed 2 January 2015). <<http://www.economist.com/node/16750119>>

<sup>98</sup> Referencing ICG (International Crisis Group), *Rwanda at the End of the Transition: a Necessary Political Liberalization*, 2002 in Lars Waldorf, Ed. Allan Thompson, "Censorship and Propaganda in Post-Genocide Rwanda," *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide* (London: Pluto Press, 2007), p.413.

<sup>99</sup> Josh Kron, "Rwandan Editor Who Accused Officials in Shooting Is Killed," *The New York Times* (Web.25 June 2010, Accessed 4 January 2015).

<[http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/26/world/africa/26rwanda.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/26/world/africa/26rwanda.html?_r=0)>

<sup>100</sup> "Rwanda: Exiled Editor Sentenced for 'Insulting' President," *CPJ.org* (Web. 6 June 2011, Accessed 7 January 2015). <<https://cpj.org/2011/06/rwanda-exiled-editor-sentenced-for-insulting-presi.php>>

<sup>101</sup> "Field Listing: Literacy," *CIA World Fact Book*.

<sup>102</sup> *3<sup>rd</sup> Census of Population and Housing of Rwanda on August 15<sup>th</sup> 2002*, p.46.

<sup>103</sup> *Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009*, p.38.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, p.37.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>111</sup> "Rwanda's Election," *The Economist*.

<sup>112</sup> *Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009*, p.37.

<sup>113</sup> "Domestic Media Monitoring Report, Rwanda: 13 – 19 January 2014," *Montreal Institute for Genocide Studies* (Accessed 8 January 2015). <[http://migs.concordia.ca/Media\\_Monitoring/documents/Rwanda\\_Domestic\\_Media\\_Monitoring\\_January\\_13-19\\_2014.pdf](http://migs.concordia.ca/Media_Monitoring/documents/Rwanda_Domestic_Media_Monitoring_January_13-19_2014.pdf)>

<sup>114</sup> *Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009*, p.37.

<sup>115</sup> *Umuwugizi* articles are largely overt attacks on the President with little, if any, evidence or research behind them, while *The New Times* are primarily concerned with giving a positive slant to the President's role in current events.

<sup>116</sup> Mwene Kalinda, Omar and Nyokabi, "Why Rwandans are grateful to Kagame," *The New Times* (Web. 21 November 2014, Accessed 9 January 2014). <<http://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/article/2014-11-21/183263/>>

<sup>117</sup> Robinson (Europe), "Obama Warns Burma's Tyranny," *Umuwugizi* (Web. 14 November 2014, Accessed 7 January 2015). <<http://www.umuwugizi.com/?p=10279&lang=en>>

<sup>118</sup> Stevenson Mugisha, "Youth Unemployment Puts Poverty Reduction At Risk," *The Rwanda Focus* (Web.28 November 2014, Accessed 11 January 2015). <<http://www.focus.rw/wp/2014/11/28/youth-unemployment-puts-poverty-reduction-at-risk/>>

<sup>119</sup> Collins Mwai, "Kagame: Rwanda Committed to EAC, African Solidarity," *The New Times* (Web.13 December 2014, Accessed 16 January 2014). <<http://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/article/2014-12-13/184003/>>

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<sup>120</sup> Eugene Kwibuka, “Kagame: No apologies for standing up for our rights,” *The New Times* (Web. 20 December 2014, Accessed 3 January 2015). <<http://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/article/2014-12-20/184233/>>

<sup>121</sup> Johnson (Sweden), “The Rwandan President attacks Human Rights watch as he struggles to attain life presidency,” *Umuwugizi* (Web. 4 December 2014, Accessed 16 January 2015). <<http://www.umuvugizi.com/?p=10350&lang=en>>

<sup>122</sup> *Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009*, p.37.

<sup>123</sup> “Headlines,” *Umuwugizi* (Accessed 11 January 2015). <<http://www.umuvugizi.com/?lang=en>>

<sup>124</sup> Michael J. Boyle, *Violence After War: Explaining Instability in Post-Conflict States* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), p.147.

<sup>125</sup> Scott Baldauf, “Rwandan opposition leader Ingabire released on bail,” *The Christian Science Monitor* (Web. 22 April 2010, Accessed 4 January 2015). <<http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Africa/2010/0422/Rwandan-opposition-leader-Ingabire-released-on-bail>>



### Chapter 3: “Hollywood” and Rwanda T.V. - Framing the Nation Through Film and Television

“The idea for the Rwanda Cinema Center came about when there was literally nothing to represent the voices and stories from here. Everything that was disseminated about Rwanda was created by others—the Belgians, French, Canadians, Americans, and so forth. We’ve always been looked at through the eyes of others.”

– Eric Kabera, founder of the Rwanda Cinema Center<sup>1</sup>

“The public radio and television are there for relaying the action of the government. The private media, rather, should be interested in other things, like music and entertainment.”

- Laurent Nkusi, Rwanda Information Minister<sup>2</sup>

#### **Serving Witness**

It is likely one of the most horrific and memorable moments of the genocide caught on tape: a man and a woman kneeling on a dirt road, surrounded by numerous bodies. *Interhamwe* militia members move around the two, wielding machetes and other weapons (as they have already dispatched more than a dozen Rwandans that now lay dead in the road), as a young boy walks across the road and offers a passing glance at the carnage down the street. His casual look suggests that these figures (the man, the woman, and the dead) mean nothing to him; they are little more than wild animals being put down. While the man and the woman continue to kneel in the road, the man begins praying with his arms outstretched toward the heavens, as the militia members start beating the dead bodies with their assorted weapons. The scene is surreal beyond description. How is it that, in all of this bloodshed, these two figures remain alive? Is the praying man hoping for a miracle to save them, is he resigned to his fate, or is he asking God to forgive his killers? How many scenes like this are playing out across Rwanda at this very moment, but there is no one there to capture them?

Almost as soon as these questions race into the viewer’s mind, a pickup truck pulls up and slows down for a moment. In the ensuing moments two more men approach the scene, weapon in hand, and strike down the praying man. Another militia member then kills the woman

kneeling at his side. Those questions that appeared so pertinent a moment earlier now seem unimportant. These two figures, kneeling in hope or in fear, are gone; just like the hundreds of thousands that would be dead over the next few months. Whether it was a miracle that man was praying for or not, earthly salvation never came. We may never know all of the horrible details of the genocide, as the movements of journalists were restricted, particularly during the evacuation of foreign nationals.

Reporting on the events of April 11, 1994 along that dirt road in the Gikondo district of Kigali, Nick Hughes (then a freelance cameraman) worked his way up to one of the upper floors of a French school in Kigali to get a better view of the valley below. Only two days earlier, U.N. Peace Keepers found the charred remains and identity cards of 110 Tutsi that had been seeking refuge in the Polish Pallottine Mission Church in Gikondo nearby.<sup>3</sup> On an upper floor of the school, Hughes met a Belgian paratrooper that had been observing the brutal massacre that was taking place below, through the scope of his rocket launcher. There was little the paratrooper could do to stop what was happening, given the strict mandate by the U.N. that prohibited intervention, so he had to stay there and watch what was unfolding on the red clay road below and do nothing.

Looking down at the road, what Hughes witnessed through his camera was important in framing the debate over U.N. intervention in Rwanda, particularly in its aftermath. In many ways, the kneeling man and woman defined the human toll of genocide in a way that statistics or talking points never could. Surrounded by dead bodies, they were just two victims in a brutal conflict that took the lives of hundreds of thousands, if not millions. But their deaths said as much about the inhumanity of ethnic violence as it did about the problematic stance of the western world on what was happening on the ground in Kigali and across Rwanda. The U.N.'s

“Mission Impossible” in Rwanda was hamstrung on a number of fronts, not the least of which being that any attempts at international intervention faced staunch resistance from the United States and France.

Though the images were important at the time, the larger impact of the Hughes footage has been a post-genocidal one. As Allan Thompson puts it, in much of the world “we watched genocide on television, then turned away and did nothing.”<sup>4</sup> Outside of Rwanda, much of the world still thinks of the country as being in the midst of genocidal conflict. Films such as *Hotel Rwanda* have framed the country within the consciousness of much of the world as a place still in the throws of civil war.<sup>5</sup> It is as though the country remains frozen at the moment that the nightly news moved on to the next big story. The Hughes footage (like *Hotel Rwanda*) operates with a strange duality upon the post-genocidal consciousness of the international community in relation Rwanda. In one sense, it tethers Rwanda to a past that appears to many as a barrier for the country to take its place in the world (to separate from that memory). Thompson even suggests that it “has become the virtual stock footage of the genocide, a sort of Zapruder film.”<sup>6</sup> Hughes’ footage also serves as a necessary reminder that such a past must play a part in the Rwanda’s future.

This duality (the struggle between remembrance and a future that needs to move out of the past) lies at the heart of this discussion of film and television in Rwanda. Interestingly, Nick Hughes has played an important role in developing Rwanda’s film industry, alongside Producer and RCC founder Eric Kabera. Following his experience in Rwanda, Hughes has continued to work, making documentaries covering different aspects of the Rwanda genocide, including the camp clearances in Goma (1997) and the Congo War (1998).<sup>7</sup> After meeting together at a pool in Kigali, Hughes wrote, directed, and co-produced the film *100 Days* (2001) with Kabera. Though

this film did not tie into the events of the original footage, they later co-produced the film *Iseta: Behind the Roadblock* (2008, dir. Juan Reina), which documents Hughes' return to Gikondo, and the process of identifying the victims from the video, as well as the perpetrators.

This partnership, between Kabera (and his company Link Media Productions, in addition to the RCC) and Hughes (and his production company Vivid Features, based in Nairobi, Kenya) has been a fundamental force in both the development and the expansion of Rwanda's film industry. Though there is little doubt that Kabera serves as the figurehead of the industry (even sitting as a member of the Media High Council), to ignore his collaboration with Hughes and the symbolic importance of his initial Gakondo footage is a mistake. In many ways, their work has gone to great lengths to negotiate the primary question of this chapter: in what ways has Rwandan Television and Film sought to articulate and actuate reconciliation as a means of constructing Rwandan nationalism? *100 Days* and *Iseta: Behind the Roadblock* engage with reconciliation in different ways, but they are both forced to navigate the same past/future duality as Hughes' original footage. As a result, a major element of this discussion needs to be the gauging of whether reconciliation is a process that resolves the past, rather than a means of reformulating Rwanda's social conditions in order to facilitate a functional future.

This point is particularly relevant due to the proximal relationship between the government and Rwanda's film and television industries, further enunciated by Kabera's role as a member of the Media High Council and the fact Rwandan Television has historically been state funded. In contrast to the bulk of Rwanda's media, the film industry has faced little to no direct censorship from the government, thus the question of self-censorship and industrial oversight that played such a prominent role in discussing the deregulation of Rwandan print media is all the more important in looking at its cinema. An analysis of the discursive stance taken by

Rwandan film and television in light of Information Minister Laurent Nkusi's suggestion in the epigraph of this chapter, that public media should be in service of the government while private media should focus on entertaining, is pertinent. If this is the government's posture toward the regulation of media, then is there a place within Rwandan film, as a private entity, to engage with and critique reconciliation and the government's handling of it? Shouldn't it be the precisely the private sector that needs to be critically engaging with the healing of the fissures in Rwandan society?

At the same time, the RCC and its films have been important in giving a voice to Rwandans to tell their own stories and share them with their countrymen, certainly, but also outside of the nation's borders. Given the para- and post-genocidal history of exploitation that has taken place in Rwanda, with reporters and documentarians flocking to Kigali with little to no actual interest in Rwanda's people or cultural past, we must temper potential criticism with the understanding that many of its film and television producers are quite jaded by the experience of dealing with outsiders. This particular stance has resulted in an industrial relationship with the government that is both financial (if only indirectly) and affinitive with stated priorities (as films and TV programs aid in remembrance *and* reconciliation). A great deal of this affinity, though, is rooted in how these relationships were historically formed.

### **Film and Television: Access, Infrastructure, and Audiences**

Given how recently both film and television have come to Rwanda (the first television station went on the air 1992,<sup>8</sup> and the first Rwandan feature film, *100 Days*, appeared in 2001), it is unsurprising that their particular media histories would be comparatively short. Television was a medium initially embraced only by the Rwandan elite, as the cost of a television set was so great (though many in the middle class did own television sets to play VHS tapes).<sup>9</sup> The overall

impact of television as a medium of communicating state endorsed discourse was thus limited. Public television on Rwandan TV (TVR) was initially minimal, broadcasting only three evenings during the week, and on weekends, until April of 1994, with three dedicated news programs (in Kinyarwanda, French, and English).<sup>10</sup> Though a great deal of the programming was slanted against the RPF, journalist Florian Ukizemwabo stated that in these early years “there was a certain independence because the chief-editor would not tolerate unbalanced news.”<sup>11</sup> The extent of this freedom is rather unspecific (criticism of the government seems unlikely), but what is interesting is the idea that “balance” and nationalism should function in affinity with one another. Ukizemwabo suggests that this was due to the reporters being “patriots defending their country.”<sup>12</sup> Though such an argument seems dubious, the notion that patriotism can govern the tone and content of print journalism is hardly novel. Instead, it runs in direct parallel with much of what this project has been attempting to show in terms of discursive trends across the Rwandan mediascape.

Ukizemwabo’s statement says quite a bit about the editorialization and self-censorship at play in early television news, but it also poses a question: what is the role of patriotism and nationalism in audio-visual media, particularly relatively unregulated media such as film? Much of this lies in the larger historical trends of the relationship between the government and the film and television industries, but it is also expressed textually in the films and television programs produced and distributed within Rwanda. In constructing a history of Rwandan media we are once again faced with the ideological fissure between the pre- and post-genocide periods. The goals of pro-Hutu and post-ethnic nationalism are quite different, but they both rely on a construction of “self” and “nation” focused around fundamental principles and values endorsed by the state.

Attempting to characterize the content of TVR as similar between the pre- and post-genocide periods is no doubt problematic, but the social and political function of the station has, in many ways remained the same. As Nkusi suggests, the function of TVR is to disseminate key governmental information (though it also runs Hollywood films and other special interest programming), making it quite similar to Radiyo Rwanda in this regard. Compared to radio, TVRs audience is quite different, due to the same issue of cost that limited the adoption of television in the early 1990s. What is interesting, in a country where approximately 11.8% of Rwandans watch TV at home, is that 66.25% of the population says that they have watched public television (a statistic even more striking due to the geographical concentration of TV ownership in the cities).<sup>13</sup> What this means is that, unlike radio which is consumed in public and shared spaces (buses, taxis, restaurants, at work, etc.), television is a medium of the domestic sphere, as half of Rwandans (47.55%) report that they watch TVR either in their own homes (11.8%) or in other people's homes (35.75%).<sup>14</sup> By contrast, only 15.35% of total respondents stated that they watch TVR in some sort of public setting.<sup>15</sup> The relevance of this data is that that, given the rather small percentage of the population that actually owns a television, general penetration of the marketplace for TV is quite high. Still, the depth and repetition of actual viewing experiences is likely extremely erratic and limited, as it seems somewhat unlikely that out-of-home (or guest) viewership would be a nightly occurrence.

The nature of audience consumption of television is quite different from radio, due to the portability and ubiquity of radio by comparison. While radio listenership spikes during the peak morning hours (5:30am to 6:30am), then again near lunch (11:30am to 2:30pm), and again in the evening (6:30pm and 9:30pm), television viewership spikes only during the evening.<sup>16</sup> The lack of a secondary viewership spike means that the vast majority of guest viewership is also

occurring during the evening hours. Additionally, the rate of consumption by television viewers (by percentage of viewers) almost mirrors the percentage of radio listeners.<sup>17</sup> This means that the percent of the total television audience viewing is the same during those peak hours, but that a rather sizeable percentage of radio listeners are also tuning in numerous times over the course of a given day. As a result, television viewing appears to be much more a singular daily experience, while one could characterize radio listenership as repeated instances of consumption over the course of a given day (thus serving as much more effective in the dissemination of important information).

In light of Nkusi's suggestion of the role of public media, then, what is the purpose of a public stations like TVR? Public media does continue to serve under the Nkusi mandate by offering a number of news programs (even continuing the pre-genocide practice of having individual programs in Kinyarwanda, French, and English), but the demands of the marketplace have placed the station in an awkward position of serving the public need for governmental information, while also supplying enough entertaining content to keep people coming back (an impossible mission for it to accomplish). As one *The New Times* editorial points out, "Rwanda TV will always lead when it comes to Government news, but their content tends to be stale and stagnant."<sup>18</sup> Such a critique emphasizes the growing demand within the Rwandan marketplace for alternative content, or at the very least a reevaluation of the production practices of public television.

The result of this demand on the marketplace has been the considerable proliferation of domestic and international alternatives. Satellite television has become a considerable force in Rwanda, particularly in the capital where many of the Hotels and bars have invested in signal access in order to cater to their international clientele. Still, private television has been rather



late to the game in the Rwandan media marketplace. It was not until 2013 that the first privately owned television station, TV10 (a channel focusing on “business, entertainment/culture, sports and news”<sup>19</sup>), began broadcasting in Rwanda.<sup>20</sup> Eugène Nyagahene, who owns TV10, is the same businessman who created the country’s first private radio station, Radio 10, in 2004.<sup>21</sup> Though the penetration of pay television into the marketplace was only 0.45% in 2009,<sup>22</sup> there has been considerable growth on this front. The success of the Chinese company Star Times over the last five years packaging flat screen TVs with decoders (with 24 or 36 channels), as well as other media companies such as DSTV,<sup>23</sup> have driven this growth. An interesting wrinkle in this advance, though, has been the recent switch over from analog to digital broadcasting, with the goal of boosting the production of local content for domestic distribution. The switch led to the creation of a number of stations beyond TVR, including Family TV, TV One, TV10, CNBC Africa, Lemigo TV, Contact TV, and Yego TV.<sup>24</sup>

The thought was that the reduction of content production costs, in tandem with unprecedented industrial growth, would result in a burgeoning domestic media industry. What has happened, instead, is an underscoring of the content production gap between international media distribution companies and the domestic producers that are finding it difficult to locate sufficient material. The hopes that digital broadcasting would usher in a new wave of programming have been quashed by the realities for content developers that “it is expensive to produce local content [...] [and that] there is lack of skills and capacity needed to produce quality content in the country.”<sup>25</sup> The rather large elephant in the room, in this regard, has been massive media dumping on the part of international media industries (particularly American and French film and television).

The repackaging of syndicated content from the United States and Europe, which is then

sold quite cheaply for distribution in Rwanda, is one part of a much larger problem for local content producers. Another is the relative mystery of who is actually watching television in Rwanda. Though the available data suggests certain viewing habits in regards to public television, there is little in the way of actual demographic data (not to mention actual television ratings). This poses a sizeable obstacle for content producers in Rwanda, as it is quite challenging to actually assess audience size, and consequently it is difficult to attract advertisers. As pointed out by *The New Times*, this is only part of what is driving down local content production as “Rwanda’s small economy coupled with the low television penetration rates means that big advertisers will continue shying away from using TV as a marketing medium to sell their products and services.”<sup>26</sup> Much of Rwanda’s television content continues to be state funded news and (imported) entertainment programming.

The creation, development, and growth of the film industry in Rwanda, has taken quite a different journey from that of television. Film exhibition in Rwanda began in the early twentieth century with open-air screenings endorsed by the colonial authority, featuring films promoting Christianity, educational films, and cartoons (many of which employed overt racial stereotyping).<sup>27</sup> Since this time period, there have been a number of United States and European productions depicting central, sub-Saharan Africa. But countries such as Rwanda have largely served as little more than a backdrop. In comparison to this long, though limited, exhibition history, the account of films shot in Rwanda (particularly those produced by Rwandans) is much, much shorter. Though Rwanda has been the location for other films before, according to Kabera the history of Rwandan cinema begins with his film *100 Days*.<sup>28</sup> For all intents and purposes, Kabera is correct in his assertion that the contemporary film industry began with his 1997 meeting with Hughes, and their eventual co-production released in 2001. Since that point, more

that 15 feature films and 50 documentaries have been shot by Rwandans,<sup>29</sup> under the purview of a select group of film centers and schools formed under the leadership of Kabera. The Kwetu Film Institute (an extension of the RCC) was designed, in partnership with a number of international filmmakers, journalists, and educators, to be a practical, hands on, school for media production, but it was also seen as a means of developing filmmaking talent in Rwanda and East Africa.

The striking difference, between Rwandan television and film, has been twofold: first, the film industry has been able to tap into very different marketplaces, and second, it has a very loose relationship with the government. Though film has faced the same series of hurdles as television, in terms of approaching the domestic marketplace, the Rwandan film industry has circumvented many of these issues by engaging with the international marketplace (in place of domestic distribution), in order to finance and support local training. As a result, since advertising does not drive the industry, its survival is dependent upon a different set of economic principles. In terms of domestic distribution, the Rwanda Film Festival (RFF), which incorporates the travelling film festival lovingly known as “Hollywood,” has been the primary means of distributing Rwandan films. What was once a travelling festival with an inflatable screen, a power generator, and a projector moved between a number of villages, towns, and cities, has now grown into a large scale festival with permanent locations in Kigali, Kiyovu, Nyamirambo, Gacuriro, and Gisozi.<sup>30</sup> The festival acts as an exhibition space for Rwandan filmmakers to get exposure, both to new audiences and potential investors, but it also serves to develop a larger audience for cinema. The success of such a venture seems to be bearing some fruit given the increasing stability of the festival, as well as the major participation of international filmmakers from a number of countries including the United States, China,

Switzerland, and Germany.

From a regulatory perspective, the industry acts independently from the government, though a certain degree of financial support does trickle down to its various entities through the Workforce Development Agency (WDA), which helps to support the Kwetu Film School,<sup>31</sup> as well as through institutional support from entities such as the MHC. The much closer relationship has been between the industry and its international partners, especially in Hollywood and Europe. There is an intriguing ideological affinity between the industry and the government, seen in the mutual emphasis on remembering the past as a means of constructing a new “post-ethnic” future. Perhaps this is the result of Kabera’s close oversight of the different branches of the industry and his close work with the MHC. Based on the regulatory laws in place, the film industry sits in a very interesting position as existing media law has not as explicitly controlled it. According to the 2009 media law, the realm of media includes, “print media publications, internet, radio and television stations and media agencies, presenting continuously or at regular intervals and at once and which is known with an intention to publicize.”<sup>32</sup> Though the industry could fall under the above description in some capacity, the government has not directly censored it. While filmmakers are no doubt as subject to the basic tenets of Rwanda’s speech laws as the press and radio, it appears that the industry has been self-regulated. The leadership and oversight of Kabera, and the development of the Kwetu Film Institute as a de facto clearinghouse for potential projects, has made this process much easier.

Exhibition and distribution are also streamlined, so much so that there are very few options for independent filmmakers outside of the RCC. Part of this is due to the fact that there are only a few theaters in the entire country, but there is also a problem of independently funding projects. Distribution, particularly in the initial years of the RCC when there were almost no

exhibition spaces, necessitated a creative system for fostering a film culture. This was the reason for the formation of the Rwanda Film Festival. Though the film industry has worked to build a film culture, there remains a great deal of work to make the industry profitable within the domestic marketplace. The focus of the industry has been on creating a place for Rwandan cinema in the international marketplace. In fact, one of the things that makes the Rwanda film industry an exceptional example among media production cultures is that it's emphasis on developing projects for international, not domestic, distribution (though there is little doubt of the RCC's desire for the growth of a domestic marketplace).

While their histories are quite different, the film and television industries have faced many of the same hurdles. Unlike radio and print media, which have historically enjoyed rather wide adoption (even in light of Rwanda's low literacy rate), film and television have faced a number of infrastructural issues that have limited their foothold in the media marketplace. First and foremost has been the limited availability of electricity, since only 10% of Rwandan homes having access.<sup>33</sup> This is particularly an issue in rural areas where only 4% of Rwandans have access to electricity (compared to 45% in urban areas).<sup>34</sup> As a result, it is unsurprising that, as of 2010, one third of urban households have a television, compared to only 2 percent of rural homes.<sup>35</sup> This means that, of those with access to electricity, approximately 73.3% of urban households have adopted television, compared to 50% of rural homes that have electricity. While this constitutes a very small portion of the total population, the adoption rate of television is strikingly high when looking at homes that *could* support a television. This is noteworthy because of the high cost of adoption for families to purchase a television and pay for content. The lack of access to electricity has had a similar impact on film, with very few theaters actually operating within Rwanda (though this is also likely driven by an overall lack of demand and the

need for a regular customer base to support public exhibition).

While Rwandan television's funding structure is relatively straightforward (state sponsorship), the particularities of the film industry's relationship to the marketplace (with limited domestic interest) raises serious questions about how the industry is able to remain stable. This appears somewhat murkier a topic given the relative unease that any discussion of finances seems to raise with filmmakers. Based on what information is available, it appears that the bulk of funding for filmmaking and infrastructure has come from private donors and charities, as well as "personal funds [and] the support of friends."<sup>36</sup> Many foreign filmmakers actually receive government funding to produce films in Rwanda, even while domestic producers struggle to finance their projects. Many of these films receive funding from the government, related in part to "the government's obsession with developing foreign investment and building ties with foreign entities."<sup>37</sup> This has led to a great deal of bitterness among many Rwandan filmmakers, particularly independent ones, so that when Rwandan films do receive funding, such as the Kabera produced *Africa United* (2010, dir. Debs Paterson), there is a general sense that such films only receive money based on their status as international co-productions, or their ideological affinity with the government.<sup>38</sup>

There is some anecdotal evidence to suggest that there may be even a closer financial relationship between the government and the film industry, but in the absence of difficult to obtain direct evidence, at this point the such as postulation remains little more than a widely shared rumor. Regardless, the international donors remain centrally important to the continued growth of the industry, if only because their funds legitimize the considerable efforts of content producers. It seems likely that such a relationship must also have an impact on the selection of films for production, as well as their content. For instance, the heavy reliance on international

donors most likely necessitates an ideological posture of complete political stability in Rwanda (both in grant applications and film content). The result is that pitching films for funding that suggest political instability represents a “no-win” scenario, because potential donors want to invest in low-risk projects, as well as to avoid potential scandals or international incidents. Even filmmakers seeking international funding, separate from the severe content limitations imposed on filmmakers of state subsidized projects, must formulate their material to have some degree of alignment with the tenets of state sponsored acceptable public discourse in order to secure said funding.

There has been some sense within the Rwandan government that there could be an important use for the film industry (documentarian Leah Warshawski has noted that the government now refers to it as “the film economy,” and that they are “starting to see the financial potential”<sup>39</sup>), but the general sense seems to be that there is a need for more governmental support if the industry is to survive. According to Aimé Philbert Mbabazi, the president of the Rwanda Cineaste Club, the push towards a solid and community based production environment has been good, “but the Rwandan film industry also needs the support of people and government.”<sup>40</sup> This suggests a number of potential conclusions regarding the status of the industry, but it points out the necessity of further developing the marketplace to make filmmaking financially feasible. Additionally, it highlights one of the major questions of this project: how has Rwandan filmmaking survived in Rwanda, and how can it continue to do so into the future?

### **Reconciliation Through Media**

A great deal of intellectual energy has been brought to bear in engaging with how media has actuated reconciliation and aided in the process of democratization, particularly in South

Africa.<sup>41</sup> What has been witnessed in Rwanda, though, is somewhat different, in large part because of the peculiarities of the official legal processes that are bringing *genocidaires* to justice, as well as what Economics and Political Science scholar Eugenia Zorbas has referred to as “silences”<sup>42</sup> that are part of the construction of Rwandan national unity. The very concept of “reconciliation” is rather murky to begin with. As Genevieve Parent points out, the definition of the term “reconciliation,” though it is used in a wide range of academic and political circles, remains contested and “unclear.”<sup>43</sup> This lack of clarity generally stems from a number of issues including the role of healing, political necessity, and the multiplicity of meanings that can emerge from different definitions of reconciliation. The larger issue, both for those engaged in the field of conflict resolution as well as the victims and perpetrators for whom the process of reconciliation reaches well beyond the theoretical, is whether or not the end goal of reconciliation is attainable. The definition offered up by Parent is that:

“Reconciliation is better understood as a societal process where each party is supposed to acknowledge the other and the other’s sufferings, where antagonistic parties are to move onto constructive attitudes and behaviors, and/or where individual and collective relationships of trust are (re)built.”<sup>44</sup>

This seems a much more useful way of thinking about reconciliation, not only because it addresses the significant social component of the process, but it also lays bear the transformative nature of the process for all parties involved. At the heart of reconciliation is the need to overcome the psychological barriers that have led those involved to be antagonistic, and attempt to create trust through the recognition of each others basic humanity (negating the “othering” that often leads to oppositional relationships that would necessitate the need for reconciliation in the first place). The character of this process is somewhat more complex in the context of post-genocide Rwanda, not only because the goal has been the “healing” of the country (which links the need for healing to larger nationalistic concerns), but also because “justice” remains a



difficult proposition given the roles that many Rwandans played in the mass murder of hundreds of thousands of people.

Reconciliation hardly operates within a vacuum. Though large portions of the populace may share in the goals of this process, one should not ignore the motivations, machinations, and political motives behind it. The overt control of the state over the implementation of the infrastructure of reconciliation (through the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission – NURC), and the prominence of Anglophone RPF members in the governmental inner circle, has led to claims of a latent “tutsification”<sup>45</sup> of the state. Though this may be a somewhat of a reach (as it seems inevitable that the RPF led government would install their own leaders in positions of power), what is much more important is the way that state endorsed discourse reflects the composition of the government.

As Zorbas suggests, there are a number of “silences” in Rwanda that persist for reasons reaching beyond simple fears of ethnic reprisal. For instance, the hiding of alleged war crimes by the RPF has represented not only their seeming protection by the RPF led government, but also the continuance of the negation of Tutsi revenge killings that has reinforced the state endorsed narrative of the genocide as being solely “against the Tutsi.” This negation points to Rwanda’s larger post-genocide ideological battleground: defining history. Since the Rwandan Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) allowed for the teaching of Rwandan history in 1999 (with little in the way of guidance in terms of *how* the courses should be taught, as well as “[offering] no new textbooks or teaching materials”<sup>46</sup>), a number of concerns have arisen over the constitution of such a history. How should courses discuss the perpetrators, particularly as most Rwandan students have family members that participated in the genocide? How should they discuss ethnic identity and the genocide? Given the complicity of Church leaders in the

genocide, how should textbooks discuss religion and reconciliation?

Such questions remain as poignant as ever, both for educators and media producers. Rwandan television parrots state endorsed discourse, which revolves around a dual emphasis on both the necessity of reconciliation and the importance of remembering the victims of genocide (though the tone of this remembrance is almost entirely directed toward Tutsi survivors). According to Mahmood Mamdani, “Rwanda’s key dilemma is how to build a democracy that can incorporate a *guilty majority* alongside an aggrieved and *fearful minority* in a single political community [emphasis his].”<sup>47</sup> Such a construction explains the overt emphasis on the ethnic identity in assigning victimhood, even as the government calls for a post-ethnic society. It also necessitates a clear (and somewhat problematic) hierarchy of identity within Rwanda that is expressed across its mediascape. Mamdani suggests that there are five categories, widely adopted by international aid organizations as well as popular discourse in Rwanda, into which Rwandans fall: returnees (primarily Tutsi returning from exile with the RPF), refugees (which are split between the “old case load” pre-genocide Tutsi refugees and the “new case load” Hutu refugees), victims (who are both Hutu and Tutsi, though this applies only to the Tutsi living victims and “old case load” refugees), and survivors, a term only applied to Tutsi.<sup>48</sup> What is interesting in this breakdown is the notion that, while there is some wiggle room in how the term “victim” is used (since moderate Hutu killed during the genocide are still categorized as victims), no such leeway is present in how one should view their surviving family, or Hutu in general.

Herein lies the problem. For Rwandan Hutu, there is no space in which survival represents victimhood, though there are certainly Rwandan Hutu that were victims of the genocide. The suggestion is that Hutu survival equates to complicity and guilt, whether that is due to active participation in the genocide or their role as bystanders. As suggested by Mamdani,

“to be a Hutu in contemporary Rwanda is to be presumed a *perpetrator* (emphasis his).”<sup>49</sup> For Rwandan Hutu, then, social identity and categorization (in addition to qualification for governmental aid and assistance) is inextricably linked with ethnic identity, since to be Hutu and alive in Rwanda is to be legally and/or morally guilty. The result is that social discourse, in addition to many aid structures,<sup>50</sup> assumes a very distinct duality between victim (Tutsi) and perpetrator (Hutu), though the realities of such a distinction are not necessarily accurate.<sup>51</sup> This kind of categorical emphasis on ethnic identity as parallel to historical or social identity lays bear the mechanisms that have driven acceptable public discourse towards the incompatibility of ethnic (“the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi”) and post-ethnic (“we are all Rwandans”) ideology. The consequence of such a construct, beyond the potential overlooking of continued fracturing within Rwanda society based on ethnic and cultural identity, is that there is a double standard that undermines the efficacy of *banyarwanda*. Literally understood as “the people of Rwanda,” *banyarwanda* is a term used to represent the idea that the nation of Rwanda is “one people”.

While the actual impact of such a double standard is difficult to gauge in the domestic sphere, its expression is felt in the acceptable public discourse propagated in mass media, such as television. Just as in the example of Rwandan radio, television is an effective tool in promoting state endorsed post-ethnic ideology. Nkusi’s suggestion that public media needs to communicate the actions of the government (and by proxy relay governmental ideology) implies that there is very little difference between Rwandan television and radio in terms of the fostering of *banyarwanda*. The repetition of the same phrases and terminology (“we are all Rwandans” and “forgive but don’t forget” in particular) appear to reinforce the government’s larger unificatory agenda. The ultimate goal of such discourse, beyond political and social stability, remains reconciliation. There is room for critique in terms of the manner by which Rwandan

reconciliation has been carried out, but little argument should exist as to the very real personal and social need for it. As a result, genocide (as a topic of discussion) appears primarily in reporting on remembrance days in April, as well as on general news topics that underscore the difficulties faced by survivors. Television serves to reflect the interests of the public vis-à-vis discourse deemed suitable by the government (per Nkusi's statement).

The film industry, on the other hand, has been more apt to operate to reflect contemporary Rwandan culture, though it often focuses on contextualizing the genocide utilizing a didactic tone. As opposed to television, which treats the genocide as either a historical moment to be remembered once a year, or a social dilemma that is seen through the lens of contemporary legislative reforms, the film industry emphasizes the historical connection between the events of 1994 and the way that Rwandans view their world. This is not to say that state endorsed discourse is not reflected in Rwandan cinema, rather that the genocide remains much more of a topic for filmmakers. What, then, is the “character” of Rwanda's cinematic product? It would be difficult to deny the centrality of the genocide in the thematic makeup of the Rwandan film industry. A large number of Rwandan produced and internationally co-produced films, such as *100 Days*, *Scars of My Days* (2006, dir. Gilbert Ndahayo), *We Are All Rwandans* (2008, dir. Debs Paterson), and *Rwanda: Beyond the Deadly Pit* (2009, dir. Gilbert Ndahayo), focus on the events of the genocide and its aftermath, issuing a therapeutic filmic discourse (Ndahayo has even stated that his film has “healed” him<sup>52</sup>). Though *100 Days* is a narrative film that tends to stick to a descriptive discourse of the genocide, unscripted works (documentary and news programs) tend to offer the opportunity for more complex articulations of variegated thematic structures.

This particular emphasis is notable because it appears in stark contrast to the vast majority of Rwandan media. Unlike public radio and television (which share the same thematic and

discursive traits in terms of their treatment of the genocide, reflecting the agenda of the government), as well as print and online journalism (which seem to take a cautious stance in discussing genocide due to the legal and political potential ramifications that have driven self-censorship), the film industry seems to view discussing the genocide not as a potential hurdle, but rather as a cathartic opportunity. There has been much greater latitude for filmmakers in terms of *how* they discuss the genocide, compared to other creative industries, though self-censorship remains a considerable issue. The collective memory of the genocide, as a central topic in Rwandan cinema, remains problematic because of the fundamental conflict between memory, its central role in driving international perceptions of Rwanda through film export, and the continuing impact of genocide on the economy and foreign aid (seen in both the suppression of foreign investment due to the assumption of political instability, as well as the subsequent increase in foreign aid and thanatourism). International productions, such as *Hotel Rwanda*, have driven perceptions of the country, a point that many Rwandans see as problematic.<sup>53</sup> The difference between domestic and international productions has historically been the emphasis of the RCC films on issues of reconciliation, alongside the careful critique of reconciliation that these films have sought to take on.<sup>54</sup>

A good example of the navigation of this tension is Thierry Dushimirimana's *A Love Letter to My Country* (2006, dir. Thierry Dushimirimana), which tells the story of the romance between a choir member, Martha (Nicole Kalisa Umutoni), and the choirmaster, Rukundo (Rodrigue Karekezi). As they fall in love, Rukundo's relationship with Martha, a Tutsi girl who lost almost her entire family to the genocide, meets with extreme disapproval from his Hutu family, many of whom participated in the violence. Though several scenes depict the events of 1994, Dushimirimana's film seems to emphasize the continued tensions that persist within

Rwandan society in general (an element that differentiates this film from many of the documentary-centric productions of the RCC). There is some diversity in RCC films as far as the degree of critique employed in discussing reconciliation, but they often offer some degree of resistance to the notion of continued social fissure. This would presumably be due to the fact that the suggestion of continued social fissure implies divisionism, but it also seems to indicate that unificatory ideology (potentially contextualized against notions of ethnic identity) serves as a general discursive similarity between the bulk of these films.

Though the majority of the RCC films do focus on the genocide, it would not be accurate to suggest that this topic serves as the as a unifying discursive characteristic of the Rwandan film industry. The local popularity of films such as *Hey Mr. DJ!* (2006, dir. Ayuub Kasasa Mago) which, while including important social messages (the story of a young DJ who comes to grips with finding out he is HIV positive), deemphasize genocide as a consistent central trope, which only serves enunciate this. In fact, it would be more accurate to argue that reconciliation (whether in overt support or tentative critique) and social unity operate as the driving characteristic of the industry.

### **Contemporary Film: Transnationalism, Development, and Cultural Proximity**

Though the Rwandan television industry has sought to fulfill the social needs of its domestic audience through the dissemination of key civic information (mirroring Rwandan radio), the film industry has focused on the international and transnational marketplace. The reliance on international investment, in addition to continued interest in the country among European and American filmmakers, has fostered an environment in which Rwandan directors and production crew regularly participate in international co-productions (such as *We Are All Rwandans* and *Kinyarwanda*) that are directly concerned with the genocide and, more recently,

reconciliation. This phenomenon has led to the development of an industrial space that is less defined by geographical borders than by trans- and international partnership.

This new transnational media space is perhaps most coherently expressed in the historical development of the RCC. Over the eight years since the establishment of the RCC to help develop a Rwandan film industry, it has expanded to include the Rwanda Film Festival (“Hollywood”) and the Kwetu Film Institute (whose curriculum was designed by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences<sup>55</sup>). The RCC has also produced several films and partnered with a wide variety of international film production and funding entities, including the Swedish Development Agency (Sida) and Swedish Film Institute, Vivid Features, Norwegian People's Aid, the Goethe Institute, the Tribeca Film Institute, as well as the Shoah Foundation Institute and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. These partnerships are important in terms of offering financial support to an industry that has not yet been able to cultivate a paying audience, but they also represent a considerable effort on the RCC’s part to focus a large portion of their attention on international audiences. This is the result of a desire for cultural capital and industrial legitimacy, but it is also a clear indication of the recognition that, at the moment, the industry’s primary audience (financially speaking) lies outside the borders of Rwanda. The partnering of the RCC with a number of film festivals has also given them a substantial amount of exposure across Europe and North America, which they have been able to convert into lucrative partnerships with prominent funding entities. These relationships have manifested themselves within Rwanda as large scale donations used to support day-to-day operations and facilities development, as well as lucrative international co-production deals that bring additional funding through tourist dollars, as well as through the supplying of equipment and crew.

One important development on this front has been the construction of a theater in Kigali

with the support of RCC board members, actress Monica Rosenthal, Phillip Rosenthal (creator and producer of *Everybody Loves Raymond*), and film director and producer Jon Turteltaub (*National Treasure, Phenomenon*).<sup>56</sup> Though the involvement of these representatives of Hollywood (just as in the case of international industrial groups) is too complex a thing to unpack here, what is important is the necessity of this relationship as expressed by the RCC itself. During an interview for an RCC promotional video, Eric Kabera points out that “it’s one thing to produce movies, but as Kigali is a city that, for now, has no movie theater to speak of, we decided to embark on a project [to build one] that can show all of these independent movies and that can entertain, educate, and [...] create a cultural proximity between our people and the international [world] [...] we need that kind of diversity.”<sup>57</sup> As a statement that is very much a comment on the financial state of Rwandan cinema, what is most intriguing is Kabera’s notion of the necessity for “cultural proximity.” Within the context of this statement, he is referring to a need to “regionalize” Rwandan cinema within a larger framework of the East African cultural community (one that is consolidated and leveraged by the Kwetu Film Institute).<sup>58</sup> Kabera is also articulating the need to stabilize and legitimize the industry through relationships with what Michael Curtin refers to as “cultural capitals,”<sup>59</sup> such as Hollywood, Hong Kong, and Mumbai.

The development of these relationships is more than symbolic, as evidenced by the creation of the Kwetu Foundation Centre in Hollywood,<sup>60</sup> a physical extension of the RCC into the Hollywood spheres of what Curtin refers to as agglomerated talent and mutual learning effects.<sup>61</sup> This proximity to the industry offers important development and funding opportunities (including the Academy, as well as philanthropic groups and individuals, such as the Rosenthal’s), as well as the cultural capital yielded by relationships with the Shoah Foundation Institute. But this proximity also allows for the possibility of tapping into other cultural



resources within Hollywood (such as facilitating talent exchanges, developing intellectual property, and opening up new distribution possibilities). As evidenced by Kabera mentioning the formation of an East African film community/industry, such propinquity is also indicative of a desire for Kigali to become the cinematic “cultural capitol/al” of Africa. As pointed out by Curtin, the only way for a new capitol or cluster to “arise is if its producers offer an appreciably distinctive product line,”<sup>62</sup> an point related to the nationalization of cinematic discourse (in content and ideology).

Another important element of Kabera's push for “cultural proximity” is the relationship, and seeming interchangeability, between education and entertainment as tools for self-promotion. It would not be fair to disregard the importance of the RCC in developing and cultivating regional talent, and in training filmmakers within Rwanda. The RCC and its ancillary bodies have developed as educational entities to promote local film production just as much as they have to market and sell themselves as a product to international investors and marketplaces. The emphasis on self-produced promotional materials is one educational component of the RCC, a point that is particularly relevant to the RCC’s posture within the international marketplace, not to mention the domestic political economy (given the need to appear as servants of the state's goals for industrial development). In the online opening statement given by Kabera to new students to the Kwetu Film Institute, he says that “this is a place which shall not be for learning alone, but also be an important place for cultural exchange with the rest of the world,”<sup>63</sup> relating local industrial development to this international transaction. By having the portals of access into the various spheres of the RCC (such as web pages for Kwetu, the Rwanda Film Festival, and the RCC, as well as YouTube promos, among many others) the cinema center is articulating an “education first” message, allowing it to acquire a sizable competitive advantage within the

international marketplace, since they become more than simply one more industry within the global market.

Instead, the RCC appears to be representative of a benevolent, if not consciously manufactured (in terms of marketing), national film movement designed to impart knowledge, rather than cannibalize international market space. Such a posture has two particularly potent effects: it gives the impression that the RCC is not actively vying for popular market share within the international media arena (that they are pushing international distribution for niche cinema), and it positions them to attract festival programmers to their product through both the humanitarian component of their content, as well as its general marketability. For filmmakers, producers, and distributors of Rwandan cinema the goal is to tell their own stories and get a foothold in the marketplace. But the development of “genocide cinema” as a pseudo-genre within the festival circuit represents more of an opportunity than a challenge. This “Trojan horse” posture, when combined with the contextual framing of the genocide, means that the RCC is capable of building an industry that can thrive within the international market space, without income from the domestic audience. As a result, the Kwetu Institute Foundation offices in Hollywood come to be important in this posturing because they provide the necessary cultural proximity to promote these superficially imbalanced relationships, while also reinforcing the RCC's philanthropic frontage. This posture also necessitates the current “genocide-centric” international distribution policies as a means of reinforcing both their “educative” and therapeutic industrial directives, as well as their cultural marketability, as the thematic of genocide offers a differentiable and marketable product for international audiences. The emergence of the genocide tourist industry in Rwanda, which takes visitors to many of the country’s primary genocide memorials and museums, pushes this point even further.<sup>64</sup>

This discussion has viewed the RCC, and the Rwandan film industry in general, as a monolithic, if not interchangeable, entity. In reality, the construction of this industry, particularly in light of its international alliances and relationships to public regulatory entities, necessitates a much more complex (even diagrammatic) approach to understanding its construction. Though it is tempting to simplify the spatial characteristics of the RCC into a west/east duality, between Kigali and its Los Angeles offices, the reality is that the geographic dispersion of its industrial labor force and partnerships are much more complex. The RCC operates as a “community based” multinational entity spread across three individual branches: the centre itself, which oversees day-to-day operations and development projects, the Rwanda Film Festival, which operates within Kigali and a limited number of specific locales across the country, and the Kwetu Film Institute, which pulls talent from East Africa and solicits resources from the international partnerships the RCC has built. Within Rwanda, the RCC partners with a wide variety of firms, including Link Media Productions,<sup>65</sup> a local camera and cinematography house that worked with the Kabera on his film *100 Days* (and have also partnered with the BBC, ABC, NBC, France 2 and 3, NPR, NHK, CNN, and Vivid Features, among others). The bulk of Link Media's work has been domestic documentaries and features produced inside Rwanda, thus their influence outside of the country is limited. Both the RCC and Link Media have worked with Vivid Features, a production company co-founded by Nick Hughes,<sup>66</sup> which operates as a much larger regional and international entity. Vivid Features serves east, central, and West Africa from their offices in Nairobi, Kenya and Lagos, Nigeria, producing a wide variety of content including features, documentaries, and commercials.<sup>67</sup> Branching out even further, Vivid (like the RCC) has a wide variety of partnerships supporting productions in Africa by European and American news agencies including CNN and the BBC, among others.

The last major component of this diagrammatic approach to the spatial dispersion of the Rwanda film industry would, up until mid-2011, have been the MHC. As the primary regulatory agency for media in Rwanda since its creation under the Press Law of 2002, the MHC operated as a semi-private entity bringing in industrial leaders and government regulators to enforce media law, as well as to oversee professional development and financing.<sup>68</sup> Much of its outside funding came from international partnerships including those with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the UK based Department for International Development (DFID) (including a staggering £52.8 million given in overall funding to the Rwandan government as of 2009-2010).<sup>69</sup> The media and political spheres of Rwanda have shifted over the last several years. Thus the role of media regulatory agencies, as part of the larger struggle between the government and the free press, has changed.

Discussing the Rwandan film industry as a “national” entity, then, is somewhat difficult. Though we can differentiate the films that are international co-productions from those that are wholly domestic (there is a clear aesthetic and thematic divergence between these two products), the funding structures at play in facilitating the continuing survival of the industry are indicative of an inherent transnational character to the industry. This concept of a “national” industrial character is even more complex if, as Christina Venegas suggests, “distribution is the key” in delineating the regional character of a film industry “since it provides economic support for the entire industrial process.”<sup>70</sup> If this is the case, then how are we to understand the character of the Rwandan film industry in light of its centripetal distribution practices? Though non-genocide oriented films have gained some traction with local audiences, thanks to the Rwanda Film Festival, the lack of paying customers has necessitated a sharp division between the variety of

films shown within the country and those generally marketed to international audience's. While films such as *100 Days* and *Scars of My Days* appear in film festivals in Europe and the United States,<sup>71</sup> less genocide-centric films such as *Hey Mr. DJ* remain unknown outside of Africa.

Why, then, does there remain an emphasis on the 1994 genocide in distributed films: is it a question of production or audience? Thus far we have viewed such production decisions through the lens of market dynamics, but could it be that there is something more at play in this process? The film industry is, at least partially, invested in the larger project of national unification and, as a result, films produced in Rwanda often reinforce these ideas. Still, the latent critique within these films, particularly those directed by Gilbert Ndahayo, suggest that one should not overemphasize the role of censorship and self-censorship within the industry. Perhaps this is why, more than any other sphere of the Rwandan mediascape, the independence of the film industry offers us an opportunity to interrogate some of the latent tensions that persist in Rwandan society.

### **Case Study: Film, Television, and the Formulation of Reconciliatory Discourse**

"I wasn't after fame, I wasn't after money. I was just after the theme and the drive to tell the Rwandan stories from within so that the world can care because film has got a powerful message to send across."  
- Eric Kabera<sup>72</sup>

"These people can't go anywhere else – they have to make peace [...] forgiveness is not born out of some airy-fairy sense of benevolence. It's more out of a survival instinct."  
- Pieter Hugo<sup>73</sup>

Given the substantial differences between the film and television industries in Rwanda, particularly in terms of their aesthetics and primary function (per Minister Nkusi's statement), to compare media texts is a bit problematic. Not the least of these issues is the frequency of production, the various domains and conditions of their consumption, and the variability of the

content and duration of the media texts themselves (with many films running much longer than the standard duration of TVR's news programs). As a result, it seems much less useful to deploy statistical analysis in gauging a relationship between these media. Thus, such data will be utilized in approaching trends in television content, though such numbers also serve as a compass in guiding us toward similar major discursive elements that appear in both industries.

Unificatory discourse operates across a wide spectrum of overt and latent occurrence in all of Rwandan media in the post-genocide era. While such discourse serves the obvious purpose of promoting the values deemed necessary to maintain political and social stability (emanating both from the government and civil society in general), it also helps to facilitate the project of nationalism through the subsuming of ethnic identity by wider frameworks, such as *banyarwanda*. The potential side effect of the process of collision between reconciliation and nationalism is the disregard of many larger issues, aside from ethnic identity. As scholar Andrew Gunstone suggests, there is a potential for the larger nationalist framework of such an endeavor to marginalize many of the issues that underpin, or are the result of, the original source of the conflict.<sup>74</sup> While the process of reconciliation has been successful in alleviating some of the tensions pertaining to the violence of 1994, it has also ignored many of the cultural and social causations of the genocide, as well as the persistent concerns among many that such reconciliation is superficial. This latter point brings us back to the larger difference between the dissemination and maintenance of ideology between public and private spheres. The truth is that there is no way to gauge the actual impact of the project of reconciliation within Rwandan homes, particularly those where Hutu Power was embraced. The goal here, then, is to recognize the potential issues that such a project may present, particularly in regards to the effacement of ethnic identity by the nationalist agenda of reconciliation (expressed by the phrase "we are all

Rwandans”).

At the heart of this analysis is the need to recognize the relevance of how media discusses reconciliation and, more to the point, how such expressions operate to resolve the tensions inherent in such an endeavor. We can parse some of this out by further interrogating the actual application of Minister Nkusi’s premise that Rwandan television should be there to “[relay] the action of the government.”<sup>75</sup> In looking at the audience survey data, it is interesting to see that Rwandan television viewers identified topics relating to the government as having relatively high and low gaps in coverage. Topics with low gaps, such as “Programs about projects in the country” (0.25%, lowest rated gap in coverage), “Unity and reconciliation programs” (0.5%, seventh lowest), and “Politics and political parties” (0.55%, eleventh lowest), along with those seen as having the highest gaps (“General News” at 9.15%, “Sports News” at 7.05%, “Children’s Programs” at 4.55%, “Theater & Drama” at 4.30%, “World History” at 2.65%, and “Music & Modern Dance Routines” at 1.25%<sup>76</sup>) all seem to support Nkusi’s assumption of the role of Rwandan television as focusing on the actions of the government, rather than entertainment.

The apparent statistical prominence of unity and reconciliation as a topic in Rwandan television programming, though, represents an interesting link between television and film industries in terms of unification as a central thematic. Anecdotally, Rwandan cinema is geared toward narratives of unification and *banyarwanda*, but the search for more solid data to reinforce such an argument remains incomplete. This is where the difficulty of attempting to compare media of different duration, purpose, and audience comes into play, necessitating a methodology that recognizes these key differences.

## *Methodology*

More so than many of the other media in Rwanda, it was particularly difficult acquiring the necessary materials in order to complete the case study of film and television, due to the limited availability of Rwandan English language television materials. In the transition from ORINFOR to the RBA, many materials that were previously available were no longer archived, which posed a rather serious research roadblock. After repeated attempts to get access to audio-visual materials and/or transcripts of Rwandan Television English language news programs through the office of the Director of the RBA, no other option was available other than to attempt to capture the programs of interest from the daily live stream on the RBA website. Unfortunately, as the stream was unreliable (for every hour of capture, only about one quarter of the recorded material was actual live programming; the rest recorded the stream buffering), it was quite difficult to acquire a substantial sample size, let alone entire broadcasts of the half hour program.

Data using the ORINFOR site in 2014, looking at the overall composition of Rwandan programming based on language (between Kinyarwanda, English, and French) was available. As a result, even though the daily programming guide was no longer on the web site, due to the transition to the RBA (there is a link on the main page to “view our program line-up,” but that simply takes site users to the television live streaming page), the older data has provided a rather clear picture regarding broadcasting language preference both in terms of overall language occurrence as well as dayparting content duration by language. All programming was analyzed between 1/5/14 and 1/11/14, totaling 194 programs,<sup>77</sup> identifying whether the primary language of the program (meaning either the original or dubbed language) was Kinyarwanda (or Swahili/regional dialects), English, French, Unspecified, or Unspecified but likely in English.



This distinction, between programs that whose language was considered to be “Unspecified” and those assumed to be in English, was based on whether the title of the program indicated that its production origins were in English speaking countries (such as the film *Yours, Mine and Ours* and the soccer match between Manchester United and Stoke City) or that it dealt with subjects that could be more likely to directed toward English speaking audiences (such as *Grand Canyon* and *Hollywood Science*). Only programs that were explicitly titled as being “in English” (such as *Evening News – English* and *International News – CNBC*) were marked as being broadcast in English. The consequence of this is that there are likely even larger percentages of English programming than are statistically expressed in the data. It would be difficult to provide an accurate means of comparison, but in order to resolve these differences, data was compiled with the sets separated, as well as combined, in order to identify the potential impact of this statistical variance by comparing the more limited approach to language identification, with a set in which all titles that appear in English were marked as being "English" programs. The only exception to this would be general English titles such as "News" which, since it is differentiated by the fact that the title does not specify its language, is categorized as “unspecified.” A similar tactic was employed in similarly problematic examples such as *Comedy Club Live in Nigeria*, since the content is likely to be in another language. Any assumptions made about the language makeup of Rwandan television, then, also needed to take these differences into account.

Due to the rather substantial variability between different film texts and the short duration of English language news television programs, the emphasis of data collection and examination is on qualitative analysis (alongside a streamlined statistical discourse analysis of television programming looking at the occurrence and usage of terminology identified as being of particular importance in previous chapters; namely “the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi” and

reconciliatory discourse). In total, this case study compiles data and analysis from 58 different segments spread, totaling 125.57 minutes, across 8 different TVR English language news broadcasts (in addition to a short video that ran on TVR during the period of genocide remembrance in April), ranging in date from 3/12/15 to 5/19/15. The sampling of these broadcasts was somewhat randomized based on when the capturing of their live streams yielded sufficient content to justify their inclusion in this study (the recording of more than one news segment). Within this sample set, then, there is a great deal of variance in terms of the duration of analyzable content (between 1.58 and 28.92 minutes in a given episode, with an average duration of 16.25 minutes), but even with this variability a great deal of usable data presented itself.

This chapter also necessitated a deeper textual analysis of two important examples of Rwandan filmmaking, *Behind This Convent* (2008, dir. Gilbert Ndahayo) and *We Are All Rwandans*. Both of these films are discussed in relation to the “first wave” of Rwandan filmmaking, comprised of 10 specific films produced in the years following the genocide by Rwandan filmmakers. The goal of this case study is to look at the particularities of how these examples of film and television express the larger thematic of reconciliation and unification in relation to the prescribed notions of nationalism identified thus far. Such issues are even more important when exploring narrative works, including documentaries, which engage with the history of the genocide and attempt to reconcile the social tensions inherent in the endeavor of post-genocidal reconciliation.

### *Results and Analysis*

Unlike radio and print media, whose user base is relative large and easily identified, consumers of Rwandan television and film are somewhat more difficult to pinpoint and define.

A great deal of this has to do with the degree to which Rwanda's infrastructural limitations (particularly the availability of electricity) have limited the lack of access to these media, but to attempt to define the makeup of these different marketplaces requires a more in depth look at both their content and distribution strategies.

As already mentioned, a majority of the general population of Rwanda (66.25%<sup>78</sup>) has, at some point in their lives, watched television. Such viewing is likely quite erratic, as 35.75% of all viewing takes place in "other peoples homes" (compared to only 11.8% occurring in one's "own home")<sup>79</sup> between 5:20pm and 10:00pm: during expanded prime time hours.<sup>80</sup> What is particularly interesting, though, is how television viewing breaks down by broadcast language, given the predominance of Kinyarwanda as the primary language of Rwanda. In looking at the total television content by duration and language, Kinyarwanda programming constitutes 31.4% (7.7 hours) of the average broadcast day. (See "Table 20: Rwanda Television Content Duration – by language") While this is more time than programming broadcast in English (18.15%, 4.45 hours) and in French (7.9%, 1.94 hours), when combining explicitly English programming with those that are categorized as "Unspecified-English" we actually find that 49.99% (12.27 hours) of all Rwandan television programming was either broadcast or produced in English.

One particular reason for this substantial shift in content language (particularly given the relative dominance of Kinyarwanda in radio and, to a lesser degree in print media) is the national push for English language education and general bi- or multilingualism. As of 2008, in the interest of making Rwandan students more ready to participate and compete in the global marketplace, Rwanda made English the primary language in the nation's classrooms.<sup>81</sup> This is part of a larger initiative in which "the Rwandan government wants to replace French with English as the language of business, diplomacy and scholarship."<sup>82</sup> This initiative has had some

success, but it would be incorrect to suggest that English has in any way overtaken Kinyarwanda as the primary means of communicating in Rwanda (which television content duration would seem to suggest). The relevance of the dominance of English source programming appears in even sharper relief given the fact that Kinyarwanda remains the primary speaking language in Rwanda (98.3% of Rwandans identify it as the primary language in their households), while a mere 12.5% of Rwandans can speak or read English.<sup>83</sup> And yet, more than 50% of all programming is either English language or English sourced (and likely broadcast in English).

This gap is further enunciated when looking at content language and dayparting.<sup>84</sup> While English language and source programming is a major component of the overall programming day, the bulk of this content is broadcast during non-prime time hours; from 11:00pm-7:00pm. In fact, only 25.22% (7.25 total hours) of weekly prime-time programming is English source content, compared to 65.8% (18.92 total hours) in Kinyarwanda/Swahili/Regional Dialect. (See “Table 21: Rwanda Television Dayparting by Language”) The likelihood of the dubbing or subtitling of English source content during prime time broadcast, given the aforementioned language gap, would be high (though anecdotally, very few English source programs viewed during data collection appeared to be subtitled in Kinyarwanda). Rather than an expression of the mass adoption of English among television viewing Rwandans, this dayparting data would seem to indicate that, while the comparative percentage of English speaking among active television viewers may be quite a bit higher than the general population (though without further data, this is conjecture), English has replaced French as the preferred alternate language. The majority of French language programming is broadcast during the Graveyard hours (55.28% of all French language programming, 7.5 total hours), from 2:00am to 6:00am. Not only does English language and source programming constitute more than seven times as much air time as

French language programming (85.86 weekly hours, compared to 13.57 weekly hours), it also holds a preferable placement on the schedule since it constitutes a much higher percentage of prime time broadcasting (in addition to Morning, Daytime, Early Fringe, and Late dayparts).

While one could characterize the bulk of the content on Rwandan Television as “media dumping,” we are at the moment far more interested in looking at Rwandan media production. As a result, English language Rwandan news offers the most fertile ground for further analysis because it is produced and broadcast within the country, but also because it represents a particularly fascinating example of ideology in translation.<sup>85</sup> Just as with print media, the idea is to create a sample set large enough to serve as some sort of baseline for general discursive trends. Unfortunately, given the rather limited availability of Rwandan television materials, the current data set offers an incomplete view into nationalist discourse. In the absence of a more substantial data set, and based on the materials that were still available in 2014, there are still a few basic conclusions we can come to about the content of English language news coverage in Rwanda.

For one, the dense clustering of Kinyarwanda language programming in primetime seems to indicate that, regardless of the continued emphasis on English in matters of education, economy, and the state, the primary means of communicating important information remains Kinyarwanda/Swahili/regional language media.<sup>86</sup> Additionally, though a great deal of television content does tend toward entertainment, seemingly in contradiction to Nkusi’s characterization of the role of state media, the composition of prime time programming does seem to affirm, at the very least, the intent on the part of programmers to reinforce the government centric role of state media. Rwandan television programming falls into three primary categories, with six additional minor types: News, Informational (such as health oriented or technology programs), and

Sports/Entertainment programs. Of the remaining six programming categories identified, the only one that averaged more than 1 hour per day was “Religious” content (4.22%, 1.04 hours). (See “Table 22: Rwanda Television Content Analysis – by subject”) Though these religious programs are statistically insignificant in terms of their overall duration, their presence does suggest a need to consider how subject duration changes from day to day, given that 77.41% of all religious programming, predictably, occurs on Sunday. In looking at the major content types, it was interesting that the two most common (“News” and “Sports/Entertainment”) mirrored one another in terms of content duration from day to day,<sup>87</sup> with News exhibiting higher duration values across the board.

When compared by their average daily duration, “News” programs (41.91%, 10.28 hours per day) appear to be most common, with “Sports/Entertainment” (28.67%, 7.03 hours) and “Informational” (31.72%, 4.53 hours) coming in second and third respectively. In looking at the two most common content types, “News” and “Sports/Entertainment,” the data suggests that the bulk of entertainment programming (just as with English language and source programming) is occurring during the daytime hours when viewership is lower, while news content is programmed to run during prime time hours and into the evening, when viewership is quite high. As a result, both content and language data seems to suggest that, even in the face of the rather high percentage of English language and source content, the actual viewing of such content is limited.

This data also suggests a disconnect between programmed content, and the perceived need for particular media from the perspective of Rwandan audiences. As pointed out by the Rwandan audience survey, the primary perceived programming content gaps are “News (general)” and “Sports News” (followed by “Children’s Programs” and “Theater and Drama”).

And yet, according to the programming data collected for this case study, it would seem that these content types represent 64.95% of total programming (if not more depending on the topicality of “Economy/Business,” “Governmental,” “Informational,” and “Political” programs). Then why are these still perceived as gaps in Rwandan television programming? It could tie into dayparting, with audience members polled looking for a greater amount of news programming during the day, and more children’s and entertainment programming in prime time. Given the consistency with which such content is broadcast during weekend hours, though, it seems possible that there could be other reasons for this perceived lack.

In looking at the content of English language Rwandan news programs, a number of trends appear to show an affinity with acceptable public discourse. In calculating the rate of occurrence of key primary terms, “Genocide” was far and away the most common on RTV broadcasts at 0.81 mentions per segment (compared to “Investment,” the second most common term at 0.33 mentions). (See “Table 23: Rwanda Television Term Comparison – by occurrence”) In comparison to radio data, the context of term usage and the number of segments in which “Genocide” and “Tutsi” appear are very similar. The term “Tutsi” appears in 8 of the 9 segments that mention “Genocide,” and the term only appears in conjunction with the use of the phrase “Genocide against the Tutsi.” (See “Table 24: Rwanda Television Term Frequency Comparison” and “Table 25: Rwanda Television ‘Tutsi’ vs. ‘Genocide Against the Tutsi’ Comparison”)

With such a limited sample set, it is important to address potential data bias based on the collection of television data needing to take into account the total number of terms occurring within each segment. Certain terms, particularly “Investment,” have a high number of references due to there being a single segment in which they appear an inordinate number of times (in the case of “Investment” this occurs during the 3/12/15 broadcast). The predominance of the term

“Genocide” is also bolstered by a large number of occurrences within a single clip, with nearly half of all occurrences being part of a 5/15/15 segment. While the term “Investment” seems statistically insignificant, the continued use of the term “Genocide” in numerous segments, its high rate of overall occurrence, as well as the sizeable duration of overall segments in which the term appears, legitimizes its relevance. (See “Chart E: Rwanda Television Key Term Occurrence – by date,” “Table 26: Rwanda Television Show Date and Key Term Usage Comparison,” “Chart F: Rwanda Television Key Term Segment Duration” and “Table 27: Rwanda Television Key Term Segment Duration”) In fact, aside from the one May segment mentioned above, nearly all occurrences of the term are in April broadcasts. (See “Table 28: Rwanda Television Placement of ‘Genocide’ – by date and overall occurrence”)

One reason for the spike in usage of the term “Genocide” during the month of April was the month long “*kwibuka*” (meaning to remember, or recall) period of genocide remembrance on TVR. Broadcasts during this period included bugs in the corner of all TVR shows featuring a small graphic and the word *kwibuka*, in addition to specific portions of news broadcasts dedicated to covering remembrance related news stories. The particular context of term usage (“Tutsi” vs. “Genocide against the Tutsi”) as well as the specific period of time of usage (primarily in April) seems to indicate limitations in the use of ethnic identity within acceptable public discourse. While the data continues to underline the problematic construction of post-ethnic national identity based upon an ethnic duality (victim/Tutsi and perpetrator/Hutu), the content of stories and how they operate to frame the manner by which the Rwandan nation is defined offers much more interesting results.

The question of governance (in both its “good” and “bad” varieties), is a central component in TVR’s pro-state discourse. The positioning of governance within broadcasts



operates as a dual opposition between governments of the past and present, and between the comparative binary of domestic and foreign governance. The repetition of the rather ill defined phrase, “good governance,” appears in a number of segments within the sample set, often in stories focusing on reconciliation and the push to improve governmental service contracts. Even within contexts where there is room for critique, such as in a 3/12/15 story discussing Rwanda’s governance scorecard, the emphasis is less on the current government’s potential failures and much more on their “clear improvement” in dealing with issues. The primary example of “bad governance” used in the TVR sample set was that of the former Rwandan government, encouraging an explicit comparison between the present and past. During a 4/10/15 story about how positive governance promotes growth, past failures in economic development are attributed to “bad leadership that segregated key populations.” Meanwhile the same clip states that this is different from the current government, “which unites, encourages, and facilitates people to engage in different activities to accelerate growth.” As an overt example of the present/past binary of governance, this particular segment fosters a historical framework that negates the tremendous impact of colonial era policies on Rwanda’s economic development, not to mention the role of divisive colonial ideology in facilitating ethnic segregation.

The other opposition, between domestic and foreign governance, takes on a predictable xenophobic or culturally superior tone. Discussions of the Rwandan government are positive and emphasize stability and public accountability, but those segments discussing foreign governments (with the exception of those governments commenting positively about Rwanda) are negative about their governance. In some examples, such as a 5/7/15 segment looking at allegations of sex abuse against French troops, the commentary is rather direct in its approach, stating “the French troops were deployed to the Central African Republic in December 2013 to

help African U.N. peacekeepers restore order after [...] sectarian violence triggered by a coup.”

As a former colonial power in Rwanda, the perceived guilt of French troops in a conflict that superficially seems similar to the events of 1994 requires little explanation. While this segment does maintain an objective tone, it is reporting on the rather one-sided release of the prosecutor’s notes. There are subtler examples, such as a 3/12/15 segment looking at the monitoring of Burundi’s elections that seems to suggest a lack of transparency, necessitating international intervention. During a 5/15/15 segment discussing the banning of boarding schools in Rwanda, Rwanda’s Minister of Cabinet Affairs, Stella Ford Mugabo, commented that:

“It is not to say that just because in Uganda little children are sent to boarding schools Rwanda should do the same. There are many things done in one place that are not necessarily done in another. Where we believe the practices are the best we can adopt them, but in cases where we believe this is not the case we are not obliged to imitate them [...] as a country we feel that the rights of a child are paramount.”

In this case, the suggestion is that while everyone can have different cultural values, Rwanda’s particular brand of governance better takes into account fundamental concerns regarding human rights. Though couched in magnanimous terms, it is the last line of the quote that frames cultural difference as acceptable, to a point. It is reasonable to believe that different people have different values, but the idea here is that Rwanda has made the “correct” choice: children’s rights. Selecting Uganda as the country for comparison is also interesting, if only because of the particularly horrific experiences that many Ugandan children have faced in the past. Though Uganda, alongside Rwanda, is now an example of the potential for stability and prosperity in central Africa, in the early 2000s Joseph Kony and the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) became infamous in Uganda for “abducting children to serve as sex slaves and fighters.”<sup>88</sup> Kony and the LRA were forced out nearly ten years ago, but this particular memory of the violation of children’s rights in the country persists. This is only furthered by the fact that

Ugandan boarding schools have a notoriously bad reputation for their safety conditions, as multiple dormitory fires have killed a large number of students.<sup>89</sup> The comparison between Uganda and Rwanda, though seemingly benign, is actually quite pointed.

Looking further into the television data, the repeated use of the phrase “the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi” helps to illuminate the degree to which many of these broadcasts operate to define Rwandan memory and ideology, in service of nationalism. While much of the narrative of memory appears couched in the already problematized mantra of “forgive, but don’t forget,” the repurposing of this phrase communicates a wide range of desires in the post-ethnic state (namely reconciliation and economic development). During a 4/16/15 TVR segment, the United States Ambassador to Rwanda, Erica J. Barks-Ruggles, discusses how ‘miraculous’ the rebuilding of Rwanda has been as “this is a tribute to the resilience of all of you who made the hard decision to reconcile to forgive and rebuild your nation, not to forget but to rebuild.” While a nice sentiment, the discursive shift that is interesting in this case is the displacement of reconciliatory terminology with that of “rebuilding.” This transition articulates a larger potential for the interchangeability of such terminology with the various mandates of the state, including infrastructural/economic development and general social cohesion (“don’t forget, develop”).

Part of this interchangeability has resulted in the utilization of noted terms and phrases across a wide range of contexts that would historically have been far less driven by norms of state endorsed acceptable public discourse. For instance, during a 5/7/15 segment looking at the opening of a new health care dispensary and the role of the Rwanda Defense Forces in supporting health, the Rwandan Minister of Defense General James Kabarebe notes that “a country can only be protected by healthy people who are well, share good ideologies, and have complete security in every aspect.” In specifying the need for security and health, this statement

underscores the perceived role of the RDF in aiding in infrastructure creation, as well as in promoting a constant sense of the need for national defense. The use of the phrase “share good ideologies” is fascinating, though, because it suggests a clear delineation between ideologies that are, and are not, acceptable (a fundamental element in defining acceptable public discourse). The statements of both General Kabarebe and Ambassador Barks-Ruggles operate to legitimize the Rwandan national project by aiding in the reconstruction of memory and ideology via television.

While Rwandan television appears concerned with articulating a coherent, and state sponsored, vision of Rwanda’s future as part of the international community, the film industry appears more concerned with negotiating the present in relation to the recent past. Filmmakers of the Rwandan Cinema Center (and the Kwetu Film Institute) face less oversight from the government, but they do face a number of market pressures that appear to inform their content. Unlike the vast majority of Rwandan media, which ignores (or at the very least avoids) discussing the genocide, the film industry has focused on the topic. While the reasons for this focus are important, the pertinent issue for our discussion of state endorsed discourse and nationalism is *how* this particular emphasis is expressed.

The many films produced in Rwanda since the genocide fall into three main categories. The first, exogenous production, are films financed and directed by non-Rwandan filmmakers, but filmed inside of the country. The most prominent example this production type would be *Hotel Rwanda*, whose various affiliated production companies reside in the United States, the United Kingdom, and South Africa (among others) and whose director, Terry George, is from the U.K. Though a number of Rwandans participated in the production of this particular film, the bulk of its production personnel were not from Rwanda. The second type, international co-

production, include films whose financing or key personnel are, at least partially, Rwandan in origin, but that still include key personnel that are non-Rwandan. A good example of this would be the short film *We are all Rwandans*, which was self-produced by U.K. director Debs Paterson, and was co-written with Rwandan filmmaker Ayub Kasasa Mago. This category of filmmaking is different from exogenous production because Rwandan crewmembers wield a considerable amount of creative control (in this case Kasasa Mago acting as the film's writer). The final category of film production is endogenous production: films that are wholly produced within Rwanda using Rwandan production personnel. Many of the early films of the Rwanda Cinema Centre fit into this category, though this has changed somewhat with the shift in vision of the Kwetu Film Institute, from developing Rwandan talent to offering "East Africa with a holistic, sustainable and internationally recognized media training facility."<sup>90</sup>

It is this last group that is particularly relevant to the discussion at hand, because of the opportunity represented by Rwandan filmmakers approaching topics that concern their nation (and important regional issues), but also because they are doing so without strict government oversight. With the shift in focus of the Kwetu Film Institute, the films that are of particular interest are those of the "first wave" of Rwandan cinema,<sup>91</sup> produced between 2004 (with director Eric Kabera's domestic production *Keepers of Memory*) and 2009 (the release of Kabera's last film, *Moto Auto Ouaga*, but before the emergence of the Kwetu Film Institute in 2011).

Within this initial group of filmmakers, led symbolically by producer and director Eric Kabera, there are a number of different political and ideological approaches to filmmaking represented. Perhaps the most radical of this group is writer/director Gilbert Ndahayo, whose own personal experience with the 1994 genocide (during which he was forced into hiding only to

return home to find that his parents, along with 153 other victims of the genocide, had been brutally murdered and buried in his back yard) has influenced his work. While *Hotel Rwanda* argues that the fundamental mode of genocidal discourse is European guilt, Ndahayo's 2008 follow up to *Scars of My Days, Behind This Convent*<sup>92</sup> argues for something that is much more nuanced and politically complex. One component of this is the role of colonial ideology and the responsibility of the European community and the United States in the events of the 1994 genocide. *Behind This Convent* begins with audio of President Clinton's apology for America's failures in Rwanda and he dedicates a section of the film to the breakdown of relations between Rwanda and France (sparked by France's role in the genocide, as well as the charge by French Judge Jean-Louis Bruguière that President Kagame played a role in former President Habyarimana's assassination<sup>93</sup>). The clearest emphasis of the role of former colonial powers in perpetrating genocide appears in an intertitle at the end of the film that reads: "There were 2,600 UN Peacekeeping soldiers in Rwanda in 1994. My parents told me we were safe. They Perished. 200 people were massacred with them behind the convent situated 200 metres next to ETO's UNAMIR camp."<sup>94</sup> Ndahayo is relating the inadequacy of UNAMIR's mandate, and by proxy French and American policy, as formulated through his own personal tragedy. This is perhaps the most important component of his film's ability to operate outside of the traditional genocide narrative.<sup>95</sup> This project poses personal and national trauma, as well as personal, social, cultural, and political responsibility, as dialectical oppositions. In this way, *Behind This Convent* juxtaposes President Clinton's apology with genocide victims recounting their loss in order to parallel the personal experience of genocide with external socio-political factors. This structure also allows him to explore what is the most problematic issue in the Rwandan reconciliation: forgiveness and the Rwandan church-state.

*Behind This Convent* focuses on this issue by positioning religious figures, most notably the nuns of the local convent, as narrators of the genocide. One could read this as a matter of yielding authority to the church in a country that was predominantly Catholic. But Ndahayo is delineating spheres of discourse, wherein church and state representatives refashion the tools of perpetrating genocide, most notably religious and socio-economic language, to synthesize a reconciliatory mythology. For example, his camera focuses on one person that states, “If you forgive, your heart is relieved and it brings unity in the society,” followed by another saying “without unity, there is no development, especially in our country, Rwanda, which relies on us as its resources.”<sup>96</sup> Though the film appears to be arguing for an overall assessment of post genocide reconciliation as productive, this example raises serious questions about the nature and purpose of such a settlement. If the design of this arrangement is to reinforce the socio-economic structure of Rwanda and alleviate ethnic tension, how can it do so without undermining public perceptions of justice?

For many Rwandans, the push for forgiveness of *genocidaires* represents the reconstitution of inequalities present before the genocide. At one point in *Behind This Convent*, a speaker comments, “Forgive! It has become a bible or like another song in this country. Forgive, forgive. While I see bad consequences.” What many see as “bad consequences” appear all the more real through the implementation of traditional *gacaca* courts, which have become increasingly necessary due to the large number of genocide perpetrators. One woman in the film states, “[In the *gacaca*,] when one repents, his sentence is reduced. One is even promoted at work, the government employs you [...] Most of the culprits of genocide have been released from jail. They have no problems. They are free to travel, eat and sleep well. The country bears the burden, as they keep on nurturing hatred. In the end, this will result into a second genocide.”

This woman seems to be asking for more than justice for the victims of the genocide, rather she is relating the frustration with inadequate justice to issues of socio-economic inequality. The problem that this film poses, without ever actually answering it, is how forgiveness can work when every day is a reminder of a singular shared trauma. This is a problematic point, as Ndahayo points out in interviews, because of the overt role of the church in actually perpetrating the genocide, stating that, “it’s very hard to recover faith once you have lost it, how do you go back to the church where people were murdered and where people were taken, including even the priests killing their follower? How do you go back in there and start praying?”<sup>97</sup> By the same token, how can Rwanda maintain social order when deep seeded ethnic identity still plays such a large part in determining individual relations to community, regardless of which political party is ruling?

What’s exposed here, though only in a limited sense, is the problematic nature of forgiveness and state sponsored discourse. In truth, the film is hardly a call for political change, instead emphasizing the interpersonal challenges posed by a framework that almost compensates the acknowledgement of responsibility for the genocide, and glosses over the very real every day dilemmas posed by reconciliation. Ndahayo does not appear to be making an argument about the state rather, as a survivor himself, he is identifying the paradox inherent in the “enforcement” of forgiveness.

This particular issue appears more pertinent due to the fact that, for many, the 1994 genocide never ended. In fact, there have been several attacks on Rwanda by the former government in exile, as well as by other rebel factions, a fact often left out of discussions of contemporary Rwanda. The 1997 attack on the Nyange School near Kibuye is the subject of the previously mention short film *We Are All Rwandans*, written by Ayuub Kasasa Mago and based



on the actual massacre of fifth and sixth grade students at a small school. Though this film is an international co-production, it is a useful example of how the industry has begun to explore some of the more difficult elements of state sponsored discourse. The film focuses on the relationships between students and their teachers over the course of a day at school, including a dialogue on ethnic division. At the end of the day, a group of Hutu insurgents attack the school and demand that the students separate by ethnic background so that Tutsi students can be killed. In the face of this intimidation, the students instead choose to tell their attackers, “Twese Turi abanyarwanda,” or “We are all Rwandans.” Depicting the murder of a group of students who refused to tell their attackers which are Hutu and which are Tutsi operates at a level of endorsing the state sponsored move towards ethnic unity, but it does so in such a way that identifies ethnic division as an ideological construct that exists “outside” of (instead of “within”) Rwanda. Such a position is reductive, and serves a convenient political end in that it ignores the exact issue that Ndahayo’s film indicates lies at the heart of ethnic discourse in Rwanda: forgiveness is easier said than done, and discourse that negates identity, personal agency, and the continued role of ethnic ideology in Rwandan homes is problematic.

Where Paterson and Kasasa Mago’s film does endeavor to politically engage is with the question of memory as it relates to Rwanda’s future. While there is a great deal of emphasis on the homogenization of ethnic identity in the film (rife with references to the need to self identify as “one Rwanda”), much of this takes place in relation to a remembrance of the past; effectively expressing the mantra of “forgive but don’t forget.” In fact, much of the film focuses on exploring the difficulties of educating a populace in genocide history, particularly important given the fact that as late as 2007 there was barely a history curriculum,<sup>98</sup> resulting in genocide history not really being taught in schools.<sup>99</sup> As part of this, the film is also engaging with the

necessary role of education in combatting domestic ethnic division. These are things not often discussed within Rwandan society, let alone with outsiders, but the reality is that ethnic tensions persist regardless of the media message of reconciliation.

If there is one hope that a resolution to such issues does exist it appears to be the push towards public and communal discourses of trauma as a means of navigating these tensions. Filmmakers such as Gilbert Ndahayo and Ayuub Kasasa Mago offer alternative perspectives on the dominant mythology of mass forgiveness by problematizing reconciliation itself. The increasing importance of *gacaca* courts in opening up a public discourse is mimicked in the public burial and testimonials of genocide victims in *Behind This Convent*, as well as the classroom discussions of ethnic identity in *We Are All Rwandans*. In a sense, these films operate to open up discussions of the inequalities of systematic reconciliation, while they also work to reinforce the problematic dominant mythology. They also operate to question the degrees to which reconciliation and the traditional genocide narrative speak to the actualities of Rwandan self-identification.

Of these “first wave” films, it is notable that a large number of them are international co-productions. Of the initial group, including *Keepers of Memory*, *Through My Eyes* (2004, dir. Kavila Matu), *A Love Letter to My Country*, *The Graduation Day* (2006, dir. Ayuub Kasasa Mago), *Scars of My Days*, *Hey Mr. DJ!*, *We are All Rwandans*, *Behind This Convent*, *Fora* (2009, dir. Ayuub Kasasa Mago), and *Moto Auto Ouaga*, six of the films are explicitly about genocide. Of the remaining four films, three are about conditions that are somewhat linked to post-genocide social fracture (poverty, drug addiction, and HIV/AIDs), and only one, *Moto Auto Ouaga* (a short film discussing the achievements of a motorcycle mechanic building a dual engine bike), is completely unrelated. This emphasis on genocide as a key thematic element in

Rwandan cinema (one that has continued on into the “second wave” of Rwandan filmmakers) is important for a number of reasons, but of primary interest is the degree to which it informs our discussion of the question of censorship and state endorsed discourse.

When looking at the discursive analysis data for Rwandan print journalism, there seemed to be only limited references to the genocide, the bulk of which appeared in specific circumstances using particular phrasing (such as “the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi”). It can be argued that this may have something to do with the particularities of Rwandan speech laws and the precariousness of press freedom. Does the emphasis on genocide within the film industry indicate an affinity between the industry and the state? Is it a matter of filmmakers feeling enough independence (given that the press laws do not seem to entirely pertain to them) that they remain unconcerned about potential censorship? Or is there something much more complicated at play here?

While it would be tempting to suggest that this thematic focus has to do with a lack of concern regarding media laws, there is textual and anecdotal evidence to suggest that this is not the case. For one, while there is quite a bit of discussion of genocide in the “first wave” films, they rarely critique the state or the role of the RPF during the genocide. Additionally, in the most politically dangerous of these films, Ndahayo’s *Behind This Convent*, though it questions the Catholic Church and reconciliatory ideology (largely through the critique of state endorsed discourse through its impact in the daily lives of Rwandans), an awkward dual filmic structure seems to mitigate some of the critique. While a majority of the film takes place in the urban space of Kigali, there is a small vignette near the end of the film in which we meet a group of models and photographers that are visiting Rwanda to take pictures with local people and nature. Unlike the rest of the film, these figures appear in many ways as outsiders, though they are aware

of the country's history. A number of people discuss how Rwanda is fertile ground to develop art related industries, including photography, as a means of further growing the economy. One interviewee states that:

“Everybody likes what’s beautiful. When they talk about Rwanda, they tell you two things: Either they talk about the genocide, or they talk about the Gorillas. Basically, what’s right? The hatred and the Gorillas. If you are talking about beauty, this is the place that people definitely should be interested in investment.”<sup>100</sup>

This statement seems to encapsulate the ideological pull of the entire sequence in that it articulates a disconnect between the view of Rwanda from those that remain outsiders, those that are visiting, and Rwandans themselves. And yet, this sequence feels completely out of place in relation to the gritty and stark imagery of Kigali's city center. Its inclusion is suggestive of the key importance of the future in discussing the past, particularly in attracting investment in Rwanda. A number of my Rwandan interviewees expressed a similar dual construction of reconciliation and future investment when discussing their relationship to their country. The general sense seemed to be that, even in the process of offering a critique of the current state of things, it was important to discuss such concerns in relation to a need for potential investment and stability. While this may seem strange in conversation, particularly with individuals that may be particularly staunch in their opposition to the Kagame Administration, it is all the more pronounced in Ndahayo's film, which switches registers between critique and tourism prospectus quite abruptly.

The content of the “first wave” films is particularly interesting beyond their latent critique. In thinking about the cinema marketplace, it is important to note that while Rwandans produce these films, they are not solely made *for* Rwandans. In fact, the genocide-centric nature of many of these films could be the result of a wide range of factors, not the least of which being the fact that the film industry has very much risen from the ashes of the experience of genocide

(with numerous filmmakers having lost close family members in 1994). Another potential element for consideration is the way that this thematic repetition has helped to facilitate the “carving out” of a space within the international marketplace for Rwandan films, not to mention that this particular topic, and educational material in general, is more apt to receive funding from the government.<sup>101</sup>

In *Behind This Convent*, the manner by which the western world has come to view Rwanda is largely through the lens of either eco-tourism or the genocide (with its own offshoot into thana-tourism). These early films do little to dissuade viewers from the central importance of these themes, instead depending on them in order to gain a foothold in the festival marketplace. *Behind This Convent* alone has received five film festival award nominations, winning both the Verona Jury Award and the SIGNIS Award at the Zanzibar International Film Festival (and appearing in numerous other festivals). Ndahayo’s earlier film, *Scars of My Days*, appeared at the Tribeca Film Festival where he won the Golden Impala Amakula Award for First Time Filmmaker in front of an audience that included former U.S. president Bill Clinton.

The suggestion here is not that this emphasis on the genocide is conscious or intentional, rather that it has aided in facilitating the continuation of the industry in the face of limited domestic consumption. The current funding structures available to filmmakers have created an environment in which continued viability for independent filmmakers necessitates some degree of appeal to a host of donors (including the government, NGO’s, etc.) whose primary directive is educational or genocide-centered films. According to Romeo Umulisa, the Festival and Art Director for the Rwanda Film Festival, “funding from these sources tends to control the story, generally making it more educational,”<sup>102</sup> which results in a structure that forces filmmakers to focus on educational films that are more apt to face a kind of latent censorship.

As a result, in the international marketplace the idea of “Trojan-horse” marketing centers much more on the biases of film festival programmers, and festival attendees, towards films that focus on the historical destruction of countries around the world (a sort of sado-masochistic dynamic). What this kind of strategy does is reinforce and play upon conditions that are already present within the marketplace.<sup>103</sup>

### *Conclusions*

In looking at the data from both television content and film distribution, it is remarkable that both industries have found a way to survive in what are inhospitable media environments. While both have faced infrastructural limitations, as well as limited domestic consumer interest, they have managed to adapt to the marketplace by limiting their cost of production and streamlining distribution. In the case of Rwandan television, production of inexpensive news programming and taking advantage of syndicated programming during off-hours have played an important role. For the film industry, limited domestic distribution has resulted in a larger focus on gaining a foothold in the international marketplace in order to build larger relationships with international donors and film festivals. What is interesting is that such strategies have resulted in different approaches to reaching audiences.

The high cost of entry for potential consumers has forced each industry to diverge in terms of the platforms of distribution and their particular means of cultivating potential audiences. For television, the close-knit relationship between the state and Rwandan T.V. has meant that narrowcasting to an elite-subset of the population does not pose an issue, insofar as the content remains similar to what the general population receives listening to the radio. Film, on the other hand, has continued to try to grow its domestic audience through a number of venues, including digital distribution via YouTube, domestic screenings with the traveling

“Hillywood” festival, as well as an increasing number of theaters in the cities (as well as at the Kwetu Film Institute). Both of these approaches have yielded a wide, but shallowly engaged, consumer base in which the vast majority of users may watch television or film irregularly.

This particular situation is quite risky, particularly if either industry loses foreign and government funding, as they both remain somewhat reliant on that money to support their larger industrial interests. For film, though some independent and industrial filmmaking utilizes funding from NGOs and private donors, the larger reach of the industry via international co-production and access to film festivals is linked to government dollars that are supporting educational films. A good example of this is Kabera’s more recent production *Africa United*, which received government funding, to the chagrin of some Rwandan filmmakers who felt that this was another example of the fact that “the government gives money to foreigners to make films in Rwanda, not to actual Rwandans.”<sup>104</sup>

As a state run entity, Rwandan television would face a very uncertain marketplace without support from the state.<sup>105</sup> The large amount of news programming during peak hours is indicative of Nkusi’s suggestion about the nature of state media to disseminate information about the government, but this is also driven by the low cost of production for news programming, as well as the continued difficulties faced in attempting to promote television as an advertising medium for potential investors. Though it is currently growing, the relative lack of pay television adoption means that Rwanda television remains dominant, which only brings into sharper relief the importance of the content data of this study. Language is one aspect of this, as just fewer than 13% of Rwandans speak English,<sup>106</sup> while more than 50% of Rwanda TVs programming is English Language or English sourced. But the more important issue is why there is such a disconnect between media content and speaking language of the audience? The

answer is media dumping.

The definition of media dumping is when the conditions are present for the sale of produced content where “the price charged in the foreign market is below cost” or “the price the producer charges in the foreign market is less than the price in the home market.”<sup>107</sup> An example of this would be a U.S. film that cost \$1 million to produce that is then sold for exhibition in Rwanda for \$40,000. At face value, this meets the second condition of media dumping (that the cost is below that in the home market). The first condition, though, is somewhat more of a difficult issue to parse out, largely because it is important to take into account the receptiveness of the marketplace.

It still remains important to address the third condition, how “salable” or attractive content is within the destination marketplace. This particular condition raises a number of questions regarding cultural proximity and production quality (as we must consider these particular conditions in relation to the relative production and distribution costs in the country of exhibition), particularly given the complex cultural economies at play in the international marketplace. In fact, “similarities in way of life and language mean that producers within a region face a lower cultural discount than those, including those in the United States, from outside the region.”<sup>108</sup> Thus, even in circumstances where the production quality of imported media is much higher than local and regional content, the very fact that it may cost less to import is hardly the only consideration.

Although English is considered to be “the world’s major ‘second language’, ”<sup>109</sup> media that is culturally proximal to Rwanda would be more apt to gain a foothold in the country’s media marketplace. The issue of media dumping then requires us to take into account the wide range of conditions reflected in the comparative advantage of English (and, to a lesser degree,



French) language programming. As a result, in the example above, the attempted sale of a U.S. film for \$40,000 for distribution in Rwanda would require a calculation that takes into account the general demand for this particular type of film (for instance, if it is an action film or a film featuring Hollywood stars, would that be in high demand in the destination marketplace?), the production quality of the product (is it so much better than local production that audience's will consider that in their media consumption practices?), and its cultural proximity to the destination marketplace (are there religious, political, or general cultural similarities or differences between source and destination countries that may impact the film's profit making potential?).

Thus, using the example above, while the cost to produce the same film in Rwanda, taking into account labor costs and the availability of equipment, would likely still be a substantial bit more (thus fulfilling the first two conditions of media dumping), we must also take into account the third condition of "salability" (based upon the above consideration). In this example, the \$40,000 price tag, given the size of Rwanda's potential consumer base, limited by the access to electricity, available theatres for exhibition and the high entry cost for television ownership, would likely be too high. In which case, a film with a lower budget, and corresponding production quality, and whose cultural characteristics were attractive to potential audiences in Rwanda would make more sense.

The problem, though, is that the price tag for U.S. content sold in Rwanda, as it is in countries around the world, is much lower. In fact, it would be more likely that that same film would cost \$400, rather than \$40,000. In this case, then, to import media would be much more attractive for Rwandan exhibitors. There is no possible way that, based on comparative economics, local producers could compete. The fact that the television (and to a lesser extent film) industry continues to struggle to promote itself as a marketing medium compounds this

fact. The result is that most, if not all, of narrative programming on Rwandan television is produced in English and French language countries.

This has not, though, resulted in the dominance of these media products within the Rwandan marketplace. Instead, less expensive English and French language syndicated television programming (including second-run sales of films for television) appears as filler during non-prime time hours, while national news and talk programs dominate prime time. The side effect of this is that, while the domestic marketplace does remain suppressed by the influx of foreign media, this has had very little impact on the content that appears during the times that Rwandans are actually watching television. Unfortunately, there is very little evidence available to suggest whether tariffs on media importation or exhibition quotas would have much of an impact on the programming of Rwandan television, but continued media dumping on state television has done little to promote local production outside of low cost content (news and talk programs).

Given the relative dearth of exhibition space for film in Rwanda, media dumping has been somewhat less of an issue. Though the “Hillywood” Film Festival does feature imported films, given its relationship to the RCC and the industry in general, a considerable amount of its programming remains dedicated to local and regional filmmakers. Where marketplace conditions (including “film dumping”) impose themselves is in the selection of films for production, given the limited funds available to filmmakers. For Rwandan productions that are able to secure NGO or governmental funding, the loss of control over the content of the film results in the production of projects that line up with the particular agendas of those backing them. As suggested by one filmmaker, “the government will pay for a film if it lines up with what they are doing [...] if the government is running a campaign about gender-based violence,

they will fund a movie against gender-based violence.”<sup>110</sup> With the limited funds available from outside sources (international grants and donors in particular), filmmakers are almost forced to gravitate toward the production of didactic and genocide-centric films from the outset.

The advantage of this has been that the current industrial model (with its concern for funding educative programming) is able to transcend the issue of production value by positioning content and ideology over aesthetic. As the majority of films are documentary or educative narratives, audience expectations are different from those associated with narrative programs, as they are not necessarily seen as competing within the same space. Instead, Rwandan cinema largely operates parallel, or in tandem, with international co-production and imported media content, rather than in direct competition with it. This has been viable because much of the exhibition space in Rwanda remains affiliated with the industry itself. Once domestic filmmaking reaches a critical mass, though, it seems unlikely that this semi-noncompetitive environment would be able to continue.

While the argument has been made that “the charge of dumping is, in fact, virtually meaningless for a good that is nonrival in consumption,”<sup>111</sup> such a position ignores the impact of media dumping on *potential* production (a particularly poignant point in the case of Rwandan film and television). Given contemporary funding conditions, potential funding has relegated general narrative filmmaking as secondary to documentary and educative programming. Though some filmmakers continue to find alternative funding, such as grants, to finish their projects, the fact that the path of least resistance to funding remains these particular kinds of films will no doubt influence the next generation of filmmakers.

It is important to view the “purpose” of the film and television industries in relation to earlier media forms, because so much of their current content is the result of the formulation of

state endorsed discourse and free speech that has determined acceptable content both on radio and in print journalism. In an informal survey of eleven members of the Rwandan film industry, the vast majority (81.8%) identified “Funding” as their primary concern, unsurprisingly making it the most common issue faced by Rwandan filmmakers.<sup>112</sup> What is interesting, though, is that “Administration/Freedom of Speech” tied for the least mentioned problem, at 9.1%.<sup>113</sup> In looking deeper at the text of their responses though, it is illuminating the degree to which state endorsed ideology has impacted filmmaking, even if the filmmakers do not explicitly mention it as an issue. One respondent noted that:

“There is a ‘moral duty’ that is more restrictive than any laws. It’s just too raw still, people need to talk about the genocide in a certain way right now, and that way does not conflict with how the government allows people to talk about it. There are also more and more movies being made here that do not talk about the genocide, so many issues of freedom of speech are avoided that way.”<sup>114</sup>

In such a way, the issue at hand becomes less an identified problem with state censorship and more a form of self-censorship predicated on the deterrent of free speech laws. Though only one filmmaker responded to the survey as seeing the government as an “issue” in their filmmaking, nearly all of the participants mention the government as being a relevant consideration. In fact, more than half (54.5%) comment that the government does influence filmmaking, with half of this particular group stating that they have either had a direct experience with state censorship or they know of people who have.<sup>115</sup> The other half of this group noted that in their, and others, experience filmmaking there is a need to self-censor by talking about the genocide in ways that would not be perceived as divisionist. Of the remaining filmmakers, 18% commented that the government ideology is a force, but that they since they agree with it there is not that much of an issue because, “no one wants to make the types of movie that would get him or her in trouble with the government anyway.”<sup>116</sup> Of the remaining, 9.1% felt that there was not any issue at all because “everything is open,” while 18.2% did not comment on it.<sup>117</sup>

Based on these responses, then, it seems fair to state that there actually *is* an identifiable impact of free speech laws and state censorship on, at the very least, a portion of the filmmaking community (and it seems likely that television content producers would echo these sentiments). The system as it stands appears to facilitate content oversight via the controlled distribution of funding to producers that are likely to subject themselves to stringent standards of self-censorship. This particular point can be seen in the fact that even though 72.5% of survey respondents noted the existence of state and self-censorship, only 9.1% replied that this was a problematic issue.<sup>118</sup> The current conditions governing content creation are not going unnoticed by consumers, as evidenced by the fact that even though news and informational programming constitutes 73.95% of prime time content, Rwandan audiences still see general news as the largest gap in program offerings.<sup>119</sup> It is not that there is a dearth of news programming, it is that Rwandan audiences seem to perceive a gap in the *kind* of news that they are receiving. A detailed survey of film audiences would likely result in similar results, though in the absence of such data this point is only conjecture.

## **Connections**

It is important that we see all of this information through the lens of Rwanda's media past. Just like radio and print/online journalism, film and television are historically tethered to the same speech laws that have come to govern much of state endorsed discourse on genocide and nationalism in Rwanda. It is only once we see these particular historical trajectories outside of isolation that we get a clear idea the processes at play in the construction, development, and dissemination of this discourse. While Chapter 1 and 2 outlined the particularities of radio and print media as institutions whose role as primary outlets for disseminating state endorsed ideology drove their content, Chapter 3 offers us an interesting counterpoint through its

exploration less widely adopted and regulated media. Film and television both exhibit many of the same tendencies as radio and print media, insofar as the discursive strategies identified in their case studies all seem to point to some degree of ideological continuity. Reconciliatory discourse remains central across all four media in contemporary Rwanda, though the reasons for this congruity may vary.

The idea that homogenized discourse is predicated solely on the strict regulation of media, really tells only part of the story. No doubt, strict oversight of state run media plays an important role in curbing the potential for resistant discourse through the direct restriction of funding, but the continuity in ideological affinity in private print media and the film industries suggests something more. Even as deregulation has superficially endorsed freedom of the press, the flexibility of speech laws as they're deployed by the state, as well as restrictive funding practices (seen in the film industry where limited funding is selectively distributed), has resulted in a mediascape where self-censorship plays a central role across all private media in framing discourse.

The conclusion of this project takes these processes into account, and considers how they have, and will, impact emerging media forms. The internet and mobile technology have already begun to challenge this discursive paradigm by making information more readily accessible. For the government of Rwanda, such challenges represent unacceptable limitations on their control (and corresponding attempts to infringe on the privacy of citizens), but also as an opportunity (seen in the adoption of new media technology by officials, including President Kagame, as outlets for disseminating information). While previous chapters have conceived of Rwanda's mediascape as regional clusters, the conclusion articulates a spatial constellation of ideological proximity that exposes the highly centralized nature of political control as it has been described

above.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Madelaine Hron, "Interview with Film Producer Eric Kabera," *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice* (vol.21:3, 17 August 2009), p.359.

<sup>2</sup> Francesco Fontemaggi, "Au Rwanda, l'information hantée par le génocide," *Liberation* (Web. 4 December 2003, Accessed 19 January 2015). <[http://www.liberation.fr/monde/2003/12/04/au-rwanda-l-information-hantee-par-le-genocide\\_454105](http://www.liberation.fr/monde/2003/12/04/au-rwanda-l-information-hantee-par-le-genocide_454105)>

<sup>3</sup> Linda Melvern, "Major Stefan Stec: UN Peacekeeper on 'Mission Impossible' in Rwanda," *The Independent* (Web. 7 October 2005, Accessed 20 January 2015). <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/major-stefan-stec-317771.html>>

<sup>4</sup> Allan Thompson, "The Father and Daughter We Let Down," *The Toronto Star*.

<sup>5</sup> This was a common comment among many that I interviewed while in Rwanda. Though the bulk of those interviewed admired the film very much (some even had some hand in its production), a sizeable number bemoaned the damage it has done to the image, and consequently the aspirations, of Rwanda. What no one mentioned during these discussions is the sizeable (if disturbing) impact that such depictions of Rwanda have had on the rather healthy thana-tourism trade. In fact, the visitation by tourists of the country's many genocide sites, known as thana-tourism, "dark tourism," or death tourism, represents a sizeable portion of Rwanda's tourism economy; rivaled only by gorilla tourism.

<sup>6</sup> Allan Thompson, "The Father and Daughter We Let Down," *The Toronto Star*.

<sup>7</sup> "Nick Hughes (100 Days)," *Rwanda Genocide on Film* (Accessed 21 December 2014). <<https://rwandangenocideonfilm.wordpress.com/the-film-director/nick-hughes/>>

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Kamilindi, "Journalism in a Time of Hate Media," *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide* (London: Pluto Press, 2007), p.136.

<sup>9</sup> Monique Alexis and Ines Mpambara, "IMS Assessment," *International Media Support*, p.11.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009*, p.29.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p.30.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p.32.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Kigali Girl, "Here's What our TV Industry Really Needs," *The New Times* (Web. 6 January 2015, Accessed 20 January 2015). <<http://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/article/2015-01-06/184679/>>

<sup>19</sup> Ben Gasore, "First Privately-Owned Television Station Hits Airwaves," *The New Times* (Web. 1 March 2013, Accessed 1 January 2015). <<http://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/article/2013-03-01/63401/>>

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009*, pp.34.

<sup>23</sup> Moses Kirui, "The First Steps of Satellite Television In," *The New Times* (Web. 22 November 2010, Accessed 4 January 2015). <<http://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/article/2010-11-22/96035/>>

<sup>24</sup> <sup>24</sup> Ben Gasore, "Digital Broadcasting Stirs Up Local TV Industry, but..." *The New Times* (Web. 31 December 2014, Accessed 3 March 2015). <<http://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/article/2014-12-31/184538/>>

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

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- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>27</sup> Maria Kaitesi, "Film Progressing in Rwanda," *The New Times* (Web. 29 July 2011, Accessed 20 January 2015). <<http://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/article/2011-07-29/97996/>>
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>30</sup> "'Reflection' 10 Years of Hillywood," *Rwanda Film Festival 2014 Program* (Accessed 24 January 2015). <[http://rwandafilmfestival.net/2014/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/RFF2014\\_Screening\\_Guide.pdf](http://rwandafilmfestival.net/2014/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/RFF2014_Screening_Guide.pdf)>
- <sup>31</sup> "Rwanda Cinema Centre & Rwanda Film Institute," *Creative Visions Foundation* (Accessed 24 January 2015). <<http://www.creativevisions.org/get-involved/cap/rwanda-cinema-centre-rwanda-film-institute>>
- <sup>32</sup> "Media Law of 12.08.09," *Official Gazette of the Republic of Rwanda*, p.34.
- <sup>33</sup> *Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey 2010*, p.21.
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p.xxi.
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>36</sup> Louisa Esther Glatthaar, "Who Will Deliver Rwanda's Film Industry," *The New Times* (Web. 8 March 2014, Accessed 7 February 2015). <<http://www.newtimes.co.rw/section/article/2014-03-08/73693/>>
- <sup>37</sup> Kierran Petersen, "Filmmaking, Reconciliation & Peacebuilding in Rwanda: Challenges and Opportunities," *Independent Study Project (ISP) Collection* (2013, Paper 1674), p.28. <[http://digitalcollections.sit.edu/isp\\_collection/1674](http://digitalcollections.sit.edu/isp_collection/1674)>
- <sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p.25.
- <sup>39</sup> Nancy Tartaglione, "Africa: 'Finding Hillywood' Filmmakers Join With AMPAS to Boost Rwandan Movie Biz," *Deadline.com* (Web. 7 April 2014, Accessed 7 February 2015). <<http://deadline.com/2014/04/africa-finding-hillywood-filmmakers-join-with-ampas-to-boost-rwandan-movie-biz-703894/>>
- <sup>40</sup> Louisa Esther Glatthaar, "Who Will Deliver," *The New Times*.
- <sup>41</sup> Ron Krabill's work looking at the important role of mass media in improving the efficiency and reach of the commissions themselves ("Symbiosis: mass media and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa," *Media, Culture & Society*, vol.23, pp.567–585), in addition to Glenda Daniel's book, *Fight for Democracy: The African National Congress and the Media in South Africa*, both are excellent examples of this.
- <sup>42</sup> Eugenia Zorbas, "Reconciliation in Post-Genocide Rwanda," *African Journal of Legal Studies* (Vol.1, Issue 1, 2004), p.31.
- <sup>43</sup> Genevieve Parent, "Reconciliation and Justice after Genocide: A Theoretical Exploration," *Genocide Studies and Prevention* (2010), p.278.
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p.278.
- <sup>45</sup> Eugenia Zorbas, "Reconciliation," *African Journal of Legal Studies*, p.44.
- <sup>46</sup> Harvey M. Weinstein, et al., "School Voices," *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, p.55.
- <sup>47</sup> Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, p.266.
- <sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.266-7.
- <sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p.267.
- <sup>50</sup> Zorbas points out that there are very real implications of the Hutu/perpetrator construct, such as the formation, in 1998, of the Fonds National pour L'Assistance aux Rescapés du Génocide (FARG), a fund for genocide survivors paid into by all Rwandans as part of their wage. The fund, though, only awards aid to Tutsi's since to qualify one must fit into the category of "survivor," which surviving Hutu (regardless of their actual experiences) do not (Zorbas, 2004, p.47).
- <sup>51</sup> The monolithic duality of victimhood and perpetrator along ethnic lines ignores the alleged war crimes committed by the RPF as well as the numerous family members of moderate Hutu that live in Rwanda. While there is certainly a degree of complicity in the act of being a bystander to genocide, the very equivalency between survival and guilt is troubling. Such ideas lead into ethnic shaming that, far from reducing ethnic tensions in Rwanda, could actually spur the development of more radicalized Hutu



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ideology within the domestic space of Rwanda.

<sup>52</sup> Abby d'Arcy Hughes, "Rwandans Flock to 'Hollywood' Films," *BBC.com*, Web. 5 April 2007, Accessed 1 December 2011. <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/6530227.stm>>

<sup>53</sup> Anecdotally, it was striking the number of Rwandans that, during interviews, mentioned *Hotel Rwanda* as simultaneously an important film (in that it brought the world's attention back to the devastating events of 1994) as well as a major problem for the continued success of their country. The common comment (even by individuals that participated in some capacity in the production of the film) was that the world still thinks of Rwanda as it was at the end of the film; that there has been no progress, and that the violence continues to rage on. Though some noted that there continues to be some ethnic violence, particularly along the borders, they all seemed to lament the predicament that this perception of their country has placed them in. In essence, though they felt that remembrance was important, by not recognizing the changes that have been made in the intervening years, Rwanda continues (in their eyes) to be seen as a country in the midst of genocide, rather than one that is trying to work through, and beyond, this past.

<sup>54</sup> Though more recent co-productions such as *Kinyarwanda* (2011, dir. Alrick Brown) and *Finding Hillywood*, (2013, dir. Chris Towey and Leah Warshawski) have begun to focus more on this topic. Some of this has been due to an upswing in interest in the particularities of reconciliation in Rwanda that has been driven by the successes of the Rwanda Cinema Center films at film festivals across the United States and Europe.

<sup>55</sup> "Kwetu Opening Message," *Youtube*, Web. 25 September 2011, Accessed 17 November 2011. <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQTHsqq0REM>>

<sup>56</sup> "About," *Rwanda Cinema Center Website*, 17 September 2008. Web. 1 December 2011. <<http://rwandacinemacenter.wordpress.com/about/>>

<sup>57</sup> Eric Kabera, "Rwanda Cinema Center: Eric Kabera's Bio," *YouTube*, 19 August 2010. <[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Txfb6SIY9ow&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Txfb6SIY9ow&feature=player_embedded)>

<sup>58</sup> "Profile: Eric Kabera," *The Rwanda Focus*, 12 June 2011 Web. 30 November 2011. <<http://focus.rw/wp/2011/06/profile-eric-kabera-%E2%80%99Ccinema-is-more-than-just-entertainment-%E2%80%9D/>>

<sup>59</sup> Michael Curtin, "Thinking Globally," *Media Industries*, p.115.

<sup>60</sup> "Contact Us," *Kwetu Film Institute*, Accessed 30 November 2011. <<http://www.kwetufilm.institute.com/contact>>

<sup>61</sup> Michael Curtin, "Thinking Globally," *Media Industries*, p.114.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> "Kwetu Opening Message," *Youtube*.

<sup>64</sup> "Tourists Visit Genocide Memorials in Rwanda," *ETN Global Travel Industry News*, 30 June 2008 Web. 2 December 2011. <<http://www.eturbonews.com/3422/tourists-visit-genocide-memorials-rwanda>>

<sup>65</sup> *Link Media Productions Website*, Accessed 19 November 2011. <[http://www.linkmedia.co.rw/flash\\_index.htm](http://www.linkmedia.co.rw/flash_index.htm)>

<sup>66</sup> *Vivid Features Website*, Accessed 19 November 2011. <<http://www.vivid-africa.com/>>

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> "Background," *Media High Council*, Accessed 15 November 2011. <<http://www.mhc.gov.rw/general-information/about-us/background.html>>

<sup>69</sup> "Rwanda Overview," *Department for International Development*, Accessed 20 November 2011. <<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Where-we-work/Africa-West--Central/Rwanda/>>

<sup>70</sup> Christina Venegas, Ed. Jennifer Holt and Alisa Perren, "Thinking Regionally: Singular in Diversity and Diverse in Unity," *Media Industries: History, Theory, and Method* (West Sussex, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2009), p.124.

<sup>71</sup> "Gilbert Ndahayo Takes His Film Skills to Another Level," *The NewTimes* Web. 1 December 2011, Accessed 13 February 2015. <<http://www.newtimes.co.rw/print.php?issue=14758&print&article=45522>>

<sup>72</sup> Leposo Lillian and Samantha Wehl, "Eric Kabera: Film Pioneer Helps Rwanda Build New Identity,"

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CNN.com (Web. 3 July 2012, Accessed 9 February 2015).

<<http://www.cnn.com/2012/07/02/world/africa/eric-kabera-rwanda-film/index.html>>

<sup>73</sup> Susan Dominus, "Portraits of Reconciliation," *The New York Times Magazine* (Web. 4 April 2014, Accessed 9 February 2015). <[http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/04/06/magazine/06-pieter-hugo-rwanda-portraits.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/04/06/magazine/06-pieter-hugo-rwanda-portraits.html?_r=0)>

<sup>74</sup> Though Gunstone is primarily interested in the results of a nationalist framework as deployed in the reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations in Australia, many of the results have been the same. The major difference is that the minority entity in Rwanda's reconciliatory process has a great deal more power and is actually driving unificatory discourse.

<sup>75</sup> Francesco Fontemaggi, "Au Rwanda," *Liberation*.

<sup>76</sup> *Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009*, p.33.

<sup>77</sup> There were 3 time slots in which two different programs seems to be double booked, meaning that instead of the usual 168 weekly broadcast hours, the data includes 3.75 double booked hours, totaling 171.75 hours.

<sup>78</sup> *Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009*, p.29.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, p.30.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, p.32.

<sup>81</sup> "English to Become Official Language in Rwanda," *NPR.com* (Web. 20 November 2008, Accessed 17 March 2015). <<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=97245421>>

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> *Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009*, pp.7-8.

<sup>84</sup> US TV dayparting schedule was adapted based on similarities between the US and Rwandan manufacturing sector employee work hours (at 8.5 hours a day/45 hours a week), pulled from International Finance Corporation and World Bank approximates (found at <http://www.doingbusiness.org/data/exploreeconomies/rwanda/employing-workers>). Approximates of Morning (6AM-10AM), Daytime (10AM-5:00PM), Early Fringe (5:00PM-7:00PM), Prime Time (7:00PM-10PM), Late (11:00PM-2:00AM), and Graveyard (2:00AM-6:00AM) are simplified from the Television Bureau of Advertising definition found in their glossary (at <http://www.tvb.org/trends/4757>). Given cultural differences, and even the non-uniformity and disagreements within the US television industry regarding how to define dayparting, though, I also implemented an hourly breakdown for comparison, per the processes utilized by Nielsen Media (<http://www.nielsenmedia.com/glossary/terms/D/>), for comparison.

<sup>85</sup> Though there is little room here to engage fully with the problematic issues posed by translation, such an endeavor in the area of Rwandan media could offer a great deal of insight into the current discussion of the role of language in constructing the new Rwandan national identity.

<sup>86</sup> Though English language and source programming takes up more than half of the broadcast day, it represents only 21.84% of primetime content (compared to Kinyarwanda/Swahili/regional dialect content which takes up 75.48%).

<sup>87</sup> The third most common type of content, "Informational" did exhibit a similar broadcast pattern to that of "Religious" programs in that it appears to peak on Sunday, but it did so at much great daily durations and seemed to take a good deal of broadcast time on Saturday as well.

<sup>88</sup> "Uganda Country Profile," *BBC.com* (Web. 21 May 2015, Accessed 5 March 2015).

<<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14107906>>

<sup>89</sup> Madeleine Bunting, "Children at Risk in Uganda's Boarding Schools," *The Guardian* (Web 5 August 2008, Accessed 27 May 2015).

<<http://www.theguardian.com/society/katineblog/2008/aug/05/childrenarestillatriskin>>

<sup>90</sup> "Vision," *KwetuFilmInstitute.com* (Accessed 4 April 2014).

<<http://kwetufilm.institute.com/school/school.php>>

<sup>91</sup> This particular definition of a "first wave" of filmmakers is largely based on the origins of the Rwanda cinema center and the rather initial phase of developing production talent through the RCC (and the film

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labs of the Swedish Institute in Rwanda, as well as other workshops and experience with European journalists). There are other Rwandan filmmakers, particularly since the advent of the Kwetu Film Institute. The larger shift, though, is that the current wave of RCC filmmakers represent less of an “auteurist” industry, as fewer and fewer of these films have garnered international circulation. These “first wave” filmmakers, whether they are producers, directors, or writers are responsible for the industry in its current form.

<sup>92</sup> This film was later be re-edited with additional material, and released in 2009 as *Rwanda: Beyond the Deadly Pit*. Though *Behind This Convent* is no longer in circulation, it is representative of the time period of its release, particularly in approaching the issues of reconciliation and the formulation of nationalism. Since it was released and has a footprint in the marketplace (it appears on IMDB, has been screened at numerous venues including USC’s Shoah Foundation Institute, nominated and won several festival awards, and has been referenced in scholarly texts including the film listing in Mick Broderick and Antonio Traverso’s 2010 book *Trauma, Media, Art: New Perspective*) it appears here as a singular film text separate from its re-release.

<sup>93</sup> “World Briefing – Africa: Rwanda: 25,000 Rally Against French Court Order,” *New York Times* (Web. 24 November 2006, Accessed 13 January 2015). <<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9504EEDB133EF937A15752C1A9609C8B63&scp=1&sq=jean-louis++kagame&st=nyt>>

<sup>94</sup> Gilbert Ndahayo, *Behind This Convent*, 2008.

<sup>95</sup> Traditional genocide narratives about Rwanda have largely revolved the role of outsiders in the formulation and fomentation of violence, most explicitly expressed in the commonly identified anecdote that “it was the radio that caused the genocide.” The actualities of the 1994 Rwanda genocide are much more complex, but such narratives simplify complex historical and ideological concepts into their simplest forms for mass public consumption. Even more to this point, Ayuub Kasasa Mago is developing a short film called *Radio Republic*, which looks at the individual media experience in the years leading up to genocide, but addresses the importance of individual accountability in the face of societal conditioning as well.

<sup>96</sup> Gilbert Ndahayo, *Behind This Convent*, 2008.

<sup>97</sup> Andrew Young, *Kigali100*, 2008.

<sup>98</sup> Eugenia Zorbas, “A View on Rwanda: An Interview with Eugenia Zorbas,” *International Center for Transitional Justice* (December 2007).

<sup>99</sup> Anna Obura, “Educational Reconstruction in Rwanda” *Never again: educational reconstruction in Rwanda* (Paris: UNESCO International Institute of Educational Planning, 2003), p.18.

<sup>100</sup> Gilbert Ndahayo, *Behind This Convent*, 2008.

<sup>101</sup> Kierran Petersen, “Filmmaking, Reconciliation...” *Independent Study Project*, p.28.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, p.22.

<sup>103</sup> This particular point is extremely relevant in the discussion of the positioning of national and indigenous cinemas within the film festival circuit but would necessitate quite a bit more space than is available here.

<sup>104</sup> Kierran Petersen, “Filmmaking, Reconciliation...” *Independent Study Project*, p.25.

<sup>105</sup> Though data available through the National audience survey largely ignores other regional and international alternatives that might indicate otherwise. For the moment the reach and consumption of these alternatives remains somewhat of a mystery.

<sup>106</sup> *Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009*, pp.7-8.

<sup>107</sup> Colin Hoskins, Stuart McFayden, and Adam Finn, *Media Economics*, p.322.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p.320.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, p.319.

<sup>110</sup> Kierran Petersen, “Filmmaking, Reconciliation...” *Independent Study Project*, p.24.

<sup>111</sup> Colin Hoskins, Stuart McFayden, and Adam Finn, *Media Economics*, p.322.

<sup>112</sup> Kierran Petersen, “Filmmaking, Reconciliation...” *Independent Study Project*, p.22.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, p.22.

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- <sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, p.23.  
<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.22-27.  
<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>119</sup> *Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009*, pp.33.

## Conclusion: Problematizing the Utopia - Realities of (De)Regulation and a New Media Geography

“I never see a conflict between political openness and social and economic development. Rather, I think the two are intertwined, even if you think one is lagging behind. The social and economic development indicators are very clear. But political openness, or whatever you call it, is subjective. Everybody has a right to define it the way they want, because there isn’t tangible specific data to base it on.”

- President Paul Kagame<sup>1</sup>

“I think [enduring is] an obligation. I have to do something good for my country. [...] I ask myself why did I stay, why not my younger sister, why not my brother, and I say maybe God has something that he wants me to do [...] Rwanda is not only about genocide [...] It is our history but we also want people to know that Rwanda is not all about genocide; Rwanda is something else.”

- Didacienne Nibagwire (actress and genocide survivor)<sup>2</sup>

### **Framing History**

Walking through the Kigali Memorial Center it can be difficult to understand the wide range of personal experience, encapsulated in displays and short videos, which are on display for visitors. As one hub in the thana-tourist trek across Rwanda, it is in some ways the least tactile of the many different sites, and yet there is something important about this particular space. Unlike the Ntarama Memorial, and those like it spread across Rwanda, with the bullet holes peppered across its façade and the remains and belongings of its victims housed within its weathered walls, the Kigali Memorial Center appears from the outside to be unremarkable aside from its unique architecture and beautiful gardens. Within its walls, though, one can begin to get some, if only a limited, idea of what happened in this country. The importance of this space is not in its efficacy in communicating the experience of genocide (the other memorials are much more impactful in this regard), in its outlining many of the causations of the violence, or even in its use of multimedia (you can get a brief glimpse of Hughes’ footage as part of one of the displays). No, the relevance of this particular memorial is that it remains the one site that nearly all visitors interested in what happened here will visit.

Just as there is an incredible feeling that accompanies flying into Kigali International Airport, both because of the historical moment that it has come to represent (particularly the assassination of the President Habyarimana) and its role as a physical symbol of the transportability of Rwandan culture across international boundaries, this memorial serves as a central international way station for genocide tourists. With flights to and from Uganda, Zambia, Ethiopia, Burundi, Gabon, Kenya, Brussels, Tanzania, Turkey, Dubai, Nigeria, South Africa, and Amsterdam (with connecting flights throughout the world), Kigali International Airport serves as a symbol of the increasing degree to which it has emerged as a global symbol of reconciliation and hope, while the memorial ushers in many of these same people to construct a narrative of the events of 1994. Regardless of the accuracy of this narrative, the memorial space serves as much as a container for this past as it does as a monument for a new Rwandan future.

Even now, it is difficult to believe that a country torn apart by ethnic hatred, that pitted neighbor against neighbor, just over twenty years ago, could appear so peaceful now. The quiet exhibit space of the memorial outlines such ruthlessness with an ever-increasing number of examples, testimonies, and placards. And yet its continued presence and relevance in Kigali points to a desire on the part of the government and its people to push forward. One should not understate the miracle of this reconciliatory transformation; Rwanda, today, sits as both a testament to the human capacity for forgiveness and the fortitude of a nation and its citizens in their struggle toward peace. To walk through the gardens and exhibits of the memorial does not necessarily bring you closer to understanding what happened, but it does bring you closer to understanding the need and desire for reconciliation.

The bulk of the research conducted in this study of contemporary Rwandan media has focused on the convergence of the past and the present, with an ever watchful eye towards an

uncertain future. Uncertainty is hardly new to any discussion of Rwanda. Is President Kagame a dictator or a statesman, a freedom fighter or a war criminal? Is ethnic hatred gone, or has it receded to the edges of Rwandan society, only to return once again? Do Rwandans feel free to speak about their government, or do the laws only benefit a state that is oppressing them? Everyone from human rights groups to journalists, academics to politicians, have taken positions (often staunch ones) on these questions, but indisputable answers are few and far between. One should not read this as a postmodern take on Rwandan history, and President Kagame in particular. Instead, the variegated shades of truth that lay on the ideological battlefield surrounding the discussion of Rwanda are no less relevant or valid than any position on the matter.

The discussions here are not intended as an assignment of value to one particular perspective or another, instead the data presented thus far is merely a starting point for further exploration of these ever changing industries and creative cultures. To this point, many of the subjects of this research have changed considerably since the inception of this project in 2008, including the MHC (whose role in overseeing print journalism is largely gone), RURA (which has been the beneficiary of the move away from the RMHC), and the Kwetu Film Institute (which for all intents and purposes did not even exist). As a result of similar change in the realm of technology, other media platforms that have gained increasing importance have only just achieved enough traction to be relevant in this larger discussion of mass media. An important example this technological, rather than institutional, shift is the use of smart phones and the dissemination of media to portable screen devices as an extension of the Internet driven new media revolution.

The initial consequences of these recent changes are far reaching, and their long-term

effects are still quite difficult to gauge, but in conceptualizing Rwanda's media space, as we have been attempting to do here, it seems a disservice not to at least think about their impacts.

Perhaps the best way to do this is to begin by approaching these wide ranging industries, thus far discussed in relation to one another in somewhat monolithic (radio) and binary terms (film and television, print and online journalism), in relation to one another. Though they may be somewhat distinct in terms of their historical trajectories, Rwanda's mediascape is a web of interdependency in which creative personnel, industries, and products (at all three levels of vertical integration) are all part of a larger geography.

Once we understand how this geography operates we have a much better basis from which to approach *how* the combination of histories and analyses of individual media relate to what is quickly becoming a culture of media convergence. Recognizing the convergence of these media throughout history (from oral storytelling to print media, print media to radio, radio to television, television to film, and film to new media – and all combinations in between) allows us to further delve into the larger considerations of (de)regulation and the seemingly ubiquitous problems of (self)censorship within creative and information industries. The adoption of smart phones has only furthered these concerns, particularly in regards to the regulation of digital media access and the role of the government in policing web content.

Finally, we can see how the case of Rwandan new media offers an opportunity to problematize many of the utopian narratives surrounding the democratizing nature of new media, certainly, but of older forms of media as well. Within this context, the larger historical trajectory of Rwandan media that lies before us, appears as both proving and inverting notions of the power of information to unify communities and offer agency to individuals. All roads, then, lead to this concluding question: in light of the available information we have discussed in charting the



historical trajectories and contemporary conditions of Rwandan media, are we any closer to understanding the relationship between trauma and the construction of the nation?

### **Internet and the “New” Media Geography**

In the most basic sense, much of public space in Rwanda is inherently multipurpose. A village church often doubles as a schoolhouse and, with the emergence of local *gacaca* trials, this same space becomes a courtroom. Soccer stadiums fulfill their function as sports venues, but they are also political centers, sites for large religious gatherings, and even spaces for genocide reenactment.<sup>3</sup> This spatial multi-purposing is hardly unique to Rwanda, and is no doubt the result of economic and civic necessity, but it is important to understand how relevant this conceptualization of space is to our discussion of this country and its media. This is particularly true in instances, such as genocide memorials, where these multi-purpose spaces (schools, churches, etc.) are reclassified and delegated a single role: remembrance.

For our discussion of media, this reclassification ties into the importance of space (the place, the people that reside within it, and the elements of how those individuals understand themselves in relation to it) as an element of national and personal identity. Much of this study has focused on the role of media in constituting national identity, thanks to the close financial and regulatory relationships between these different media industries and the state. These relationships, though, have faced some challenge over the course of Rwandan media history. While much of domestic radio has historically parroted state endorsed discourse (especially before 1994), the challenge of Radio Muhabura, broadcast from Uganda, was an important tool in undermining this discourse. For print and online journalism, the loose and somewhat unreliable allegiance with *Kinyamateka*, as well as the numerous journalists and bloggers that continue to work in exile, has also undercut state endorsed discourse (with some in the domestic

press even showing open resistance to speech laws during the last election, resulting in the government shutting down several outlets for irresponsible reporting<sup>4</sup>). Even the emergence of pay and satellite television has brought about a number of ideological challenges in the formation of the new Rwandan nation (particularly as they represent the potential for a lack of state control over content).

Perhaps the greatest challenge that the state/media relationship has faced is only just beginning: the Internet. The internet has increased in importance over the last several years, with scores of internet cafe's appearing all over Rwanda's major cities, as well as the completion in early 2011 of a \$95 million dollar fibre optic network<sup>5</sup> (but home internet remains somewhat uncommon). The reach of the Internet is limited, with only 3% having access as of 2010.<sup>6</sup> But this user base appears to be growing by leaps and bounds, with that number more than tripling (9.17%) as of 2014.<sup>7</sup> Rwanda has 1,110,043 Internet users, a number that places them as 117<sup>th</sup> in the world<sup>8</sup> (a decent ranking since the country is 149<sup>th</sup> in geographical size,<sup>9</sup> 74<sup>th</sup> in population,<sup>10</sup> and 142<sup>nd</sup> in GDP<sup>11</sup>), but this number grew by 16% last year alone.<sup>12</sup> One reason for this growth has been the limited cost of internet access, with monthly fees ranging from \$30 for single users to \$46 for multiple users, and café's charging approximately \$1.28 for 30 minutes. Additionally, infrastructural improvements have placed Rwandan download performance in first place in Africa and 62<sup>nd</sup> place globally (at 7.88Mbps in February 2013).<sup>13</sup>

Much like India in 1995,<sup>14</sup> Rwanda sits very much on the cusp of mass internet adoption, spurred by investment in fiber optics, but also thanks to mass adoption of cellular communications technologies and a burgeoning information marketplace. The government continues to face the fundamental issues inherent in the promotion of the opening up of access to the Internet as a means of diversifying their economy, while rapidly trying to meet the demands

of increasing information network capabilities and infrastructure. One facet of this has been the limiting of access to controversial online journals and blogs, including the complete blocking of an online newspaper leading up to the 2010 presidential election.<sup>15</sup> As with other media, concerns over government intervention have led a number of journalists and publications to be careful in both the selection of topics, as well as the language used in articles and posts. As pointed out by the chairman of the Rwanda Media Commission, Fred Muvunyi, “Self-censorship is flowing like blood in the arteries and veins. There is no [direct] censorship, but there are things that journalists do not do because they are not confident of what will happen.”<sup>16</sup> Given the extent to which free speech laws have encumbered discourse in Rwanda, Muvunyi’s statement seems hardly limited to journalists, rather this uncertainty appears as a guiding principle throughout the country’s mediascape.

Due to the lack of Internet access across much of Rwanda, censorship has not been much of a cause for concern, both for its limited number consumer base and the government, whose disposition toward the growing platform generally appears “relaxed,”<sup>17</sup> with few exceptions. One major factor that may change this in the coming years is the emergence of the cell phone as both a communications device and as a means of accessing the internet in areas of the country that would historically not have had access (particularly in rural regions with limited utilities infrastructure). Though poverty has played a role in limiting the mass adoption of cell phones, the government has invested considerable resources into expanding cell phone usage and other Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), creating the “National ICT Literacy and Awareness Campaign” in 2013 designed to “familiarize at least 200,000 Rwandans with ICT tools within six months.”<sup>18</sup> Additionally, the launch of cellular provider MTNs Comeka ReadySet, along with the development of numerous solar technologies geared toward the

charging of cell phones, tablets, and laptops (among other things) has only increased mobile phone adoption, growing from 40% in 2011, to 50% in 2012, and 57% in 2013.<sup>19</sup> The cost of data enabled phones has also gone down considerably, with MTN offering phones ranging from 18,500 to 20,000 Rwf (about \$28 to \$32).<sup>20</sup> More importantly, rural populations have far greater access to cellular service than traditional Internet, thanks in large part to a mobile phone network that covers nearly 98% of the population.<sup>21</sup>

Expanding access to the Internet has led to the further development of controls and restrictions on information access. According to Rwanda's Minister of the Interior,<sup>22</sup> "It will now be punishable in Rwanda to read information that is not approved by the authority and such an offence will be regarded with complicity [...] the security services are now allowed to listen to all phone call and read emails between individuals."<sup>23</sup> The actual degree to which the Rwandan government employs such practices is unknown, but beyond questions of communication surveillance, such a statement may be the first salvo in a burgeoning conflict over the role of cell and smart phones in disseminating ideology that the state has not endorsed.<sup>24</sup> The introduction of new media, as well as the increased adoption of ICTs, has problematized the monolithic notion of "mandatory" national listenership that made radio an ubiquitous component of daily life to this point. Even with this challenge, radio still holds a prominent position in the Rwandan mediascape, and the various means of national production and distribution (including radio, film, television, print and online journalism) need to be thought of in local, national, and regional terms.

In its most general sense, we need to view contemporary Rwandan media as geographical spheres based on their production (where and who is creating these media?), their consumption (where and who is watching, reading, or listening to these media?), and their ideology (what is

the ideological proximity of these media in relation to the state?). In practice, it is uncommon for these different geographies to completely align with one another. For instance, in the United States, the geography of film production is largely clustered around key centers of skilled labor, production facilities and available finance (Michael Curtin refers to these as “cultural capitals”<sup>25</sup>), particularly in Los Angeles and New York City. These same industries, due to advantageous state and regional (and international in the case of international co-production) tax benefits and financing, have become global. Thus, around these large clusters there are a number of somewhat smaller clusters. In terms of consumption, the U.S. film industry enjoys a global reach, with the bulk of domestic consumption occurring along the coasts. Though consumption and production geographies would appear to be somewhat similar, overall consumption would appear to be much more spread out geographically than production.

Finally, state endorsed ideology, as a component of these industries, is not exactly housed in these same capitals. Instead, it is an amalgamate of a wide range of viewpoints, dogma’s, and ideas that originate in seats of governmental power, but that are also arranged as a constellation around different sphere’s of affinitive politics (such as the Red State/Blue State ideological arrangement). This particular geography is “normalized” compared to those of production and consumption thanks to the bulk of industrial content produced with the intent to sell to a wide cross section of the U.S. populace. More to the point, this geography is not as directly related to “capitals of power” as production might be. Nor is it as wide ranging as the ideological leanings of consumers. After all, the ideological bandwidth of consumers is much wider than acceptable industrial discourse. For instance, Hollywood as the major film industry does not generally make films targeted to active participants in fringe political entities such as the Ku Klux Klan, nor does it usually make films featuring characters that are smokers, even though a considerable

chunk of its audience may fall into one or both of these groups.

In looking at the media industries of Rwanda, then, it is necessary to note that these geographies may differ from the model expressed above for a wide range of reasons. For one, the size of media industries, and the country, may have a considerable impact on how producers approach domestic media (the small number of filmgoers will impact the necessity for a wider dispersal of product in order to sustain the industry). In terms of consumption, the limited size of the domestic marketplace, as well as particular civic roles of media in Rwanda, also tend toward the mass adoption of one or two particular platforms above all others. This would compare to the constant fracturing and interdependency of media in the U.S. (where one may favor the internet or television, but usually still actively consume media on one's cell phone, the radio, the newspaper and movie theater). Because of the central location of creative industries and the government in Kigali (in addition to the fact that many of them are state run), Rwandan media is geographically and ideologically focused in a way that is quite different from the U.S.<sup>26</sup>

The result of this particular arrangement is that the centralization of Rwandan media has helped to streamline the dissemination of state endorsed discourse, while also limiting the possibilities for dissent. This has been accomplished through the limitation of available funding and production facilities, which has necessitated the involvement of third party donors. For state run media (such as Rwandan television and radio), the interrelationships that define the production sphere confine themselves, largely, to Kigali and the facilities and personnel of the RBA and its partner agencies and ministries. As a result, these industries are local in character, necessitated in some sense by their ideological proximity to the state. Non-state run television (such as TV 10, Clouds TV Rwanda, LEMIGO TV, Family TV, YEGO TV, and OMEGA TV) also remains in close proximity to the capital, with all seven stations broadcasting and producing

most, if not all, of their content from Kigali. The production, labor, and broadcasting of non-state run radio does still exhibit a centripetal dispersal pattern, with the dominant station continuing to be, Kigali produced, Radiyo Rwanda.

In looking at the stations as they appear regionally, 55.17% of broadcast frequencies (32 of the 58 frequencies) across the country are produced and broadcast in Kigali (such as Choice FM, City Radio, Contact FM, Flash FM, and Radio 10), or they are alternate frequencies for Radiyo Rwanda. In fact, nearly 30% (17 of 58 frequencies) of broadcast frequencies in Rwanda are alternate broadcasts of state radio.<sup>27</sup> Compared to television, the geographic dispersal of radio is centralized in Kigali, as the majority of central nodes (based on listenership) are in the capital. In fact, the four most listened to stations at a national level<sup>28</sup> are all in the capital. Similarly, the top 11 most read print publications in Rwanda are all edited and published in and Kigali.

The film industry, on the other hand, is superficially much more diffuse than the other media industries we have discussed in terms of their production. The building of the RCC and Kwetu Film Institute in Kigali mirrors other media industries, but the numerous production entities involved in, particularly “first wave,” Rwandan cinema are far more geographically dispersed. For instance, while the RCC has historically done quite a bit of production work in-house, they have partnered with a number of regional and international production partners (including Link Media Productions, BBC, ABC, NBC, France 2 and 3, NPR, NHK, CNN, and Vivid Features, among others). As the depth of many of these creative relationships is difficult to ascertain (are they supplying equipment or labor, or do they have much more of a hand in shaping film projects?), the only clear indicator of the industry, itself, operating in a centrifugal fashion is the creation of the Kwetu Foundation Centre (KFC) in Hollywood, CA. It appears,

though, that rather than serving as a production node, KFC instead appears to be a marketing and funding entity (though its presence in Los Angeles is very interesting).

Though the geographic centrality of these media production industries is an important point, it is necessary to note that the centers of media distribution, regulation, and editing may not always be the same as the sites of media content creation. For instance, online journalists, now more than ever, are able to more readily communicate with their editors and home publications from across great distances. Additionally, the tenuous relationships between domestic media industries and international funding, production, and distribution entities have only increased since the 1994 genocide, resulting in media producers in the diaspora.<sup>29</sup> Regardless of the diffusion and dispersal of production labor within each of the creative industries outlined here, all of the editorial and administrative labor (subject to direct and latent regulatory pressures) remain in close proximity to the state. Even as these relationships have multiplied, all media industries have kept Kigali as the geographic center for production.

Consumption, on the other hand, has its own, much more varied, geography. As previously stated, radio operated as a ubiquitous news source within Rwanda, but its reach, beyond the border countries of Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, is somewhat limited. Within the country, the consumption of radio takes place in a wide variety of contexts, including in public and private spaces, as well as urban and rural ones. As a result, though radio consumption of Radiyo Rwanda via the airwaves is limited to central Africa, audience data seems to suggest that audiences return to radio throughout the day<sup>30</sup> (implying a focused and deep engagement with radio that is unlike most other media). The advent of streaming Internet radio has also increased the reach of Radiyo Rwanda into the sizeable Rwandan diaspora. While the diaspora is both global and sizeable, it is difficult to gauge the



extent to which its members consume Rwandan media (particularly considering the current availability of Kinyarwanda language media such as online newspapers and streaming radio and television). For the purposes of this media geography, then, we must view them as an “ancillary audience,” rather than a primary one.

While the broadcasting and streaming range of Rwandan television and radio are quite similar, the former remains much more regional in its consumption. This is particularly apparent in the split of television adoption between the different provinces, with Kigali, along with the southern and western provinces of the country representing almost all of the television owning households.<sup>31</sup> This split is likely driven by the fact that a great deal of the urban population of Rwanda lives in these particular provinces, but also that this high population density appears alongside relative affluence within the region (with Kigali and the surrounding area having the wealthiest neighborhoods).<sup>32</sup> While the advent of online streaming has made the dispersal of television content more complex (in addition to the transfer of some television shows to DVD for modest distribution), it remains, very much, a domestic medium with limited broadcast range beyond its border countries and the diaspora. The geography of television consumption is quite similar to that of radio and the space to which it is broadcast, though it is quite different in terms of the ubiquity of said consumption.

Meanwhile, newspapers fit somewhere in between radio and television in terms of their consumption. Since literacy has increased, so has the variety of different papers (both online and offline) offering a wealth of reader options. Still, the current literacy rate of 71.1%<sup>33</sup> is a fair bit lower than national fluency in Kinyarwanda, meaning that direct consumption of Rwandan print media does not quite reach the level of radio, even though they share similar distribution/broadcast ranges. Additionally, the cost and complexity of nationwide distribution

for print media has forced the industry to face a similar set of problems in continuing to publish in print as has been seen with U.S. publishers over the last several years. As distribution methods have become more diversified (such as with online publishing now available on ICT devices), consumptive practice has been somewhat altered as well. Online news, in particular, has led to the creation of a large number of news sites, many of which produce content from outside of the country, potentially due to concerns over state sanctions or violence. For the purposes of Rwanda's media geography, it is problematic to characterize these publications as being a major component of Rwanda's media sphere because it is difficult to ascertain what kind of audience they actually have. Given the government's history of blocking critical publications (such as *Umuvugizi* in 2010,<sup>34</sup> even as the editor was publishing in exile), as well as the uncertainty of the private ideological alignment of Rwandan citizens, there is no real way to know what information is actually reaching Rwandans.

What is safe to assume is that readership numbers are much less for exiled publications. As an example, *Umuvugizi* is the 492<sup>nd</sup> most viewed site in Rwanda and gets approximately twenty-five thousand visits per day,<sup>35</sup> compared to *The New Times* and *Kigali Today* which both place in the top fifty<sup>36</sup> (with two hundred thousand<sup>37</sup> and one hundred thousands<sup>38</sup> views). Additionally, visitors on average spend quite a bit more time (4.72 minutes per visit for *The New Times*,<sup>39</sup> and 8.83 minutes for *Kigali Today*<sup>40</sup>) on the two domestic sites on average, with more average page views (2.55 and 2.98 page views) than *Umuvugizi* (2.7 minutes per visit and 1.87 page views<sup>41</sup>). More to the point, Rwandan readership is much higher for domestic papers, as *Umuvugizi* only gets 29.08% of its views from within the country,<sup>42</sup> compared to 41.6% for *The New Times*<sup>43</sup> and 68.79% for *Kigali Today*.<sup>44</sup> As a result, not only are more readers visiting these larger domestic sites, they are also reading more articles, spending more average time on these

sites, and a greater percentage of their readership come from within the country.

In comparison to other Rwandan media, the film industry is somewhat unique in that, while it is localized, it is still working towards developing a sustainable audience. In terms of consumption, film availability remains limited. The Rwanda Cinema Centre (RCC) completed its own theater, and their traveling film festival, referred to as “Hillywood,” has limited its scope to visiting a select number of cities, towns, and villages each year. More recently, a Century Cinema (no apparent relation to the U.S. theater chain) theater opened in the Kigali City Tower, which shows first run Hollywood films,<sup>45</sup> and there have been a number of more informal screenings in Cafés, Restaurants, and at the Goethe-Institut and Korean Embassy. For the most part, the film industry is still attempting, as its founder Eric Kabera puts it, to account for a “lack of paying customers.”<sup>46</sup> Internationally, the films of the RCC filmmakers have gotten quite a bit of attention, showing at several major festivals (including the Tribeca Film Festival), and some filmmakers are even attending film school in the United States. Other national film organizations have allied themselves with the RCC and the Kwetu Film Institute, both in terms of funding and other forms of general support. In this way, the film industry is localized to a small level, but also multinational.

Composing a geography of film consumption is somewhat different from any of the other media industries for two key reasons: reach and direction. For one, the secondary nodes of consumption (such as “Hillywood” and international film festivals) expand the reach of the film industry beyond the cities (unlike television). Additionally, their global reach, though not directed toward the diaspora in particular, stretches well beyond print news. In fact, while the film industry does produce some movies directed more toward domestic audiences, a great number of the films that have received international distribution and exhibition seem focused on

international audiences. Compared to online news and streamed radio/television, whose content remains aimed at domestic consumers, the film industry is, at the very least, producing content with the international consumer in mind. That is not to say that the intent of “first wave” films was to cater solely to international audiences, rather that we should read these informational films about the genocide as productions conscious of other potential markets (as evidenced by the need in these films to explain histories and contexts that would be apparent to Rwandan viewers). Geographically, we should view the Rwandan film industry as “split” between domestic and international spheres of consumption.

The final consumptive sphere, the Internet, is somewhat more enigmatic. Though access remains limited, particularly between the urban and agricultural regions, the Internet has become an important tool for diversifying and expanding access to the other spheres of consumption. For example, film, television shows, and radio programs, in limited numbers, are available online to international audiences as well as the Rwandan diaspora, particularly through YouTube. Additionally, a large amount of original web-based content has been produced, particularly in the form of regional and international web based news services and social media sites. President Paul Kagame is even active on Twitter<sup>47</sup> and has appeared as part of YouTube's web series “Worldview.”<sup>48</sup> The reality, though, is that this sort of tech-centric posturing does not speak to the continued limitations of Internet access in Rwanda.

As this project has suggested, an ideological geography of Rwandan media is somewhat less complex than those of either production or consumption. In fact, this point is really the crux of this study. While there are some examples of resistance to state sponsored discourse, such as *Umuvugizi*, they are few and far between. For the most part, even deregulated industries continue to have a close affinity with the ideological posture of the state. For print journalists,

though the fear of direct content regulation from the MHC or the government has been somewhat tempered by Law no.02/2013 and Law no.03/2013, the free speech limitations on critiquing the government or discussing genocide outside of particular acceptable terms (such as “the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi”) have homogenized the ideological message of Rwandan media. Those critical of the government or its ideology receive punishment through suspension, arrest, or exile.

The hope has been that the “wild west” of the Internet in Rwanda might necessitate some degree of ideological change, but up to this point there is very little evidence of any such shift. Still, the Internet does represent an important change: it could end up being the next paradigm shift in Rwandan media consumption. Just as radio supplanted newspapers and the pulpit as central modes of mass communication, increasing the depth and reach of media message systems, the internet could offer an even greater level of simultaneity while expanding the reach of media into the transnational sphere, depending on the growth of Rwanda's communications infrastructure. Paired with the Rwandan government endorsed mantra of “forgive, but don't forget,” this democratization seems poised to help alleviate continued ethnic tensions. Unfortunately, this sort of utopian notion remains far off at this point, as Couldry points out “pressures to *claim* that society 'comes together' increase, especially, perhaps, as their basic plausibility decreases.”<sup>49</sup> This construction of Rwandan nationalism, centered on a process of cultural homogenization (even as ethnic tensions persist), is something worth exploring a bit further. As argued by Ernest Gellner (and problematized by Benedict Anderson), “Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist.”<sup>50</sup> Anderson takes issue with the idea of the assumption of the existence of a “true” community,<sup>51</sup> but the fundamental construction of the “imagined community” remains important to any

understanding of nation-creation at play in the process of the government's active manufacturing of Rwanda's utopian socio-cultural future.

Technology, particularly the internet and cell phone, has come to take on an important role in this procedure as the historical “failure” of radio to unify the country's geographically dispersed populace (from the urban centers to the countryside) necessitates a new approach. Where the radio compressed space and offered a medium through which rudimentary interactivity was possible, the Internet offers the utopian possibility of a continuous and immediate national dialogue. In such a way, one could transcend Anderson's imagined community, where “members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion”<sup>52</sup> entering into an interpersonal communicational Mecca through the interactive immediacy of cyberspace. The realities of the democratizing power of the internet are somewhat less ideal than this (to say the least), but major questions about the country's technological future remain: will Rwanda emerge (as Ravi Sundaram suggests India did in 1995) as a national imaginary built upon the computer as “the iconic space around which almost all representation, both state and commercial [cohere]”?<sup>53</sup> Or will limited adoption of technology stifle the development of this relationship between user, medium, and community?

A great deal of this rests on how Rwanda approaches the deregulation of media in both the present and immediate future. Though some have been optimistic about the changes over the last decade (even arguing that the push towards an independent press is one that belongs “to the libertarian world; a world of the free guided by rational thought through the process of reasoning and arbitrated, in the professional realm, by collective ethical practices”<sup>54</sup>) what they will mean to the Rwandan mediascape seems less clear. Though the intent behind deregulation seems to be

the alleviation of pressure on the part of international donors, it does appear to be the first salvo in what could eventually be a call for constitutional changes that could alter the relationship between the state and various media industries. Persisting tensions regarding the different spheres of regulation seems to indicate that the new role of regulatory agencies remains enigmatic to media practitioners and regulators alike, with constitutional law serving as the primary arbiter of acceptability. It seems likely that the coming months and years will clarify things, even as many jockey for positions of power within this newly defined media sphere. It seems most likely that the regulatory space that had once been so contested domestically and internationally will now be supplanted by a similarly contested deregulatory environment. The temporary calm within the international community regarding potential overreach on the part of the Rwandan government in how it handles free speech will likely not be long lived.

To this point, it would be unwise to discount the importance of international funding to the future developments of Rwandan media regulation. Just as the RCC remains tethered to the international marketplace, the Rwandan government is still very much reliant on political and financial support from the international community. As a result, issues of censorship and media freedom within Rwanda take on a uniquely international characteristic. Just as political pressures, to some extent, initiated the most recent string of regulatory changes, future tensions with Rwanda's development partners could repeal these modifications. From a historical perspective it is clear that these regulatory changes represent a drastic shift from even ten years ago, and there is some room to be optimistic about the diversification of media taking place. Still, practices of media “dumping” continue to threaten the stability of Rwanda's emerging cultural industries and are one component in the geographic decentralization of Rwandan film consumption and funding initiatives. The geographical organization of Rwanda's spheres of

consumption and production express the transnational nature of these industries, even as the film struggles to find paying customers at home. In understanding the nature of these drastic transitions in media practice, perspective remains central to understanding the dynamic contemporary Rwandan media environment. Though President Kagame, among others, calls for (limited) freedom of the press, the future is likely to remain divided between those who view the media as free, and those who only see oppression (with the truth lying somewhere between the two).

## **Coda**

The goal of this dissertation has been to identify the key characteristics of Rwandan nationalism as expressed in contemporary media, and to sort out the media processes at play in the creation and maintenance of state endorsed discourse. To this end, the rhetorical position of this document is loosely based on George Santayana's proposition that "those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it,"<sup>55</sup> or more directly that to understand our present it is necessary that we know our past. The past for Rwanda does not begin with the genocide; though it seems that many writing, speaking, and filming the country seem often to forget it. In looking at the history of Rwanda, the 1994 genocide is not merely a "result" (of unequal taxation, of economics, the calcification of ethnic identity, etc.); we should see it as an origination point for the Rwanda that exists now.

Radio in Rwanda, since its inception, has been a key political tool for both revolution and the ruling elite. From the MSM/PARMEHUTU to the RPF/Kagame administration, the reach of radio has made it important for connecting people across a sizeable geographic area, reinforcing what it meant to be a Rwandan. In comparison to newspapers and the pulpit, the two largest competitors to its reign, radio provided an immediacy unmatched by other media, even with the



introduction of television. More than its ubiquity, radio came to serve a deeper cultural and social function. Though I reject the literal notion that radio has some undeniable “power” of people creating “radio has said” minded citizens; believing everything announced on radio as biblical truth”<sup>56</sup> (as echoed by André Sibomana), the data collected here does indicate that radio has played a fundamental role in shaping Rwandan nationalism.

This “role” connects to the ritualized nature of media consumption that, while certainly not unique to Rwanda, gives radio its importance. If Rwandans do not listen regularly and repeatedly (multiple times per day), the ideological relevance of radio would be less (as is the case in any variegated media environment). While the message in Rwandan radio has changed since before 1994, its function and role has remained the same. While the sort of “radio has said” listeners suggested above do not necessarily exist, radio is the central means of receiving state endorsed discourse in Rwanda. Just as RTLM called for the killing of hundreds of thousands, contemporary radio asks that citizens to “forgive but don’t forget,” a discursive shift outlined and problematized in the RTLM/Radiyo Rwanda case study. As with any message system, though, there is likely some dissonance, even resistance, to this discourse. This occurs because no matter the message, the internalization and expression of discourse behind closed doors is another thing entirely.

Print and online media, though secondary to radio, remain important in disseminating ideology in Rwanda, if only because of their traditional role in relation to the Catholic Church and pre-revolution state. The resiliency of print media has been incredible, particularly given the country’s literacy rates in the period between 1950 and 1994, but contemporary journalists (online or otherwise) face a particularly inhospitable political environment to be reporting in. Even as deregulation has received some approval in the international community, Rwanda’s free

speech laws have silenced the importance of critical voice to the fourth estate. It seems reasonable to assume that there are some publications that will report fairly, even in the face of governmental pressure, but this seems to be the largest barrier to complete Rwandan democracy. Just as with radio, the same unificatory mantras persist in print media. But there exists a potential for online media to challenge this, particularly in the area of social networks. The case study suggests that, as currently constituted, Rwandan journalism appears split between domestically based publications that (to varying degrees) limit critique to avoid governmental interference, and exilic publications that are hypercritical to the point that their credibility is impaired.

Though they technically enjoy a fair bit more regulatory leeway, Rwandan Film and Television seems to follow a similar model of self-censorship. Though their current domestic reach remains limited, both of these industries are important ambassadors of state sponsored discourse outside of Rwanda. The presence of English (and French) language programming during extended prime time on Rwanda's state run television station is an important indicator of both the desire to promote second language speaking, and the perceived importance of controlling the message of news viewed by non-Rwandans within the country. Just as Radio Muhabura functioned in the information wars of the early 1990s for the RPF, state run television functions for the purpose of "relaying the action of the government."<sup>57</sup> It is much more difficult to ascertain the specifics of the relationship between the state and the Rwandan film industry. Its partial reliance on international donors has led to an aesthetic of "critical stability" that is more open to critique, but that still gravitates toward a more "acceptable" characterization of national stability.

This research proposes a number of conclusions. Regardless of governmental posturing,

Rwandan free speech remains very much limited. A key goal of this project was to ascertain the actual condition of production in contemporary Rwandan media, and to portray them as anything but ideologically contained is foolish. To not take into consideration the political concerns that have at least partially necessitated this posture on the part of the Rwandan state is equally foolish. It is not this author's objective to defend or attack these conditions; rather it is to ascertain how they impact cultural production. There is very little doubt, as evidenced by the wide range of data and research provided in this dissertation, that they do leave their mark.

This project represents an unwritten and ignored history of Rwandan media. More than this, though, it is a call for more complex research into the relationships between media industries. Though this discussion has been set up as a series of binaries (RTLM/Radiyo Rwanda, print/online journalism, film/television industries), we should be viewing these industries at the macro level not as monolithic entities, but in relation to one another. Without the oral traditions of pre-colonial court society, the role of religion and Church organs such as *Kinyamateka* may have developed quite differently. Though this is not the only historical collision that has impacted Rwandan media, it has to varying degree impacted all media industries in Rwanda. These intermedia relationships hardly end there, but this means that we should view media history as a series of collisions that all feed into one another (just as experimental films in the U.S. inspired advertisers, that consequently impacted another generation of experimental filmmakers, but also journalists, poets, historians, etc.). As a result, it is important to be aware of larger conditions that govern media production, but also take into account how different media impact one another.

The global memory of Rwanda remains dominated by genocide, but this is not where it should end. The importance of this project is that it seeks to expand upon previous work

researching Rwandan history and media. Though there is quite a bit of original research, the more fundamental objective was to connect the dots placed by the numerous scholars that have trod this ground before. There is a fair amount of material published on the genocide and its relationship to media, but the dearth of research on contemporary Rwandan media is suggestive of a lack of interest in post-genocide Rwanda (with the exception of reconciliation scholars) and a particular blind spot in the area of media studies. This research seeks to be the first salvo in a push for more in depth, and preferably intermedia, research on the state of Rwandan cultural production.

Due to the ambition inherent in any attempt to detail the relationship between a number of media industries, there still remain several key blind spots. For one, a number of media industries in Rwanda are not discussed here at all, including contemporary literature, the persistence of traditional oral storytelling, folk art, cultural production in the Rwandan diaspora, the burgeoning domestic music industry, as well as the wide range of digital media production. The latter includes the ever-increasing number of YouTube projects, the importance of Facebook (which currently is the most visited site in Rwanda<sup>58</sup>), Twitter, and even pornography (Xvideos.com is the 36<sup>th</sup> most visited site in Rwanda<sup>59</sup>). Perhaps the largest and most glaring omission in this study is Kinyarwanda language media across all industries. At a methodological level, there is also ample opportunity for further research into media producers and other industry members.

This project has been successful, though, in bringing to light the central importance of discourse and nationalism in Rwandan media. The utilization of unificatory mantra (“Forgive, but don’t forget” and “We are all Rwandans”) across all media is important evidence of the particular discursive shift that characterizes new Rwandan nationalism. The repetition of these

particular phrases is also indicative of the central role that the trauma of genocide has had in the formation of the new Rwandan state. In some sense, this is hardly a surprise as the current government has its roots in the RPF, and was made necessary due to the events of 1994. But there seems to be something more at play in the repetition of these phrases. Unification, and unificatory discourse, is linked to the shared experience of genocide and the goal of avoiding future violence. That Rwandans have something that they must universally “forgive” and “not forget” has become entangled in the project of national identity creation, which necessitates the transcendence of Rwandan identity over that of ethnic identity.

The problem is that the discursive project of remembrance in Rwanda has, both socially and constitutionally, required a one sided way of talking about the nation’s past. “The 1994 genocide against the Tutsi” is more than a simple framework for describing and remembering the past; it is a rhetorical device that creates a paradox within the process of identity creation. The notions of “we are all Rwandans” and “genocide against the Tutsi” are incompatible insofar as they create stratification and a hierarchy of identity within Rwandan society. It is not as though the reinforcement of ethnic identity over the course of several decades has disappeared overnight. The long-term impact of this paradox is uncertain, but it will rest on the reconciliation of personal and national memory over the next several years. If “we are all Rwandans,” then some of us are considered victims while others are perpetrators (though in reality such definitions are not so clearly defined along ethnic lines as such mantras would suggest).

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>9</sup> "Country Comparison: Area," *CIA World Fact Book* (Accessed 13 April 2015).

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<sup>12</sup> "Internet Users by Country 2014," *InternetLiveStats.com*.

<sup>13</sup> "Freedom on the Net 2013: Rwanda," *FreedomHouse.org* (Accessed 16 April 2015).

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<sup>14</sup> Ravi Sundaram, "Beyond the Nationalist..." *Electronic Media and Technoculture*, p.281.

<sup>15</sup> "Freedom on the Net 2013: Rwanda," *FreedomHouse.org*.

<sup>16</sup> Anton Harber, "Legacy of Rwanda genocide," *Committee to Protect Journalists*.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> "ICT Literacy Campaign Gets Under Way," *Rwanda Focus* (Web. 21 January 2013, Accessed 16 April 2015). <<http://allafrica.com/stories/201301220076.html>>

<sup>19</sup> "Rwanda Mobile Penetration Tops 57%," *Biztech Africa* (Web. 1 May 2013, Accessed 15 April 2015).

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<sup>23</sup> Jean Mitari, "Rwanda: Censorship Reaches a Scary Level," *Jambo News* (Web. 17 August 2012, Accessed 13 April 2015). <<http://www.jambonews.net/en/news/20120817-rwanda-censorship-reaches-a-scary-level/>>

<sup>24</sup> To explore the actual impact of the internet and cell phones on the reinforcement or subversion of state endorsed discourse would require a great deal of statistical and ethnographic data that is simply not available at this point, but certainly worthy of further discussion. While *Freedom House* (2015) offers a great deal of compiled data (much of which directed this study to other sources), much of what is available is either limited in scope to the economic impact of ICTs or it heavily utilizes governmental data that should be viewed with a critical eye.

<sup>25</sup> Michael Curtin, "Thinking Globally," *Media Industries*, p.115.

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<sup>26</sup> These differences are not a critique, rather this is just a simple comparison meant to illuminate how these geographies could potentially differ. For instance, media geographies representing the U.S. are likely quite different from those in Canada or Cuba, not necessarily due to their different or similar sizes, but rather due to a number of other factors (including political, social, and industrial differences).

<sup>27</sup> The remaining stations are a combination of international news stations, such as Deutsche Welle (1 station), BBC World Service Africa (3 stations), RFI Afrique (1 station), and Voice of Africa (2 stations), alongside a number regional and community stations. For the latter, a more in depth study of content and audience reach would be needed to address their potential relevance, but based on the Rwandan Audience Analysis 2009, it appears that they have a limited audience size.

<sup>28</sup> *Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009*, pp.9.

<sup>29</sup> This particular element of Rwandan media production is worth a great deal of attention given the rather sizeable number of Rwandans displaced during the period between 1950 and 2000. Given the particular attention given in this project to domestic production, and limited consumption of media produced outside of the country based on the 2009 Audience Survey, creative production in the diaspora does not have as much of a role to play in Rwanda's media space (thus it was not included in this particular project). Still, further research into the importance of media production in the Rwandan diaspora for constructing and maintaining post-genocidal ethnic identity is most definitely worthwhile.

<sup>30</sup> *Rwanda Audience Analysis 2009*, p.15.

<sup>31</sup> Emmanuel Gatera, "ICT Household Statistics: The Case of Rwanda," *ECA-ITU-UNCTAD Regional Workshop on Information Society Measurements in Africa* (Web. March 2007, Accessed 23 April 2015), p.20. <[https://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/events/ethiopia07/material/10\\_Rwanda%20ICT%20Household%20Statistics%20%20-%20Emmanuel%20Gatera%20-%20EN.pdf](https://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/events/ethiopia07/material/10_Rwanda%20ICT%20Household%20Statistics%20%20-%20Emmanuel%20Gatera%20-%20EN.pdf)>

<sup>32</sup> "The Evolution of Poverty in Rwanda from 2000 to 2011," *National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda* (February 2012), p.17.

<sup>33</sup> "Field Listing: Literacy," *CIA World Fact Book*.

<sup>34</sup> "Persecution of Independent Newspapers Extended to Online Versions," *Reporters Without Borders* (Web. 11 June 2010, Accessed 24 April 2015). <<http://en.rsf.org/rwanda-persecution-of-independent-11-06-2010,37718.html>>

<sup>35</sup> "Traffic Overview: Umuvugizi," *SimilarWeb* (Accessed 24 April 2015).

<<http://www.similarweb.com/website/umuvugizi.com>>

<sup>36</sup> "Website Ranking: Rwanda," *SimilarWeb* (Accessed 24 April 2015).

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<sup>37</sup> "Traffic Overview: Newtimes.co.rw," *SimilarWeb* (Accessed 24 April 2015).

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<sup>38</sup> "Traffic Overview: Kigalitoday.com," *SimilarWeb* (Accessed 24 April 2015).

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<sup>39</sup> "Traffic Overview: Newtimes.co.rw," *SimilarWeb*.

<sup>40</sup> "Traffic Overview: Kigalitoday.com," *SimilarWeb*.

<sup>41</sup> "Traffic Overview: Umuvugizi," *SimilarWeb*.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>43</sup> "Traffic Overview: Newtimes.co.rw," *SimilarWeb*.

<sup>44</sup> "Traffic Overview: Kigalitoday.com," *SimilarWeb*.

<sup>45</sup> "Home," *Centurycinemas.rw* (Accessed 24 April 2015). <<http://www.centurycinemas.rw/>>

<sup>46</sup> Piotr A. Cieplak, "Hollywood 2009: The 5<sup>th</sup> Rwanda Film Festival," *Senses of Cinema*, Web. 16 November 2011. <<http://www.sensesofcinema.com/2009/52/hollywood-2009-the-5th-rwanda-film-festival/>>

<sup>47</sup> "Paul Kagame," *Twitter*, Web. 25 November 2011, Accessed 4 June 2014.

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<sup>48</sup> Khaya Dlanga, "YouTube Worldview Interview – President Paul Kagame, Rwanda," *Youtube*, Web. 10

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May, 2011, Accessed 20 November, 2011. <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGbbK05nbJM>>

<sup>49</sup> Nick Couldry, *Media Rituals*, p.35.

<sup>50</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Thought and Change*, p.169.

<sup>51</sup> David McCrone, *The Sociology of Nationalism: Tomorrow's Ancestors* (London: Routledge, 1998), pp.83-84.

<sup>52</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p.6.

<sup>53</sup> Ravi Sundaram, "Beyond the Nationalist..." *Electronic Media and Technoculture*, p.276.

<sup>54</sup> "Rwanda's Shifting Media Policy," *The Chronicles*.

<sup>55</sup> George Santayana, *The Life of Reason, vol. 1: Reason in Common Sense* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1980) p. 284.

<sup>56</sup> "Rwanda's Shifting Media Policy," *The Chronicles*.

<sup>57</sup> Francesco Fontemaggi, "Au Rwanda," *Liberation*.

<sup>58</sup> "Website Ranking: Rwanda," *SimilarWeb*.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*



## TABLES

Table 1: U.S. News Coverage Monthly Frequency and Average Duration (4/6/94-11/23/94)

Date Range	# of Occurrences	Avg. Duration (sec)
April	44	62.7
May	43	98.4
June	27	71.5
July	64	215
August	38	98.7
September	2	55
October	1	20
November	6	90

Table 2: RTLM Radio Term Usage by Occurrence

Term	Overall Ranking	# of Occurrences	Overall Percentage
Hutu	67	246	0.26%
Tutsi	74	221	0.23%
Twa	1434	5	0.01%

Table 3: RTLM Identificatory Terminology

Term	# of Occurrences	Overall Term Percentage
Inkotanyi/s	592	0.6156%
Rwanda/ese/n/ns/s	523	0.5428%
RPF/s	316	0.3286%
Hutu/s	246	0.2558%
RTLM/s	109	0.1133%
UN/AMIR/AR	95	0.0988%
White/men/s	52	0.0541%
Ethnic/alilty/ity	48	0.0499%
MRND/s	27	0.0281%
Muhabura	25	0.026%
CDR/s	24	0.0239%
MDR/s	21	0.0218%
OAU/s	14	0.0146%

PSD	8	0.0083%
PARMEHUTU	7	0.0073%
Twa/s	5	0.0052%
Pro-RPF	3	0.0031%
RAF	2	0.0021%
Bahutu	1	0.001%
Interethnic	1	0.001%

Table 4: RTLM Derogatory Terminology Usage

Term	Quantity	Overall Percentage
Inkotanyi/s	592	0.6156%
Inyenzi/Intutsi/s	276	0.2870%
Wicked/ness	42	0.0437%
Trick/s/ery	22	0.0229%
Kagome	13	0.0135%
Sorcerers/ry	7	0.0073%
Soothsayer/s	4	0.0042%
Bitches	2	0.0021%
Gutternsipes	2	0.0021%
Hyenas	2	0.0021%
Traitor	2	0.0021%
Of-a-bitch	1	0.001%
Witchcraft	1	0.001%
Wizards	1	0.001%

Table 5: RTLM “Us” vs. “Them” Terminology Usage

Term	Quantity	Overall Percentage
They/ll/re/ve	1987	2.07%
We/d/ll/re/ve	1789	1.86%
Their/m/mselves	1589	1.65%
You/r/rs/rself/relves	1576	1.64%
Us	396	0.41%
Our/s/selves	301	0.31%

Other/s	278	0.29%
Let/s	217	0.23%
Me	150	0.16%
My/self	114	0.12%
TOTAL	8397	8.73%

Table 6: RTLM “Us” vs. “Them” Terminology Summary

Term	Quantity	Category Percentage
“Them” - they/ll/re/ve, their/m/mselves, you/r/rs/rself/rselves, other/s	5430	64.67%
“Us” - we/d/ll/re/ve, us, our/s/selves, let/s, me, my/self	2967	35.33%

Table 7: Radiyo Rwanda Term Usage Summary

Rank	Term	# Occurrences	Percentage of Stories
1	Genocide	21	25.93%
2	Violence	21	25.93%
3	Tutsi	15	18.52%
4	Commemoration	14	17.28%
5	DRC	13	16.05%
6	Conflict	12	14.81%
7	UN	11	13.58%
8	Economy	10	12.35%
9	International Community	7	8.64%
10	Peace	7	8.64%
11	Development	6	7.41%
12	Education	5	6.17%
13	France	5	6.17%
14	Government	5	6.17%
15	Region	5	6.17%

Table 8: Radiyo Rwanda Term Usage Summary 8-27-12 to 1-31-13

Rank	Term	# Occurrences	Percentage
1	Violence	13	28.89%
2	DRC	11	24.44%
3	Conflict	9	20%
4	Economy	7	15.56%
5	Development	6	13.33%
6	France	5	11.11%
7	Genocide	5	11.11%
8	Tutsi	5	11.11%
9	Education	4	8.89%
10	Government	4	8.89%
11	Regional/Local	4	8.89%
12	Extradition	3	6.67%
13	Investment	3	6.67%
14	Modernization	3	6.67%
15	New Media	3	6.67%
16	Peace	3	6.67%
17	UN	2	4.44%

Table 9: Radiyo Rwanda Term Usage Summary 4-11-12 to 5-2-13

Rank	Term	# Occurrences	Percentage
1	Genocide	16	44.44%
2	Commemoration	14	38.89%
3	Tutsi	10	27.78%
4	UN	8	22.22%
5	Violence	8	22.22%
6	International Community	5	13.89%
7	Peace	4	11.11%
8	Conflict	3	8.33%
9	Corruption	3	8.33%
10	Destruction	3	8.33%
11	Economy	3	8.33%

12	Human Interest	3	8.33%
13	Law	3	8.33%
14	War Crimes Tribunal	3	8.33%
15	Weather	3	8.33%

Table 10: Print-Online Publication Overall Story Frequency

Publication	# of Articles	Overall %
The New Times	335	87.7%
The Rwanda Focus	42	10.99%
Umuwugizi	5	1.31%
Total	382	N/A

Table 11: Print-Online Publication Compiled Article Length Average – by publication

Publication	Total Words	Total Articles	Average
The New Times	28050	50	561
The Rwanda Focus	21410	42	509.76
Umuwugizi	837	5	167.4
TOTAL	50297	97	518.53

Table 12: Print-Online Publication Topics Summary

Topic	Total Occurrences
Government/Civic	39
Economy	28
Infrastructure	20
General Interest	3
Sports	3
Trials	3
Health	1
TOTAL	97

Table 13: Print-Online Publication Overall Term Occurrence

Rank	Term	# Occurrences	Percentage
1	Government	243	19.58%
2	Growth/Development	236	19.02%
3	President	198	15.95%
4	Kagame	154	12.41%
5	Nation	147	11.85%
6	International	64	5.16%
7	Right/s	60	4.83%
8	Genocide	60	4.83%
9	Journalist	23	1.85%
10	Minimize/Deny	22	1.77%
11	Tutsi	17	1.37%
12	Inclusive	10	0.81%
13	Terrorism	6	0.48%
14	Refugee	1	0.08%
	TOTAL	1241	N/A

Table 14: Print-Online Publication Key Term Disposition – percentage by publication

	President			Kagame			Government		
Publication	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Neutral
The New Times	7.86%	0%	92.14%	9.17%	0%	90.83%	0%	0.64%	99.36%
The Rwanda Focus	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%
Umuwugizi	0%	66.67%	33.33%	0%	91.67%	8.33%	0%	75%	25%
AVERAGE	5.56%	5.05%	89.39%	6.49%	7.14%	86.36%	0%	1.65%	98.45%

Table 15: Print-Online Publication “President” and “Kagame” Term Occurrence Comparison – by publication

Publication	Total Articles	President	Ratio	Kagame	Ratio	Both	Ratio
The New Times	50	140	2.8	109	2.18	249	4.98
The Rwanda Focus	42	43	1.02381	33	0.78571	76	1.8095
Umuwugizi	5	15	3	12	2.4	27	5.4
TOTAL	97	198	2.04124	154	1.58763	352	3.6289

Table 16: Print-Online Publication President/Kagame Usage Ratio

Publication	President	Kagame	Ratio
The New Times	140	109	1.2844
The Rwanda Focus	43	33	1.30303
Umuwugizi	15	12	1.25
TOTAL	198	154	1.28571

Table 17: Print-Online Publication “President” vs. “Kagame” Per Average Word Count – by publication

Publication	Avg. Words per Article	President	# per Word	Kagame	# per Word	Both	# per Word
The New Times	561	140	0.00499	109	0.00389	249	0.0089
The Rwanda Focus	509.7619	43	0.00201	33	0.00154	76	0.0035
Umuwugizi	167.4	15	0.01792	12	0.01434	27	0.0323
TOTAL	518.5258	198	0.00394	154	0.00306	352	0.007

Table 18: Print-Online Publication “Genocide” vs. “Genocide against the Tutsi” Comparison – by publication

Publication	“Genocide” Occ.	“Genocide Against...” Occ.	% of Phrase Use
The New Times	28	17	28.57%
The Rwanda Focus	32	9	28.13%
Umuwugizi	0	0	0%
TOTAL	60	17	28.33%

Table 19: Print-Online Publication “Genocide” AND “Genocide against the Tutsi” Comparison – by publication

Publication	# w/Genocide Mention	# with Both	% with Both
The New Times	9	5	55.56%
The Rwanda Focus	8	8	100%
Umuwugizi	0	0	0%
TOTAL	17	13	76.47%

Table 20: Rwanda Television Content Duration by Language

Language	Total Duration	Daily Average (hrs.)	% of Total
Kinyarwanda/Swahili	53.93	7.7	31.4%
English	31.17	4.45	18.15%
Unspecified/English	23.27	3.32	13.55%
French	13.57	1.94	7.9%
Unspecified	49.82	7.12	29.01%

Table 21: Rwanda Television Dayparting by Language

Time Slot	Language	Duration (hrs.)	% of Daypart
Morning (6am-10am)	Kinyarwanda/S/R	5.5	19.3%
	English	11	38.6%
	French	2.5	8.77%
	Unspecified	9.5	33.33%
Daytime (10am-5pm)	Kinyarwanda/S/R	15.77	32.18%
	English	27.93	57%
	French	1.32	2.69%
	Unspecified	3.98	8.13%
Early Fringe (5pm-7pm)	Kinyarwanda/S/R	4	28.57%
	English	10	71.43%
	French	0	0%
	Unspecified	0	0%
Prime Time (7pm-11pm)	Kinyarwanda/S/R	18.92	65.8%
	English	7.25	25.22%
	French	2.25	7.83%
	Unspecified	0.33	1.16%
Late (11pm-2am)	Kinyarwanda/S/R	2.75	13.07%
	English	16.18	77.01%
	French	0	0%
	Unspecified	2.08	9.92%
Graveyard (2am-6am)	Kinyarwanda/S/R	7	22.95%
	English	13.5	44.26%
	French	7.5	24.59%



	Unspecified	2.5	8.2%
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Table 22: Rwanda Television Content Analysis - by subject

Subject	Duration (hrs.)	Daily Average (hrs.)	% of Total
Advertisements/Weather	4.25	0.61	2.47%
Economy/Business	1.5	0.21	0.87%
Governmental	3.67	0.52	2.13%
Informational	31.72	4.53	18.47%
News	71.98	10.28	41.91%
Politics	0.25	0.04	0.15%
Religious	7.25	1.04	4.22%
Sports/Entertainment	49.23	7.03	28.67%
Uncertain	1.9	0.27	1.11%

Table 23: Rwanda Television Term Comparison - by occurrence

Term	Occurrence	% of Total	Average per Segment
Genocide	47	43.52%	0.8103
Investment*	19	17.59%	0.3276
Tutsi	15	13.89%	0.2586
Unite/Reconciliation	12	11.11%	0.2069
Survivors	9	8.33%	0.1552
Remembrance	6	5.56%	0.1034

\* - The vast bulk (17 of 19 mentions) of "Investment" references come from a single segment during the 3/12/15 program

Table 24: Rwanda Television Term Frequency Comparison

Term	Occurrence	# of Segments Mentioned	# of Mentions per ID'd Segment
Unite/Reconciliation	12	8	1.5
Remembrance	6	4	1.5
Tutsi	15	8	1.875
Survivors	9	4	2.25
Genocide	47	9	5.222
Investment*	19	3	6.333

\* - The vast bulk (17 of 19 mentions) of "Investment" references come from a single segment during the 3/12/15 program

Table 25: Rwanda Television “Tutsi” vs. “Genocide Against the Tutsi” Comparison

Term	Occurrence
Tutsi	16
Genocide Against the Tutsi	16
% of Use of Phrase in Overall Mention	100%

Table 26: Rwanda Television Term Frequency Comparison

Date	Genocide	Survivors	Unite/Reconciliation	Tutsi	Remembrance	Investment	TOTAL
3/12/15	0	0	1	0	0	17	18
4/10/15	14	8	5	3	3	0	33
4/16/15	5	1	3	3	1	1	14
4/18/15	4	0	1	4	41	0	10
5/7/15	1	0	0	1	1	1	4
5/15/15	23	0	2	5	0	0	30
5/19/15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

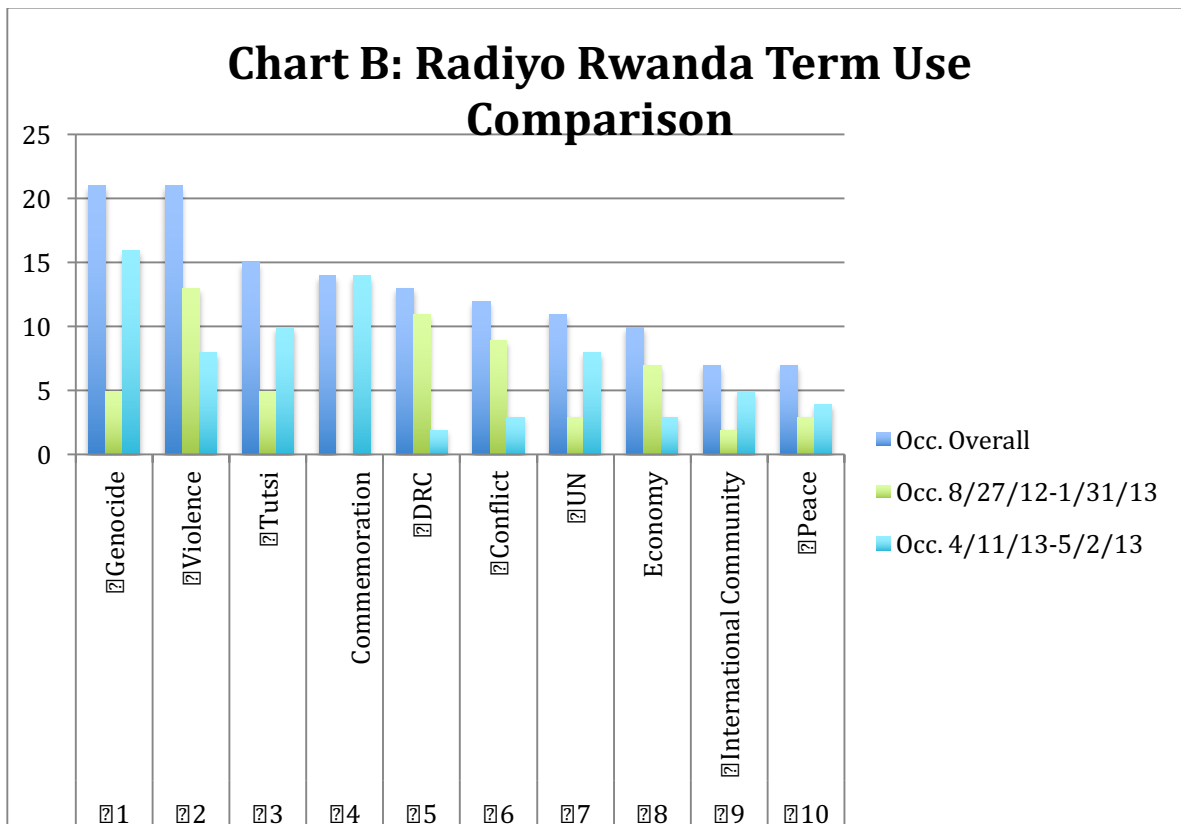
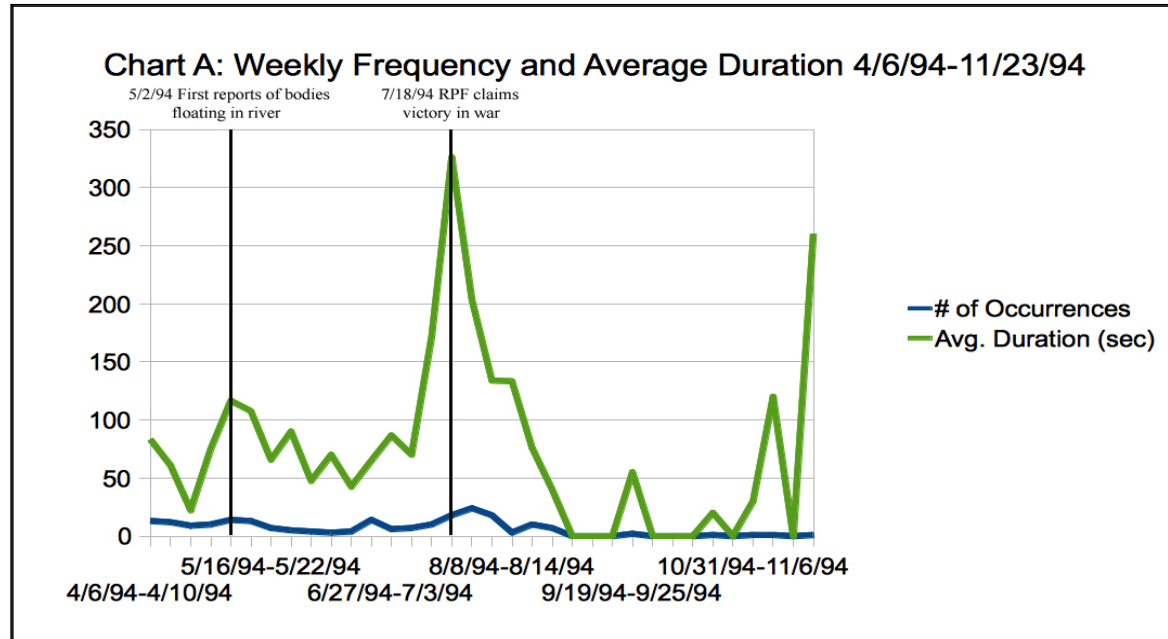
Table 27: Rwanda Television Key Term Segment Duration

Term	Segment Duration (min.)
Unite/Reconciliation	18.92
Genocide	18.75
Tutsi	16.48
Survivors	9.42
Remembrance	8.42
Investment	6.27

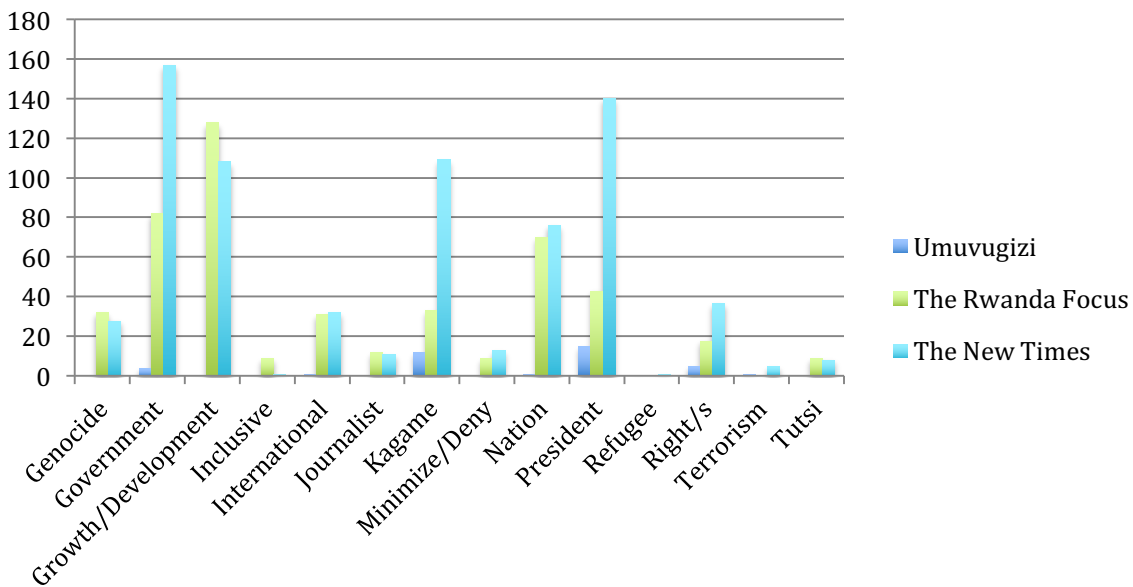
Table 28: Rwanda Television Placement of ‘Genocide’ – by date and overall occurrence

Date	Occurrence
3/12/15	0
4/10/15	14
4/16/15	5
4/18/15	4
5/7/15	1
5/15/15	23
5/19/15	0

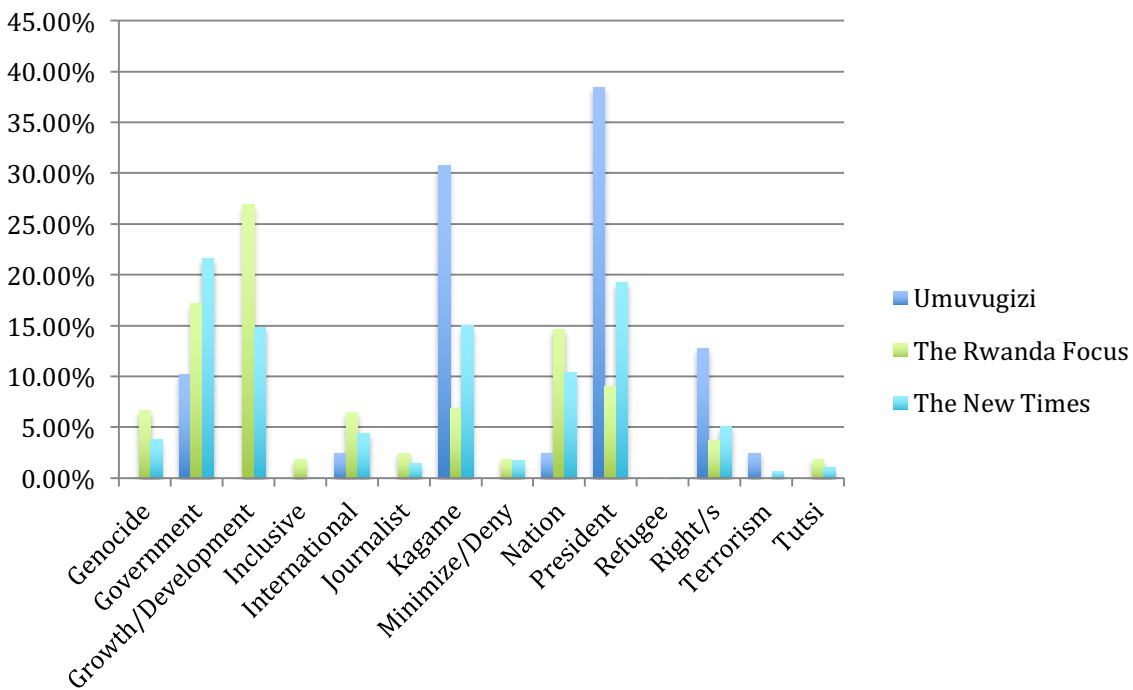
## CHARTS



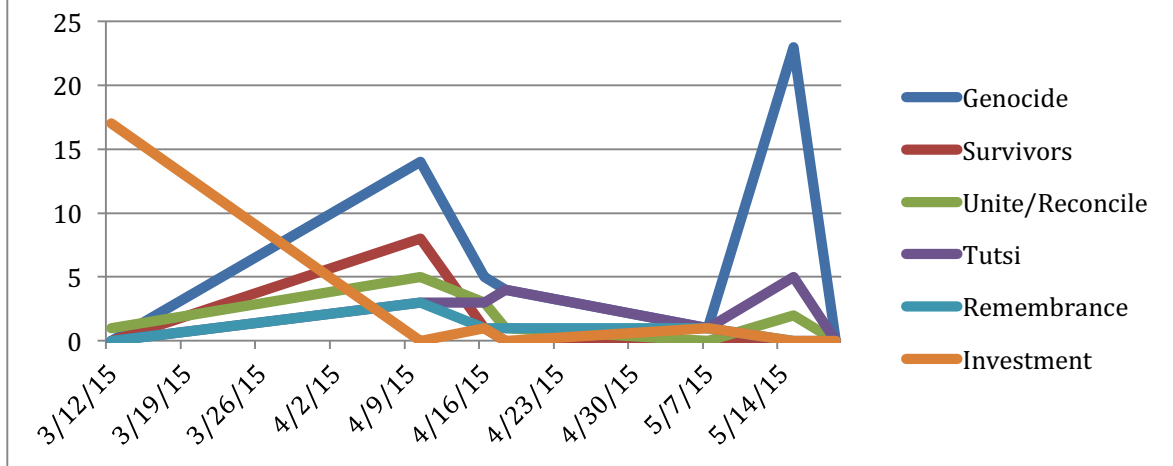
**Chart C: Print-Online Publication Term Occurrence - by Publication**



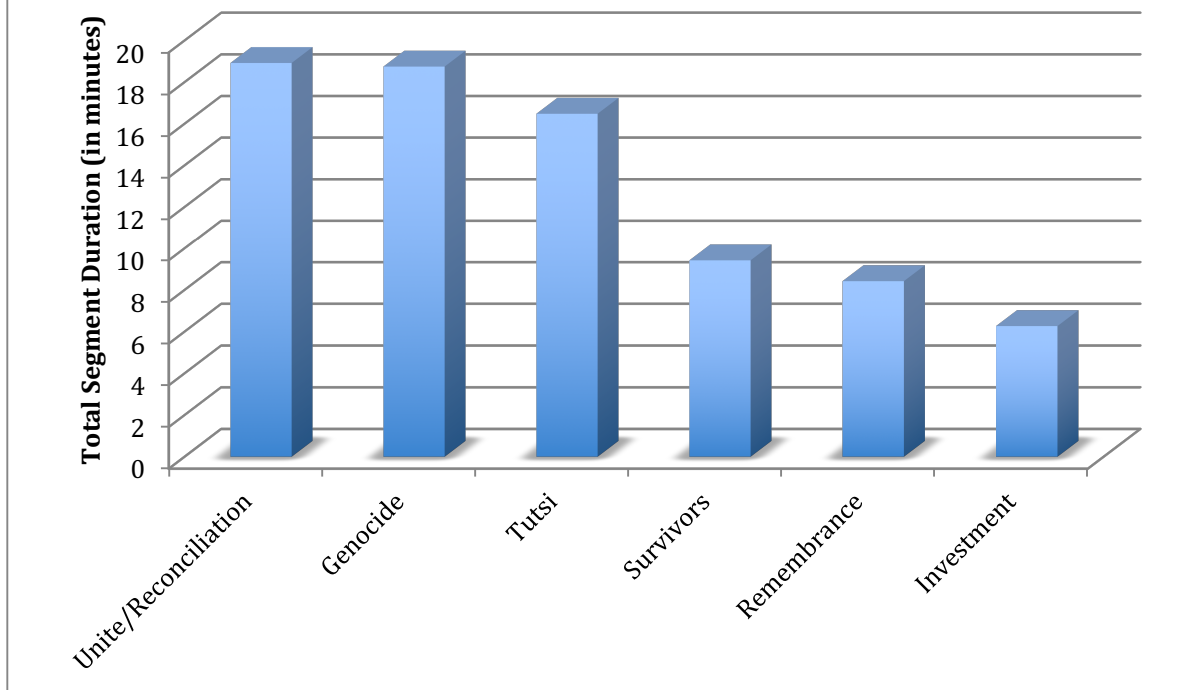
**Chart D: Print-Online Publication Term Frequency – per article**



**Chart E: Rwanda Television Key Term Occurrence - by date**



**Chart F: Rwanda Television Key Term Segment Duration**



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