

Bystanders to the Rwandan Conflict & Genocide: Current state of research

Report Ordered by The Living History, Sweden
By Christopher Kayumba & Dr. Jean-Paul Kimonyo
P.O.Box 3763, Kigali
January 2008

I. Introduction

This paper is a desk-based inventory of the current state of research on the bystanders to the Rwandan genocide; and the researchers that have written on the topic so far-if any. It answers the questions: what kind of research exists on bystander perspective in the Rwanda conflict and who are the researchers that have written on the topic? How do these researchers define the concept of bystander and is it related to concept of victim and perpetrator? Who are the bystanders and do the researchers explain their actions and inactions? Are individuals, organizations, institutions and states discussed as bystanders? Alternatively, is the bystander perspective relevant at all while discussing the Rwanda conflict of the 1990s? Is it possible to initiate new fields of research about the bystander perspective in the Rwanda conflict?

In order to find answers to these varied and crucial questions to the Rwandan horrors of the 1990s, the paper is divided into three parts. Part one locates the country defined as Rwanda, summarizes the conflict history, including the genocide and its causes. Part two defines bystander as a concept and how it relates to the Rwandan conflict/genocide thus far. Part three, finally, discusses research and researchers who may have investigated the Rwandan conflict from the bystander perspective, whether or not individuals, institutions, organizations and states are discussed as bystanders; or whether or not this concept is relevant at all in comprehending the Rwandan conflict and genocide.

2. Part I: Rwanda

2.1 Country Background

Rwanda is a small, landlocked country located in the Great Lakes region of Central Africa. With slightly more than nine million inhabitants living in a territory of 26,000 square kilometers (about 435 people per square kilometer of arable land), overpopulation is a serious problem. Sixty percent of Rwanda's population lives below the national poverty line of one dollar a day.

The Rwandan population is composed of three groups: Hutu, Tutsi and Twa. These groups share the same culture, language, way of worship and live side-by-side throughout the country. Because they are distinguished more by politics than by culture, it is more accurate to refer to them as political identity groups than as ethnic groups (Mamdani, 2001, Kimonyo, Twagiramungu and Kayumba, 2004). Historically, each identity group has had a different socio-economic specialization. In general, Hutu were agriculturists, Tutsi were cattle keepers, and Twa were hunter-gatherers. As the current government is committed to the non-politicization of ethnic differences, no reliable statistics exist on the size of these three groups. But before the 1994 genocide, official statistics reported that Hutu made up 85% of the population, Tutsi 10%, and Twa 5%. Finally, Rwanda has three official languages: Kinyarwanda, French, and English.

2.2 Conflict History

Rwanda became independent in 1962. The dominant political party, the Democratic Republican Movement-Parmehutu (MDR-Parmehutu), was the main indigenous force behind the 1959 Revolution. Led by President Grégoire Kayibanda, it suppressed all opposition, and became a *de facto* State party in 1963. These events led to state engineered massacres of Tutsis and their mass exodus to neighbouring countries.

With the incursion of armed groups of exiled Tutsi from neighboring countries, the MDR-Parmehutu regime committed large-scale massacres against the Tutsi, particularly in December 1963 and January 1964 in the Gikongoro prefecture. More than 10,000 people were killed including women and children. During the same period, collaborationist Tutsi opposition members were executed. To legitimize its hold on power, the MDR-Parmehutu developed a powerful ideological discourse portraying the Tutsi as a foreign minority that had colonized the indigenous Hutu majority centuries earlier. It articulated a view that equated the triumph of the majority Hutu over the ruling Tutsi minority as a victory for democracy. By doing so, MDR-Parmehutu inducted a notion of democracy that equated political majority with ethnic majority. This was the beginning of a pattern in which the state promoted the ideology of “democratic” domination of the ethnic majority over the minority and operationalized this domination through the use of mass violence and civic exclusion.

After having excluded virtually all Tutsi from the political and civic spheres, MDR-Parmehutu also excluded increasing numbers of the Hutu elite based on regional differences. Power and privilege were concentrated in the hands of politicians from the prefecture of Gitarama. By the early 1970s, however, President Kayibanda and his party found themselves politically isolated. They tried to regain the initiative by fomenting renewed violence against the Tutsi. A group of senior officers from northern Rwanda, led by the Minister of Defense, Major-General Juvénal Habyarimana, took advantage of the disorder and organized a successful coup against President Kayibanda in July 1973. General Habyarimana became president.

President Habyarimana promised to remedy the ethnic and regional sectarianism of the former regime. But instead he reinforced the system of allocating employment and education along ethnic and regional lines, and the Tutsi were turned into second-class citizens. The Habyarimana regime also continued the MDR-Parmehutu policy of preventing the return of Tutsi refugees. In this process, Hutu from the central and southern regions were also marginalized. Just as Kayibanda had done, the Habyarimana regime began to exclude important sections of the Hutu elite. Power, privilege, and wealth were conferred on those from the president’s home area in the prefecture of Gisenyi in northwest Rwanda.

At the end of the 1980s, coffee prices declined and Rwanda was struck by severe economic crisis. Poverty was so extreme that Rwanda ranked second-to-last for developing countries.

During this time, the second generation of Tutsi refugees born in exile found themselves in a dire situation. In June 1986, the Rwandan government declared the country “full” and claimed there was no room for the return of refugees. Meanwhile, Rwandan refugees had been forcibly expelled from Uganda in 1982 by the Obote regime. They languished for many months in the no-man’s land between the two countries. Many young Rwandan refugees enlisted in Yoweri Museveni’s guerrilla force in order to defend themselves. Subjected to discrimination by both Rwanda and Uganda, these refugees nourished a dream of returning to a country of their own.

After Museveni took power in Uganda in 1986, Rwandans who served in his army soon realized that they would not be given full participation in Ugandan life as they had been promised. They began to organize politically and militarily as the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) with the goal of returning to Rwanda by force. Together with Rwandan refugees from neighboring countries, they formulated political demands for the end of discriminatory policies, the establishment of the rule of law, and the right of return. Inside Rwanda, dissatisfaction with the regime was running deep both among the marginalized elite and the ordinary people. The moment seemed ripe for change.

On October 1, 1990, the RPF attacked Rwanda from Uganda. Simultaneously, a wave of political liberalization was sweeping across Africa in the aftermath of the end of the Cold War. Western countries that had unconditionally supported the Habyarimana regime—particularly France—began to pressure him to open up the political arena. The month after the invasion, thirty-three Rwandan intellectuals wrote an open letter to the president demanding political pluralism. The Habyarimana regime capitulated and authorized opposition parties.

Over the following years, a three-player game unfolded between the RPF, the internal Maynly Hutu political opposition, and the Habyarimana regime. The RPF and the internal political opposition (including the MDR) allied tactically against the Habyarimana regime and succeeded in pressuring President Habyarimana (and his National Revolutionary Movement for Development-MRND party) to begin peace negotiations and to allow opposition parties participation in government. A cease-fire agreement was reached in March 1991, and negotiations began in Arusha, Tanzania. But even as the MRND negotiated with the RPF and opposition parties on the Arusha Accords, it was also attempting to derail the process through violence. The regime instigated massacres of Tutsi people and political violence against opposition parties, who were branded as traitors to the Hutu cause. The strategy was to convince Rwandan and foreign opinion of the ethnic rather than political nature of the conflict. The regime masterminded several massacres of Tutsi including children and women both in the vicinity of the battlefield and in distant places. Different human rights organisations local and international investigated these killings between 1990 and 1993. The following table synthesises their findings.

TABLE 1: HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES/CRIMES COMMITTED IN RWANDA BETWEEN OCTOBER 1990 AND JANUARY 1994 ACCORING TO DIFFERENT SOURCES

Events	Details of the killings	Dates	Locations	Presumed responsables	Sources
<i>Massacres in Mutara and Byumba regions (North-East) close to the battlefield</i>	300 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children	October 1990	Mutara region	FAR, militias	Amnesty International (A.I.) Report May 1992
	18 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children	7 October 1990	Byumba military camp	FAR	International Commission of Enquiry ¹ (I.C.E), p.57
	150 RPF prisoners of war	October–November 1990	Ryabega Commune (Byumba prefecture)	FAR	I.C.E., p.61
	Between 500 and 1000 Hima civilians, men, women and children (Hima are a group close to Tutsi)	8 October 1990	Mutara region (Byumba prefecture)	FAR	I.C.E., p.62
<i>Massacre of Bagogwe</i>	352 civilians, including 345 Tutsi and 7 Hutu	October 1990	Kibirira Commune (Gisenyi prefecture)	Local authorities, militias	SRS NgororeroII ²

¹ Rapport de la Commission internationale d'enquête sur les violations des droits de l'homme au Rwanda depuis le 1^{er} octobre 1990, mars 1993, p. 57. (Report of the International Commission of Enquiry on Human Rights violation in Rwanda since October 1st 1990, Marsh 1993, p. 57.)

² Rapport du service de renseignement de la sous-préfecture de Ngororero au chef du service central de renseignements Kigali, 4 février 1993. (Report of the Intelligent Service of the Sub-Prefecture of Ngororero (Gisenyi prefecture), February 4, 1993.)

<i>in October 1990 in communes of Gisenyi communes relatively remote from the battlefield</i>	20 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children	October 1990	Satinskyi Commune (Gisenyi prefecture)	Local authorities, militias	SRS Ngororero II
	120 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children	October 1990	Rubona Sector, Kibirira Commune (Gisenyi)	Local authorities and other administrative agents	I.C.E., p. 21
	160 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children	October 1990	Sub-Prefecture of Ngororero (Gisenyi prefecture)	FAR, local authorities, militias	A I Doc. I
<i>Massacre of Bagogwe in January and February 1991 in Gisenyi Prefecture (Near to the battlefield)</i>	14 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children from 4 families	23 January 1991	Commune Kanama (Gisenyi)	Security forces and militias	A I Doc I
	Between 500 and 1000 Bagogwe civilians, men, women and children (Bagogwe are a subgroup of Tutsi)	23 January – February 1991	Kinigi Commune (Ruhengeri prefecture)	FAR, Local authorities, militias and local population	A I, letter to Nsanzimana ³
	2 Tutsi brothers and their uncles	2 February 1991 and 25 January 1991	Communal office of Busogo (Ruhengeri prefecture)	FAR, local authorities	A I , letter to Nsanzimana
	30 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children	23 January - February 1991	Nkuli Commune (Ruhengeri prefecture)	Militias and guards of the Volcanoes Park	A I, letter to Nsanzimana

³ Amnesty International, Letter to Sylvestre Nsanzimana, Minister of Justice, Kigali Republic of Rwanda. N/Réf. : AFR 47/92.05, 28 May 1991.

	14 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children from a same family	4 February 1991	Kanama Commune (secteur Buzizi, cell Kibuye)	FAR	A I, letter to Nsanzimana
	370 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children	January – March 1991	Kibirira Commune (Gisenyi prefecture)	Local authorities, militias, FAR	Journal IMBAGA Newspaper
	372 Bagogwe civilians, men, women and children	January – July 1991	Prefectures of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri	Not identified	Rwandan Ministry of Interior (Document of 6/07/1991)
<i>Compilation of numbers of persons killed in the North-East in January.-June 1991</i>	1481 civilians killed	January - June 1991	Prefectures of Byumba, Kibungo, Ruhengeri and Gisenyi	Not identified	Rwandan Ministry of Interior (Document of 17/07/1991)
<i>Massacre in Bugesera region of March 1992 (Far away from the battlefield)</i>	52 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children	Between 5 and 17 March 1992	Kanzenze Commune	Not identified	Ministry of Interior ⁴
	64 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children	Between 5 and 17 March 1992	Gashora Commune (Kigali rural)	Not identified	Idem
	36 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children	Between 5 and 17 March 1992	Ngenda Commune (Kigali rural)	Not identified	Idem

⁴ Ibarwa ya Faustin Munyazesa, ministre w'ubutegetsi bw'igihugu n'amajyambere ya Komini, igenewe Nyakubahwa Perezida wa Repubulika y'u Rwanda, Kigali, 19 mars 1992 (Letter of Faustin Munyazesa, minister of Interior and Local Development to the President of the Republique of Rwanda, Kigali, 19 Marsh 1992).

	62 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children	March – May 1992	Kanzenze Commune	Militias	Commission of the prefecture of Kigali ⁵
	84 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children	March – May 1992	Gashora Commune	Militias	Idem
	36 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children	March – May 1992	Ngenda Commune	Militias	Idem
	300 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children	Beginning March 1992	Kanzenze Commune (Kigali rural prefecture)	FAR , militias	A I, letter to Nsanzimana
	300 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children	March 1992	Whole Bugesera region	Local authorities, militias, FAR	Rwanda Rushya Newspaper ⁶
<i>Massacre in Kibuye prefecture of July-August 1992</i>	85 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children	July – August 1992	Gishyita and Rwamatamu Communes (Kibuye prefecture)	Local authorities, militias, FAR	ADL ⁷

⁵ Raporo ya Komisiyo ishinzwe gukora raporo ku mvururu zabereye mu Bugesera, Kanazi, 5/5/1992, p. 11. (Report of the Rwandan Commission of Enquiry on the events that took place in Bugesera region, Kanazi, 5/5/1992, p. 11.)

⁶ Rwanda Rushya n° 20, Marsh II, 1992

⁷ Association rwandaise de défense des droits de la personne et des libertés publiques, Rapport sur les droits de l'homme au Rwanda (septembre 1991 – septembre 1992), Kigali, Décembre 1992. (Rwandan Association for the Defence of Human Rights and Public Liberties, Report on Human Rights in Rwanda (September 1991- September 1992))

Massacre of Bagogwe of end 1992, beginning 1993	137 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children	End 1992 – beginning 1993	Préfecture de Gisenyi (Communes non précised)	Local authorities, militias, FAR	SRS Gisenyi ⁸
	130 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children	January – February 1993	Satinskyi Commune (74) Ramba Commune (55) Kibirira Commune (1) Préfecture de Gisenyi	Local authorities, militias	SRS Ngororero II ⁹
Compilation of numbers of victims	1481 civilians tués	January-June 1991	Prefectures of Byumba, Kibungo, Ruhengeri and Gisenyi	Not identified	Rwandan Ministry of Interior (Document of 17/07/1991)
Compilation of numbers of victims	2000 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children	1 st October 1990 - March 1993	Prefectures of Gisenyi, Bugesera, Ruhengeri, Byumba	Local authorities, militias, FAR	I.C.E., p.48
Compilation of numbers of victims	2300 Tutsi civilians, men, women and children	October 1990 - end 1993	Several communes in Gisenyi, Ruhengeri, Kibuye, Kigali, Byumba, Kibungo prefectures	Local authorities, militias, FAR	Amnesty International ¹⁰

⁸ Rapport du service de renseignement de la préfecture (SRS) de Gisenyi au service central de renseignements Kigali, 27/1/1993/ Auteur : Niyibizi Damien, responsable SRS Gisenyi. (Report of the Intelligent Service of Gisenyi prefecture, to the Central Service of Intelligence Kigali, 27/1/1993. Author Damien Niyibizi, Responsible for the Intelligence Service in Gisenyi).

⁹ Services de renseignements de la sous-préfecture (SRS) de Ngororero, Note de synthèse au chef de service central de renseignements Kigali, 4 février 1993. (Intelligent Service of the Sub-Prefecture of Ngororero, Synthesis Note of the Chief of the Central Service of Intelligence Kigali, 4 February 1993.) (Gisenyi prefecture.)

¹⁰ Amnesty International quoted by F. REYNTJENS, Les Escadrons de la mort, Bulletin CRIDEV n° 109, 1993.

In August 1993, the Special Rapporteur on Rwanda of the United-Nations Human rights Commission, Bacre Waly Ndiaye, issued an alarming report validating the NGOs' reports. He highlighted that the overwhelming majority of the victims were civilians Tutsi targeted solely because of their ethnic identity. He therefore stated that these killings could be qualified as genocide. He also warned against the risk of large scale genocide against the Tutsi population in Rwanda.¹¹

On April 6, 1994, President Habyarimana was finally summoned to Dar-es-Salaam by the presidents of the region and pressured to implement the peace agreement. He was killed, however, when his plane was shot down upon his return to Kigali. The identity of those responsible for the assassination is still unknown. While it is clear that preparation for the ensuing genocide had begun as early as late 1992, its planners used the death of President Habyarimana as a pretext to resume fighting with the RPF and to begin the genocide. In almost one hundred days, about 75% of the Tutsi population living on the territory controlled by the government of Rwanda was killed. Reprisal killings by RPF combatants and Tutsi civilians also occurred and have been acknowledged by RPF leaders. After three months of intense fighting, the RPF army captured the city of Kigali on July 4, 1994, and put an end to the genocide.

2.3 The genocide

From the 7th of April to the 4th of July, between 500,000 and one million people were killed, the overwhelming majority of them Tutsi, though thousands of Hutu were also killed. The number of people killed and the causes of the genocide are matter of dispute. Human Rights Watch estimates the number of victims at 500,000 Tutsi, which would represent some 75% of the Tutsi population in Rwanda at the time. Gérard Prunier estimates that 800,000 Tutsi were killed along with 10,000 to 30,000 opposition Hutu. The Ministry of Local Government and Social Affairs has published an enumeration of 1,074,017 declared victims and 934,218 victims actually counted.¹² The Human Rights figure of 500.000 underestimates the number of people killed. More probable are those put forward by Prunier and the Ministry of Interior. The main cause of disparities comes from who was considered Tutsi and by whom. Prunier calculus derives from difference between the official number of Tutsi stated by the Rwandan government before April 1994 and the number of Tutsi survivors. While the Ministry of Interior figure comes from the actual counting of victims. Officially for the Rwandan government at the time Tutsi

¹¹ Bacre Waly Ndiaye, Report on human rights violations in Rwanda (E/CN4/1994/7/add.1).

¹² Human Rights Watch, *Leave None to Tell the Story. Genocide in Rwanda*, New York, 1999, p. ?; G. Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997, p. 265; Ministère de l'Administration locale et des Affaires Sociales, Direction de la Planification, *Dénombrement des victimes du génocide*, Kigali, March 2001.

were those who had that ethnic identity inscribed in the personnel I.D. card and other official papers. This official ethnic identification was based on a first ethnic census carried out in 1935 by the Belgian colonial administration. At the time, those who were officially identified as Tutsi were those who were socially considered so but also who had at least 10 cows. This means that in some family groupings, part has been identified as Tutsi and another part as Hutu. Second, since being considered Tutsi had become a cause of discrimination and exclusion, quite a number of Tutsi, especially during the 1980s, had corrupted local authorities in charge of establishing identification papers to have their ethnic identity changed. These two groups could officially be considered Hutu, but socially they were still regarded as Tutsi. During the genocide, in towns or on roadblocks, killers used to ask passers-by for their I.D. cards and killed those officially identified as Tutsi or those looking like typical Tutsi even if in their I.D. it was written Hutu. In rural communities and urban neighbourhoods where people knew each other, killers didn't use I.D. cards to select their victims: all those socially known as Tutsi were targeted and often they were more numerous than those officially labelled so.

2.4 Causes and processes of genocide

There is an important debate revolving around the causes of the genocide and how it was implemented. There are mostly two important and often opposing schools of thought: one emphasising the role played by contextual circumstances and the other upholding the importance of the ideology. The debate follows quite closely the cleavages of the *Historikerstreit*, the bitter debate among Holocaust historians putting at odds internationalists against structuro-fuctionalists. The former state that the final solution to the Jew question was inscribed in Hitler political agenda based on his pathological anti-Semitism, before Nazis' power takeover. The latter argue that the Holocaust was the outcome of the cumulative radicalization of Nazis' anti-Semitism that has to be put in the context of the nature of Hitler's power, the implementation of anti-Jews policies, the Nazi's foreign action and their expansionist ambitions.¹³

In Rwanda, the debate revolves around on one hand the role of the war waged by RPF since 1990, President Habyarimana brutal death the ensuing resuming of war. This context would have created a situation of crisis and fear bringing about the security dilemma of to kill or to be killed that would have provoked the extermination of Tutsi.¹⁴ On the other hand, it is stated that the 1959 Hutu revolution, reset the identity of the

¹³ Ian Kershaw, *Qu'est-ce que le Nazisme ? Problèmes et perspectives d'interprétation*, Paris, Editions Gallimard, 1997.

¹⁴ Jean-Pierre Chrétien, *Le défi de l'ethnisme. Rwanda et Burundi : 1990-1996*, Paris, Karthala, 1997. Luc de Heusch, « Anthropologie d'un génocide : Le Rwanda », *Les Temps Modernes*, vol. 49, no. 579, 1997, p. 1-19. Colette Braeckman, *Rwanda: histoire d'un génocide*, Paris, Fayard, 1994. Peter Uvin, *Aiding Violence*, West Hartford, Kumarian Press, 1998.

Rwandan state as a Hutu state tolerating the existence of an alien Tutsi component as long as it stayed on the margin. Any challenge to this political and ideological order was to be met with a risk of extermination of the Tutsi. This school of thought bases its reasoning on the recurrent killings and victimization of Tutsi, their political and civic exclusion even in time of peace, and on extremist propaganda during the years 1990-1994.¹⁵

But a consensus has emerged among specialists that put together both arguments, saying that both war and ideology contribute to explain the irruption of the genocide, but this consensus put more emphasis on the political motive. The argument goes as follows. The grip on power of hardliners of the former state-party MRND was challenged by both the mainly Tutsi armed opposition of RPF and by the mainly Hutu political opposition of the political parties. To counter these threats, the MRND, first to divide the political opposition while ideologically ethnicising the conflict and appealing to Hutu solidarity against the Tutsi enemy and its accomplice, the Hutu political opposition that resists the ethnic appeal. For ideological reasons, a big chunk of the Hutu political opposition shifted alliance and joined the MRND in the Hutu-power coalition. Strengthened by this new political alliance, MRND political and military hardliners decided to launch the genocide against the Tutsi as an extreme measure because they could not militarily defeat RPF.¹⁶

3. Part II: Defining bystander

The New Oxford Dictionary of English defines a bystander as, a person who is present at an event or incident but does not take part. Renowned psychologist, Ervin Staub in his book *The Psychology of Good and Evil: Why Children, Adults, and Groups Help and Harm Others*, links the concept to the Rwandan genocide and defines it as ‘the individual or collection of individuals, including nations, who witness what is happening’ (2003:4) or ‘people who witness but are not directly affected by the actions of perpetrators’ (2003:331). In a wide sense, Arne Johan Vetlesen (2000) defines the concept loosely as “...every contemporary citizen cognizant of a specific ongoing instance of genocide, regardless of where in the world”. Bystanders to evil such as genocide cannot be reduced

¹⁵ Filip Reyntjens, *L'Afrique des Grands Lacs en Crise*, Paris, Karthala, 1994. Jef Maton, *Développement économique et social au Rwanda entre 1980 et 1993. Le dixième décile en face de l'Apocalypse*, Ghent, State University of Ghent, Faculty of Economics, Unit for Development Research and Teaching, 1994. Stefan Marysse, Tom de Herdt et Elie Ndayambaje, « Rwanda. Appauvrissement et ajustement structurel », *Cahiers Africains*, n°12, 1994, p. 82. Scott Strauss, *The order of Genocide. Race, Power, and War in Rwanda*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 2006.

¹⁶ Human Rights Watch, *Leave None to Tell the Story*; Gérard Prunier, *Rwanda : le genocide*; Catharine Newbury, « Background to Genocide in Rwanda », *Issues*, vol. 23, no 2, 1995, p. 12-17.

to victim and perpetrator or agent (Vetlesen, 2000). For, as a crime of crimes, those directly involved, as either victim or agent will be a minority; since for every victim, there are many bystander. These may either be internal i.e. within the specific borders of a nation-state or external i.e. outside the borders of the nation-state where the crime is committed. Internal bystanders can be individuals, organizations, institutions or the state itself while external bystanders, in addition to these, include countries. While this definition may be limited, for bystanders need not be direct witness to nor necessarily not affected by perpetrators, Staub reckons that such peoples' actions or inactions shape societal norms; capable of promoting peoples' well-being and understanding, or they may, by their silence or passivity, promote violence, evil and suffering; including, in our case, genocide. If, for instance, bystanders act in defence of victims or potential victims and disapprove actions, words and world-views of perpetrators, this may have great impact in mitigating or even ending violence. If, on the other hand, bystanders remain passive in the face of evil and violence, this may be taken as support for perpetrators' actions and the evil being perpetrated (2003:4).

As Edmund Burke observed, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing" (cited in Rosenbaum, 1996:1, Krosiak, 2007:1) This is most apparent in the case of Rwanda where, since 1959, when ethnic violence broke out leading to Tutsis exodus, flowing into neighbouring countries and over thirty years of forced exile, a process that produced the 1990 war and genocide is largely well known today (Prunier, 1995, HRW, 1999, Mamdani, 2001, Semujanga, 2003, African Rights, 1995). In the case of the 1994 genocide, a result of years of devaluation, demonization and discrimination of Tutsis-also well documented, Staub notes that by member countries of the UN refusing to use the term genocide despite the fact that what was happening amounted to genocide since it aimed to eliminate all Tutsis, which, by the Genocide Convention all UN members would have had a moral responsibility to act, they failed in this responsibility and therefore culpable of the evil of genocide (2003:4). Yet, as is well known, but less highlighted, the UN was present in the 1960s when ethnic violence broke out leading to Tutsis exiles and watched for over thirty years without finding a solution.

Research in psychology, and evil, and indeed in the evolution of genocide as stated by Staub show, for genocide to happen, individuals or groups involved in harming others first have to devalue them, taking away their human qualities and giving them animal-like character which, progressively, makes it easier to harm them even further; including normalization of victim deaths (Staub, 2003, Prunier 1995). What has to be recognized is that, while being a bystander is considered evil, in the Rwandan context, bystanders are hailed, with the consideration that, at least, such individuals did not kill and this has

something to do with, not only the popular agency of this crime; but also that, to internal bystanders, not being part of the killing machine was potentially dangerous and individually life threatening (ibid, African Rights, 1995, Human Rights Watch, 1999).

3.1 Bystander perspective to the Rwandan genocide

Thus, in the Rwandan context, the definition of bystander is problematic and there is no research that exclusively and specifically investigates the conflict from this perspective; although some work on some external bystanders exist. The main reason for this state of affairs may come from the urgency felt by researchers of first defining who were the perpetrators, how many and why did they act the way they did. This urgency steams from their universally supposed large numbers.

Genocide organizers sought to create popular agency in the commission of the crime of genocide by trying to incite and enlist all Hutus. According to African Rights, the aim of the perpetrators in the genocide project was not only eliminating all Tutsis, but also transforming collective Hutu identity by creating a ‘community of killers’; a people tied together by crime and slaughter. Afterwards, African Rights notes, genocide perpetrators sought to mould a “... new Rwanda...a country of Hutu people bound together by their joint participation in a monstrous crime”; consciously designed to achieve a new order. This also means that the genocide project also involved a process of reconstructing morality through the normalization of, hailing and rewarding killing of Tutsis, making it socially acceptable, making non-conformist Hutus look guilty and thereby creating ‘blood brothers’; bound together by and commonly baptized in Tutsis blood (1995:993, Human Rights Watch, 1999, Gourevitch 1998, Mamdani, 2001, Semujanga, 2003, Gatwa, 2005).

This process in the normalization of evil, in part, explains why the propaganda aired on the extremist Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) hate radio, the killing of Tutsis was referred to as ‘working’ i.e. a noble national duty and responsibility. In this sense, Hutus who would be identified as against this project would be labeled accomplice to the enemy and their lives would also be and indeed were at risk. For, as African Rights establishes, “The extremists aimed to create two categories of people in Rwanda: killers and the killed” i.e. perpetrator and victims (African Rights, 1995:1060, Prunier, 1995, 1997, Human Rights Watch, 1999, Mamdani, 2001, Semujanga, 2003).

The explanations of the popular participation are better understood when one differentiates, as most specialists do, between what caused the genocide on the central stage of national politics initiated by the political and military elites that controlled levers of power and the causes that led the masses to be involved in its execution.

3.2 A genocide with popular agency?

To have a clear picture, an estimate of the importance of the popular participation in the genocide is provided by the Gacaca jurisdictions. These community based and tradition inspired tribunals are responsible for the prosecution of people accused of involvement in the genocide. Almost at the end of their proceedings, Gacaca Jurisdictions have issued some figures concerning the level of popular participation in the genocide. After a first phase of formal gathering of information, Gacaca Jurisdictions have indicted 818. 000 persons i.e. 11.4% of Rwanda population before the genocide according to the 1991 population census or 25% of the population aged between 15 and 54¹⁷. Among these indicted, about 9% fall in category 1 that is to say those who organised the genocide, people involved while being in situation of authority, those accused of rape and sexual torture and their accomplices; 52% are in category 2, i.e. particularly zealous and cruel killers, those who committed murders and harmed people and their accomplices; 37% are in category 3 that is to say those who looted or destroyed goods.¹⁸

Regarding the causes and processes of the mass participation in the genocide per se, so far only two studies have tried to account for it in systematic manner. These are Scott Strauss's *The Order of Genocide* and Jean-Paul Kimonyo's *Rwanda: A Popular Genocide*.¹⁹ Strauss estimates the number of perpetrators between 175.000 and 210.000. Just after the genocide, some RPF government officials could mention three millions of participants that would amount to the entire adult Hutu population of the time.²⁰ Mahmood Mamdani estimates hundreds of thousands perpetrators, Human Rights Watch, "tens of thousands", Christian Scherrer claims 40-66% of male Hutu farmers, 60-80% of the higher professions and almost 100% of the civil servants participated.²¹ These estimates are based on a definition of perpetrators as those who actually killed or were closely associated to the killings like by being in a group of killers even if they didn't kill themselves. Kimonyo has a wider comprehension of the participation in the genocide.

He argues that participation to the genocide shouldn't be limited to those who killed but should also include those without whom this intense genocide wouldn't be possible, those

¹⁷ République rwandaise, Service de recensement, *Recensement général de la population et de l'habitat au 15 août 1991*, Kigali, décembre 1992.

¹⁸ Service national des juridictions Gacaca, *Synthèse des accusés par province et Ville de Kigali*, sans date. <http://www.inkiko-gacaca.gov.rw/Fr/Introduction.htm>

¹⁹ Scott Strauss, *The order of Genocid*; Jean-Paul Kimonyo, *Rwanda: A Popular Genocide*, Paris: Editions Karthala, forthcoming.

²⁰ Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to*, p. 244.

²¹ Strauss says that Scherrer estimates amount to to one million of perpetrators, Strauss, *The Order*, p. 115 n. 28.

who controlled physically the targeted population. Rwanda is a small country and many Tutsi lived not very far from an international border, but most of them couldn't escape. Physical control of the targeted population was of crucial importance for the success of the total genocide of the Tutsi. There was no infrastructure to keep the Tutsi locked, no systematic means of transport for the killers and/or the victims. A huge number of people were needed for the control of the surroundings and for preventing the Tutsi from escaping, for searching the bushes, swamps and other potential hideouts. Kimonyo states that according to many published testimonies from survivors, rescues, killers and bystanders, the Hutu general population, including children, women and elders, was the main agent of the physical control of the Tutsi. He does not give any figure estimating the number of participants in the genocide.²²

Strauss and Kimonyo agree that while in most local communities, the popular participation started first with hesitation, opposition or arguments on the course of action before the local social elite dedicated to the exterminatory agenda managed to win the sway. With the assistance of local thugs, these elites imposed the genocide policy upon their communities. This was made possible, among other reasons, because of the authorising influence of the central state in spite of, often, hesitation or opposition of local state authorities had to be neutralised.

Regarding the causes of the mass participation of ordinary Hutu citizens, Strauss stresses the importance of three factors: 1) fear and anger that these perpetrators would have experienced after the death of president Habyarimana and the resumption of war; 2) Intra-hutu coercing pressure to comply with killings; 3) the culture of obedience to authority. Kimonyo disagrees with the fear and anger explanation because, according to him, the bulk of the killings took place in the Centre and South regions that were strongly opposed to the Habyarimana regime and still situated afar from the front line (until the end of April). But he strongly shares the intra-hutu coercing pressure as one of the most important explanation of the mass popular participation. He adds factors such persuasion and greed. Finally, both authors agree that after a while, different causes, among others the violent silencing of the opposition to the Hutu-power coalition, the silence of churches and of the international community, led to a cohesive cognitive pressure that made resistance to the genocide orders futile-from the actors' viewpoint. By doing so, they corroborate the sentiment diffuse in post-genocide Rwandan social knowledge coming from testimonies of different types of actors, perpetrators, surviving victims, rescuers and bystanders, saying that not to participate was not always easy. Nor is it easy to determine who was involved in a certain manner or another or who was really a

22

bystander since the killings were not confined in specific locations but took place throughout the country in the middle of communities.

Due to this, nearly universally recognized mass participation in the Rwandan genocide, and while being a bystander is considered evil (Staub, 2003), in the Rwandan context, bystanders are hailed, with the consideration that, at least, they did not kill. Often this has something to do with, not only the popular agency of this crime; but also that, to internal bystanders, not being part of the killing machine was potentially dangerous and individually life threatening (ibid, African Rights, 1995, Human Rights Watch, 1999). For as Prunier notes, “In such extreme cases, even the refusal to kill (with the attendant danger to one’s own life) was a heroic act” (1997:260). In fact, many of those believed to have been passive bystanders during the genocide are currently in government, including, for instance, the Prime Minister who testified in a Gacaca court²³; a number of ministers²⁴, civil servants; MPs²⁵, university lecturers, doctors, priests, nuns and ordinary citizens.

4. Part III: Research and researchers on bystanders to the Rwandan conflict

As noted earlier, so far, there has not been any systematic study of internal bystanders to the Rwandan genocide; although states, NGOs, the UN and OAU are discussed in this light. Even then, this is not done in relation to bystander as a concept and how it relates to, or apply to the Rwandan condition; but is done in terms of ‘the role of UN in the Rwandan genocide’; ‘the role...’. Nothing, in all these studies thus far expounds the conflict from the bystander perspective.

Beside the research on the causes, processes and magnitude of popular participation that have been reported above, very few studies directly focus on individual internal bystanders (Prunier 1995, 1997; Strauss 2006). Instead, more attention has been paid to victims and perpetrators as well as on external bystanders, foreign countries and international organizations Prunier, 1995, 1997, African Rights, 1994, 1995, 1995, Berry & Berry, 1995, Uvin, 1998, Gourevitch, 1998, Human Right Watch, 1999, Howard & Astri (eds.), 1999, Mamdani, 2001, Power, 2001, Semujanga, 2003, Staub, 2003, Gatwa, 2005). In relation to the issue of internal individual bystanders another kind of writing is multiplying, testimonies of internal individual bystanders (Sibomana, 1997; Umutesi,

²³Gacaca courts are traditional grass-roots courts that traditionally dealt with minor societal conflict aimed at ensuring restorative as opposed to retributive justice. Now are dealing with genocide cases in categories two, three and four. It is a form of restorative justice as opposed to retributive justice in the classical sense.

²⁴ For instance the Minister of Defense who was at the start of the genocide the army’s Chief-of Staff, but removed for his moderate views; the minister of Internal Security, the Minister of Environment.

²⁵ Including the President of the Chamber of Deputies-who was a Chief –Editor of a government weekly newspaper, *Imvaho*.

2000; Karemano, 2003 ; Dallaire, 2003) and rescuers (Rusesabagina, African Rights 2003a, 2003b, 2006). Most of these are descriptive narratives not analysis.

4.1 Internal individual bystanders and rescuers

Among the few and limited studies on the issue of internal individual bystanders Strauss (2006, 145-148) dedicates a short section of his book to the question of who did not participate. In his limited sample of respondents, he found few instances of non-participants to the genocide. Most of those non-participants had to pay the killers to get off the pressure that was put on them. Strauss explains the fact that there were relatively few non-participants by invoking the strong intra-hutu coercive pressure and the realistic probability to get killed in case of resistance (last two sentences not clear).

Another limited entry into the question of bystanders, but without evoking the concept, is made by Gourevitch (1998: 7-8) regarding the role of the third Rwandan identity/ethnic group, the Twa²⁶, who as an ethnic group were the only undefined Rwandans in relation to the genocide project. He points out, owing to their historical connections to the monarchy as court jesters, "...the memory of this ancestral role meant that during the genocide pygmies were sometimes put to death as royalist tools, while elsewhere they were enlisted by Hutu militias as rapists-to add an extra dash of tribal mockery to the violation of Tutsi women" (1998:7-8). But as he again points out when he encountered a Twa in Gikongoro after the genocide in 1995, he (the Twa), in a conversation with him declared his identity to him without being asked; adding that he believed in *homo sapiens*-without referring to genocide. To Gourevitch, the man seemed to set "...himself apart from the matter of Hutu and Tutsi, and in relating to me as a fellow outsider-an observer at large" (1998:7). They have been treated with disdain, indecently and prefer to remain aloof and unbothered by the conflict between Hutus and Tutsis; so it seems.

In apportioning blame individually for the category of organizers, Prunier identifies, in order of culpability state officials: Col. Théoneste Bagosora, who was the director general of services in the Ministry of Defence as co-ordinator of the 'final solution', Defence Minister Maj.-Gen. Augustin Bizimana as logistics head and one who convinced reluctant FAR officers to join in the slaughter. He, according to Prunier, was assisted by other military assistants such as Col. Aloys Ntabakunzi, who was head of paratroopers, Lt. Col. Protais Mpiranyi who was head of the presidential guard, Lt. Col. Leonard Nkundiye, Capt. Pascal Simbikangwa who 'supervised killings in Kigali', his assistant, Capt. Gaspard Hategekimana, and all these acted on national level. At the local level, he identifies, Col. Nsengiyumva, head of Gendarmerie, who directed killings in Gisenyi,

²⁶Believed to constitute about 1% of the total population, generally marginalized as pygmoid and irrelevant.

Col. Muvunyi et cetera (1997:240). Civilians who co-ordinated murder at the national level included, Joseph Nzirorera, the Secretary General of MRND (D) who coordinated *Interahamwe* militia, Pascal Musabe, Félicien Kabuga, a businessman, financier of RTLM hate radio and President Habyarimana's in-law, Robert Kajuka, leader of the extremist CDR party and locally, heads of prefectures and communes coordinated massacres in their areas. In a word, the organizers, according to Prunier, were a small elite group tied to the regime militarily, politically and economically; sharing not only the regime's privileges, but also the radical ideology of Hutu ethnic domination (1997:240-242). And then, as noted earlier, adds the churches as bystanders.

Regarding testimonies of eyewitness bystanders Marie Béatrice Umutesi (2000) narrates her journey from Kigali where she witnessed the genocide onwards deep into Congolese forests in the west side of the continent where as a refugee she fled the advance of Kabila's and Rwandan troops. In the narrative one perceives that her position of bystander – i.e. of non-participant to the genocide- can be partially explained by her commitment to humanitarian values that she manifested by working for development NGOs in Rwanda. Paul Rusesabagina (2006) narrates his role as manager of the Hotel Milles Collines where he made his best to keep at bay the killers and managed to save 1.268 mostly Tutsi and moderate Hutu who had took refuge in the hotel. His narrative has been put on screen in the popular film *Hotel Rwanda*. In his book *And Ordinary Man*, the author gives one reason that may partially explain his action: the fact that his mother was a Tutsi and his father a Hutu and the tolerant moral-fiber from his family and upbringing. He also recalled vividly how his father, earlier in his life when he was a child, rescued and gave shelter to pursued Tutsi during the 1959 revolution.

Another high profile individual, who fits the designation of bystander-by *formal appointment* (Vetlesen, 2000) has narrated his experience during the genocide, General Romeo Dallaire (2003) the commandant of the UN military peace keeping mission that had been send in Rwanda a couple months before the genocide. While should have been a rescuer and his mission has rescued a number of Tutsi, the self-confessed striking overall failure to stop or subdue the genocide puts him the in the rank of bystanders. He explains his failure by the weak mandate of his mission that was restrictively interpreted by his New York headquarter when dangers were mounting and by too few badly trained troops and lack of adequate equipment.

When political pluralism started in Rwanda, in 1991, Charles Karemano (2003) became one of the leaders of Parti Social Democrate (PSD), an opposition party. When the genocide started in Kigali, the hardliners killed all the leading figures of his party. He managed to survive by hiding and then going to Butare which was the stronghold of the

PSD. After a while, the extremists ceased the killing of Hutu opponents. Karemano staid very discreet and didn't participate to the genocide.

Consider also that: Gen. Dallaire mentions roles of Col. Rusatira, Gatisinzi as 'moderate' and may fit description of bystander for they neither killed nor were they targeted. Other individuals he mentions are Bernard Kouchner, a Frenchman who at the time was president of a French NGO (former and now French foreign minister), and who contacted him saying he wanted to rescue children and later came back, breaking news about turquoise and attempting to convince him on behalf of France to support it; a French col. Who commanded evacuation of expatriates and did not even want to look at Dallaire leave alone discuss the genocide; etc e.g, see inserted para below

In a horrifying and graphic personal account of the conflict and genocide, and while indicting individual Rwandan Hutu extremists like Col. Theonest Bagosora, Gen. Augustin Bizimungu-Chief-of-Staff, minister of Defence Bizimana, militia leaders Robert Kajuga, Bernard Mimiragaba, Ephrem Nkezabera and individual outsiders like Bernard Kouchner, who, while a President of a French NGO, acted as conduit for his country's interests; countries like Belgium for abandoning Rwanda and its people at the hour of need, Gen. Dallaire in *Shake Hands with the Devil* summarizes, "Ultimately, led by the United States, France and the United Kingdom, this world body (the UN) aided and abetted genocide in Rwanda. No amount of cash and aid will ever wash its hands clean of Rwandan blood" (2003:323). A more interest account of events that come out of Dallaire's account is, who are the peacekeepers to be taken? This question is also apparent in other works (HRW, 1999). While the UN is criticized for lack of political will to act, and consequently for failing to give UNAMIR the right mandate, equipment, manpower, et cetera and for thinning it out when genocide started, the few UNAMIR forces that remained performed heroic acts, saving people against all odds; but also, withdrew and left people to deny. And most disturbingly, the presence of UNAMIR ensured so aid of security and assurance that, possibly, individuals and families that might have left the country before the genocide stayed put.

Departing from pejorative qualities attached to the role of bystanders, in the context of the genocide in Rwanda, internal individual bystanders may fall into the praised category of those who did not participate, almost next to rescuers. A review of the related issue of rescuers shows the dangers that resistance to the genocide entailed as an indirect explanation to why so many participated and why being bystander was not easy.

In its report *Tribute to Courage*, African Rights (2003) narrates the stories of 19 Rwanda who stood up against the genocide either by hiding Tutsi or by deliberating choosing to

share their fate by physically fighting alongside them against the killers and eventually be killed. The following table summarizes the information related to these rescuers

Table 2: Some rescuers during the genocide

Names	Identity	Profession	Details	Fate	Region	Number of Saved
Froduald Karuhije	Hutu	house builder	He hide refugees	survived	Gitarama near Nyanza	14
Sula	Hutu woman, muslim 75 years	farmer	Hiding	Survived	Gitarama near Nyanza	Her grandson expelled the Tutsi
Father Vieko Curic	Ex-Yugoslav	Priest	Sheltering And transferring to a save camp	Lived	Norht Gitarama	about 100 saved
Callixte Ndagijimana	Dubious hutu	Burgomaster	Exhorting not to kill, Fighting	Killed	Gitarama near Nyanza	
Dr. Wolfgang Blam	German Married to Tutsi woman	Physician	Treated, fed and give water to Tutsi. Refused to leave his wife	Managed to flee with wife	Kiguye town	
Jean-Marie Gisagara	Dubious hutu	Burgomaster	Exhorting not to kill, Fighting	Killed	Butare near Nyanza	
Father Célestin Hakizimana	Hutu	priest	Gave shelter in his church	Survived	Downtown Kigali	About 1.500
Thérèse Nyirabayovu	Hutu, woman, 67	Traditional midwife	She hide and took care of refugees	Survived	Kigali town	
Father Jean-Bosco Munyaneza	Hutu	Priest	He welcomed refugees and took care of them, then he organized their resistance, fought alongside them and got killed with them	Killed	Kibungo	
Paul Kamanzi	Hutu	Shopkeeper	Refused to leave his Tutsi friends, fought alongside them and got killed with	Killed	Kibungo	

African Right published two separate reports on two other rescuers. One, *A True Humanitarian* (2006) on Karl Wilkens, the American country director of the Adventist relief Development Agency (ADRA). When other expatriates were evacuated in the beginning of the genocide, he refused to leave his Rwandan colleagues and friends to a certain death. He managed to save hundreds of lives. Another report, *The Gisimba Memorial Centre: No place for Fear* (2003), was written in tribute to Damas Mutezintare Gisimba. Gisimba was in charge of an orphanage counting 60 children Hutu and Tutsi, plus a number of Tutsi staff, and his wife who was also Tutsi. Because he managed to keep at bay the killers, men, women and children started to take refuge in his centre. At the end of the genocide, he had managed to save close to 400 people.

4.2 The Church as a bystander

A number of authors have identified the Church, mainly the Catholic and Protestant Churches not only as unable to offer moral guidance and leadership in the Rwandan crisis, ethnic violence and marginalization in the historicization of the conflict, but also as bystanders as well as complicit in the 1994 genocide (Prunier, 1995, 1997, African Rights, 1994, 1995, Berry & Berry, 1995, HRW, 1999, Mamdani, 2001, Gatwa 2005). Historicized as an agent of colonial rule, and ethnic domination-first on the side of Tutsis and later Hutus in post-independent Rwanda, the church, both the Catholic and the Protestant Churches are discussed as a combination of accomplice to the genocide and victim. For instance, whilst the church is reputed to have supported colonial rule, it also supported subsequent post-independence regimes of Kayibanda and Habyarimana which were discriminative against Tutsis; and also, in the schools it controlled, practiced 'quotas system' i.e. allowed Tutsis minimal access (ibid).

While all the above writers and organizations expound the role of the church during the genocide, it is Gérard Prunier that succinctly discusses it in terms of bystander; a claim contested by Mahmood Mamdani who instead sees the Church as accomplice with some of its members-Tutsis as victim (2001). But on the question of whether there were any bystanders, Prunier notes that these were largely, the Churches; although some Christians did help and not kill, the church hierarchy was either useless or accomplices to genocide (1997:250). He notes that, in fact, this is revealed by priests themselves, mainly ones who had been advocates of human rights which they saw as the modern incarnation of Christian values. He quotes two of them as wondering:

'Why did not the Bishop react? They made a few vague speeches but had no prophetic commitment. If they had spoken out, the massacres might have stopped. (...) Most of the priests who were killed were those who had defended human rights. (...) Only two bishops (out of nine) spoke out clearly, those of Kibungo and Kabgayi. The bishop of Rwankeri even dared to ask the Christians to support the (interim) government' (Prunier, 1997:250, citing Jean Chatain, May 1994)

However, Mahmood Mamdani, in his book, *When Victims Become Killers* (2001) rejects Prunier's claim that the churches were bystanders. Instead, he reckons, "the church was a direct participant in the genocide". He adds that, like the rest of society, the Church was divided between those who were to be physically eliminated-the Tutsis and "those who led or facilitated the killings"; with no middle ground. He reports that priests who had, prior to the genocide opposed the ethnic quotas, say in schools were the first victims. In all, 105 priests and 120 nuns; accounting for at least quarter of the clergy. On the other hand, about a dozen priests are said to have directly participated in the killings while others supervised gangs of killers. Citing a Lutheran minister who had been told by marauding militias that "You can have religion afterwards"; the minister explained to a reporter why he was moving with a machete: "Everyone had to participate. To prove that you weren't RPF, you had to walk around with a club. Being a pastor was not an excuse" (2001:226).

While showing the nature of Church hierarchy complicity, Prunier notes that Fathers Vleugels and Theunis of the White Fathers did, throughout the genocide, send faxes to their orders, indicating names of priests killed, but nothing on the mass killings of Tutsis, names of perpetrators and killers; except when, it was the RPF suspected-then all the details, including names and other particulars would be given (1995, 1997:250-252).He adds that if foreign priests could distort what was happening, it was even worse with the Hutu clergy; adding that, at the end of the genocide, "There was not the slightest trace of collective guilt among the Christian clergy'. Instead, after the genocide, tried, by listing names of 192 priests killed to claim a moral ground and present itself as a martyr (Prunier, 1997)²⁷. He adds that while there are a few courageous priests who saved their Christians, and while Tutsi and moderate Hutu priests were killed, the majority of Hutu priests remained passive and indifferent to the killing of their charges. This indifference and complicity of the Catholic Church, according to Prunier had international consequences as 'Christian Democratic International' followed suit, developing a cold attitude towards RPF and failing to condemn the extremists or the massacres (1997:251).

Regarding the Protestant Churches, Prunier notes that while not historically linked to the Hutu government, it was no better bystanders; although its leadership acknowledged their complicity. He cites Rev. Roger Brown who writes, 'Anglican Church leaders were too closely aligned with the Habyarimana government. The archbishop spoke openly in support of the president and his party. (...) The ethnic issue also run deep within the churches and all the Anglican diocesan bishops were Hutu' (1997:252).²⁸

²⁷ Citing the Monthly Catholic magazine, Dialogue No. 177, August-September, 1994, pp.123-35

²⁸ Citing Revd Roger Brown, "The role of the Churches in Rwanda: Anglican Perspectives", December 8, 1994. Also see, Tharcisse Gatwa and André Karamaga, *Les autres Chrétien Rwandais: la Présence protestante*, Kigali: Urwego, 1990

In contrast to the Catholic and Protestant Churches, Prunier reports that, although a small proportion of about 1.2%, it was only the Muslim denomination that protected its members from the genocide. To him, this owes, not only to their discrimination in the country, but globally, that, in this context, made it overcome ethnic identity (1997:253). However, he does not say whether or not the Moslem community opposed the genocide nor does he indicate whether they did rescue people in danger or just looked on-as this would qualify them as bystanders.

The result of this complicity and passivity is that immediately after the genocide, Prunier reports that there was a 'church in exile' that refused to denounce the genocide, but which was also rejected by Tutsi 'returnees'. On the part of the Catholic Church, twenty-nine priests, on August 2, 1994, a month after the genocide wrote to the Pope claiming innocence of the Hutu in the genocide and instead, placing it on the RPF; but with the same breath, rejecting the formation of an international tribunal to try perpetrators (1997:252).²⁹ The UNHCR, according to Prunier complained as early as November 18, 1993 to the Minister of External Affairs at the recruitment of Burundian refugees into the Interahamwe militias and finally, according to him, the killers, unfortunately, 'were the ordinary peasants' (1997:246-247, also see, African Rights, 1994:59). As a bystander, while this action of writing such a letter was ignored, had it been followed by similar actions from other organizations, probably a genocide would have been foiled.

Human Rights Watch (1999) also holds the Churches and the clergy as at most, bystanders, and accomplice. While noting, in *Leave None to Tell the Story* that Tutsi clergy were targets as any other Tutsis in the general Rwanda society, it notes that four days into the slaughter, the Catholic bishops issued a statement supporting the interim government and calling on all Rwandans to support it.

4.2 The media

Melvern also indicts the international press for misleading the world about what was happening in Rwanda. While noting that some journalists like Philippe Ceppi had as early as April 11 had written in French newspaper *Libération* that what was happening was a genocide; followed by Jean Hélène in *Le Monde* on April 12, other reports after this described what was happening as tribal frenzy, chaos and renewed civil war, to the extent that even the analysis written by the director of US Committee for Refugees, Roger Winter who had returned from Rwanda describing what was happening in Rwanda as a politically motivated killings orchestrated by extremists using ethnicity, the article was rejected by most US papers, including the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*; only accepted by *Toronto Globe and Mail*. Her verdict on the behaviour of the international media is this, "The media's failure to report that genocide was taking place, and thereby generate public pressure for something to be done

²⁹ Although the international community rejected this and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) was formed and is based in Arusha, Tanzania.

to stop it, contributed to international indifference and inaction, and possibly to the crime itself” (2006:137-138).

While discussing the local press, the hate-media as accomplice to the genocide, Linda Melvern accuses the international press-including *Le Monde*, *The Guardian*, of at best, ignoring the deteriorating situation and the genocide and at worst, trivializing what was happening as old tribal rivalries and massacres (2005:102). ‘Mass media reach not only people's homes, but also their minds, shaping their thoughts and sometimes their behavior’.

Elsewhere, the media has been heavily presented as a perpetrator of genocide leading to what is now known as hate media (Chrétien, 1995, Prunier 1995)³⁰, it has to be recognized that within Rwanda, it was the same media that, while it incited people to commit genocide, particularly RTLM, and Kangura, long before the start of the actual genocide on April, 6, 1994, had reported the impending catastrophe. Reminding his readers that the genocide had been known since 1993, Prunier notes that the extremist media had warned, even with accuracy of the president death and the genocide that would ensue. He quotes the extremist Kangura (wake up) newspaper No. 55 of January 1994 which wrote: ‘who will survive the March war?’, adding, ‘The masses will rise with the help of the army and the blood will flow freely’. In *La Médaille Nyiramacibiri* of February 1994, the newsletter writes in a headline, ‘By the way, the Tutsis could be extinguished’ (1995, 1997:222).

However, whilst the media has been discussed as accomplice, the local press cannot, from what has been written, be called passive. Negatively, it prepared the population of what was coming; although the message is always and can always be interpreted differently. For instance, in the early days of April 1994, RTLM, the infamous hate-media broadcast messages indicating something sinister was being organized. Specifically, on 3 April it announced, “On the 3rd, 4th, and 5th, heads will get heated up. On the 6th of April, there will be a respite, but a small thing will happen. Then on the 7th and 8th and other days in April, you will see something (Prunier, 1995, HRW, 1999). *La Médaille Nyiramacibiri*, a journal allied with MRND wrote in its February 1994 issue, “By the way, the Tutsi race could be extinguished,” and Hassan Ngeze’s *Kangura* magazine cold-bloodedly wrote in its January 1994 issue No.55 that the President would die in March and asked, “who will survive the March War?” (Prunier, 1995, HRW, 1999). Coming long before the start of the genocide, what can this be called?

4.3 The Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF)

Although not discussed in the context of rescuer, Prunier writes of the RPF, in relation to the perpetrators of the genocide that the latter had counted on ‘their capacity to resist the RPF militarily and it was their miscalculations on that factor-and that factor alone-which defeated them’. That is, he discusses the RPF as rescuers; a point also made by Gen. Dallaire (2003).

³⁰ Jean Pierre Chrétien, (editor), *Rwanda: Les média du Génocide*, Paris: Karthala, 1995

Both authors concur that had perpetrators of the genocide succeeded on this factor i.e. militarily defeating the RPF as envisaged, they would have succeeded in their plan of the total extermination of the Tutsis as a group (1995, 1997, 2003).

Regarding ‘moral rules/standards’, Prunier writes that, the reasons why the genocide had a popular agency among Hutus is a result of years of indoctrination into the ‘democratic majority’ ideology, demonization of the Tutsis, a strong and authoritarian state, the culture of unquestioning obedience, and the evolution of this hate ideology to the point where killing a Tutsi was no longer regarded as a crime, but also, especially in times of crisis, rewarded (1995, 1997)

4.4 External bystanders documented as ‘role of...’

Another type of research, whilst not using nor discussing the concept of bystander, except Staub (2003) and Prunier (1995), focus on external bystanders; for they document roles of the United Nations (UN), UNAMIR, the Organization of African Unity (OAU, now AU), or specific countries, including France, Uganda, the United States of America (USA), Belgium, the United Kingdom (UK), Egypt, Russia, China, Burundi (Krosiak, 1998, 2007, Melvern, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2005, 2006, Anyidoho, 1997, 1998, Barnett, 1997, Burkhalter, 1995, Gourevitch, 1998, Samantha, 2001, Dallaire, 2003). These works, some detailed and well researched, expound actions, inactions and passivity of external bystanders-especially the UN, France, Belgium and USA.

In passing and in less systematic form however, Ervin Staub, in his book, *The Psychology of Good and Evil: Why Children, Adults, and Groups Help and Harm Others* (2003), in a small section discusses the concept of bystander in relation to the Rwandan genocide and identifies the international community in general, but uniquely, the United nations (UN), United Nations Mission to Rwanda (UNAMIR), France, USA, and Belgian as culpable. He discusses this concept in relation to the concept of victim and perpetrators and how the actions and inactions of these bystanders may have affected the course of evil; for while it encouraged perpetrators, sending a signal that they would not pay for their actions; such actions also increased the likelihood of more deaths for the target victims. For instance, when the Habyarimana regime claimed self-defense and France responded by sending troops to its rescue in the face of the invading RPF. This factor led to a spiral of related France actions that sustained the genocidal actions of the Habyarimana regime; and later, the interim-government that supervised the genocide; and whose representative to the UN was allowed to address the UN Security Council despite UN members’ knowledge that a genocide was being carried out (2003:346-349). These actions of France are also elsewhere cited to pin it as accomplice to the genocide (Prunier, 1995, African Rights, 1994, Human Rights Watch 1999, Dallaire, 2003).

Posting that bystanders normally respond to events and violence not on the basis of informed evaluation of what is happening nor on moral principles; but on a history of prior relationships, Ervin Staub also uses the term 'bystander nations' to point an accusing finger at these nations not only for remaining passive, but some as complicit, through inactions or actions that allowed the genocide to happen as planned by perpetrators (2003:341-349). Staub identifies actions or inactions of these states that fit the description of evil-bystanders; specifically France. He notes that France, sent troops to the rescue of President Habyarimana's regime when the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) attacked. He writes that while it might be forgiven for probably not knowing the real motives of the regime it was defending, when the regime started massacring Tutsis in early 1990s, France did not complain or express outrage. Secondly, with the signing of Arusha Accords in 1993, which prohibited supply of arms to the Rwandan government, France continued to supply arms. Finally, whether acting on the basis of personal friendship between President Mitterrand and Habyarimana, or whether to keep at bay the RPF which was considered 'Anglophone' extending Anglo-Saxon influence, Staub notes that France did not act on the information it had on moral principles or accurate information on what was happening; but continued to support even members of the defeated interim government that had directed and supervised the genocide (2003:347).

Gérard Prunier, albeit generally discussing, from a historical perspective the origins of the conflict, perpetrators, victims and the role of the international community in the genocide-which he views as a process starting in 1959, has a small sub-section on bystanders under the section coined in question format, '*Who were the bystanders*'. Largely, he sees bystanders as being the churches-Catholic and Protestant Churches; with the Moslem community largely protecting its followers from participating in the genocide (1997:250).

In this sense, and since many of these works also narrates specific roles, actions and inactions of some members of the international community and NGOs, like Human Rights Watch's '*Leave None to Tell the Story*' (1999), African Rights' '*Rwanda: Death, Despair, and Defiance*' (1995), and reports such as that by the Organization of African Union (now African Union) '*Rwanda: The Preventable Genocide*' indirectly refer to specific roles of nations, OAU and UN as bystander-although this concept is not used.

Like others (Prunier, 1995, African Rights, 1995, Human Rights Watch, 1999, Melvern 2000, Mamdani, 2001), Staub adds that France was however not the only culprit to the genocide. Other members of the international community are also responsible; for information was available explicitly narrating not only what was being planned, but later as genocide was being committed. To support his claims, he cites reports by Human Rights Watch, information from UNAMIR Commander Lt. Gen. Dallaire. In this light, he finds the United States as a 'passive bystander'; but more revealingly, adds that the US "...also acted in ways that made response by others less likely" (2003:347).He adds, "The United Nations, other

nations, and the United States resisted calling the violence genocide, so that the genocide convention, which requires or at least creates strong pressure for a response, would not be invoked; The United States resisted and slowed down a vote in the Security Council on sending back peacekeepers, even though U.S. troops were not required; the United States refused to provide equipment but insisted on leasing it to the United Nations; the United States and the United Nations haggled over the amount to be paid for the equipment, while every day many thousands of people were killed (2003:347-348, Gourevitch, 1998, Dallaire, 2003).

In a more explicit and well researched book titled, *'The Role of France in the Rwandan Genocide'* (2007), Daniela Krosiak asserts that France did not only know about the impending genocide, but also armed, trained FAR, and the genocide militia-Interahamwe and helped its organizers to escape when they were eventually defeated by the RPF as well as continued to fund their operations in Eastern DRC in the preparation to re-attack Rwanda. This, according to her, marks France as an accomplice. As evidence of the source of reliable information for France to have known, she cites France's well placed Embassy in Kigali; its secret service; human rights reports like Human Rights Watch and local human rights organizations whose reports were widely circulated; the briefing by UNAMIR reports and UNAMIR force commander to the French ambassador which emphatically outlined the planned genocide, and arms being circulated and France's well placed position at the United Nations Security Council where it has a permanent position; which was briefed on what was happening. Instead of acting on this information to stop the impending danger, France, together with other members of the UN Security Council allowed Rwanda's ambassador to address the council and remain on it when it well knew that his government was carrying out genocide (2007). Most of this information is confirmed by Lt. Gen. Roméo Dallaire in his memoir, *Shake Hands with the Devil* (2003); Linda Melvern in *A People Betrayed: The Role of the West in Rwanda's Genocide* (2003), Human Rights Watch, *Leave None to Tell the Story* (1999), African Rights, *Death, Despair and Defiance* (1995).

By far, African Rights' *Rwanda: Death, Despair and Defiance* (1995) and Human Rights Watch's *Leave None to Tell the Story* are the most exhaustive witness account of the horrors of genocide and its evolution. Relying on documentary evidence and witness account, the two volumes, in almost complementary manner, document the killing machinery, right from the intellectuals, the ideologues of the 'final solution'; the perpetrators-including the top MRND and CDR politicians; the implementations of the slaughter, including the Presidential Guard (GP), the ordinary soldiers (FAR); the militias (Interahamwe³¹ and Abahuzamugambi³²); ordinary Rwandans who killed; victims; rescuers and bystanders-largely, defined as external e.g. UN, U.S.A., France, Belgium and other countries. To this list, Helm Jutta in a paper titled, *Willing bystanders and the Politics of Memory* (2004), adds Germany as a former colonial power and one that was well connected to the Rwandan people-through government and NGOs.

³¹ Kinyarwanda word for 'those who work or act together'.

³² Kinyarwanda word for 'those with a common purpose, objective or agenda'.

Human Rights Watch notes that while Rwandans bear the primary responsibility for the genocide, the international community, shares the shame for watching as the crime was committed. It goes further to indict the UN for failure to implement the principle of NEVER AGAIN, failing to provide adequate information and guidance to members of the Security Council; reducing UNAMIR and not acting despite reliable information from, among others, its force commander. In addition, it also principally indicts three countries: Belgium for withdrawing its peacekeepers and leading UN force reduction; the U.S for preferring saving money to lives and for slowing down relief force; and France for continuing to support a government that was committing genocide (1999:17). These actions and inactions, for instance the killing of ten Belgium peacekeepers and Belgium responding by withdrawing its forces and championing the withdraw or reduction of UNAMIR, says Human Rights Watch, and indeed others (Prunier, 1995, 1997, African Rights, 1995, Mamdani, 2001), vindicated genocide planners for they had predicted that by killing some peacekeepers, the UN would withdraw, leaving them to accomplish Tutsi extermination without international action.

One of the foremost researches that exist on the Rwandan genocide is that by Gerard Prunier titled, *The Rwanda crisis: History of a Genocide* (1995, 1997). While historicizing the history of the conflict and the genocide in this tiny central African country, to avoid confusion regarding the demarcation between politically motivated killings targeting opposition politicians and the genocide that ontologically targeted Tutsis simply due to who they are, he asks certain questions that enable him to discuss perpetrators, victims, rescuers and bystanders. These questions include: (i) 'Who were the organizers'? (ii) 'Who were the killers?' (iii) 'Who were the victims?' (iv) 'Were there any bystanders?' (1997:237-250).

By organizers, Prunier does not mean either the actual killers or the brains behind the genocide i.e. intellectual instigators, but, as he notes, "...people who actually carried out the organization of murder squads, distributed guns and gave or relayed instructions at a high level" (1997:239). Whilst noting the complexity of identifying the real individuals who give orders to mass murder, in the Rwandan genocide, the question of 'who' is easily answered, for the same names keep on coming up in different research writings; in this context, among others, in Human Rights Watch Africa (1994), Human Rights Watch (1999), African Rights (1994, 1995) and testimonies of witnesses and survivors.³³

What is notable, according to Prunier is that while these organizers, both national and local pursued their agenda of killings with ferociousness, what is common among all of them is that they 'Verbally attacked their victims'; denied any physical violence or killings 'and fudge the responsibility issue so that, although there are victims, the killers' identities remain vague and undefined, almost merging into non-existent' and that, while talking to supporters, never claimed credit for what was being done, but referred to the benefits that would accrue

³³ See Human Rights Watch Africa, *Genocide in Rwanda* (April-May 1994), *African Rights: Rwanda: Who is killing? Who is dying? What is to be done?*, May 1994; *Rwanda: Death, despair, and defiance*, 1994, 1995

(1997:241). In addition, Prunier notes that, although efficient, the organizers would not have been successful had it not have been for two other factors: capacity to recruit large numbers of killers and moral support of the majority of the population (1997:242). Like Mahmood Mamdani (2001), Prunier also documents the extensive role of Uganda and President Yoweri Museveni as the main backers of the Rwandese Patriotic Front/Army (RPF/A); the movement that launched the October 1990 war in Rwanda and the stoppers of the genocide in 1994.

Regarding the question of ‘who are the killers’, he notes the presidential guard, amounting to about 1500 men, who swung into action on the 6th and within at least thirty-six hours had eliminated prime targets e.g. key opposition politicians, journalists, human rights activists, et cetera in the Capital Kigali; Interhamwe and Impuzamugambi militias amounting to about 50,000 individuals, Burundian refugees who had fled after the murder of Mechior Ndadaye in 1993.

On the question of ‘who were the victims’, Prunier identifies all Tutsis as targets, alongside ‘moderate’ political opposition-whether Hutu or Tutsis. This is also collaborated by almost all researchers who have written on the Rwandan conflict and genocide.

While not using the term bystander, the report by ‘The International Panel of Eminent Personalities to Investigate the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda and the Surrounding Events’ titled *‘Rwanda: The Preventable Genocide’* (2000), while detailing most of the human rights violations and atrocities against Tutsis since the invasion of RPF in October 1990 and actions that the Habyarimana regime was planning the extermination of Tutsis, long before 1994, incidents many of which were reported by human rights organization and in the media, members agree that the most remarkable thing about the genocide in Rwanda is that it was the most easily preventable crime had the international community decided to act. They add that not only because the world knew about it long in advance, but also that the Rwandan government heavily depended on international community for survival. Of what the world knew, the Eminent Persons write, “There can be not an iota of doubt that the international community knew the following: that something terrible was underway in Rwanda, that serious plans were afoot for even more appalling deeds, that these went far beyond routine thuggery, and that the world nevertheless stood by and did nothing” (2000:61).

The catalogue of massive human rights violations presented in this report and indeed, of which Human Rights Watch in *Leave None to Tell the Story* dedicates thirty-pages which it calls early warning signals, indicates, according to Eminent Personalities’ report that: (1) ‘Violence was rampant for years before the genocide and was escalating perceptibly; (2) This state of affairs was well known; (3) It was also well known that the situation was not the product of chance’ (2000:64-65). For, as the report rightly notes, the diplomatic community was well informed, since Rwanda had a small elite community, and the country itself small, in the Capital Kigali, everyone knew everyone and all had the same information; with the

difference being what they chose to believe and what they communicated to their home governments.

4.5 The United Nations (UN) and UNAMIR

In her book, *A People Betrayed: the role of the west in Rwanda's genocide* (2005, 2006), Linda Melvern ably documents the role of UN, UNAMIR, states such as France, Egypt and S. Africa in supplying arms to the Habyarimana and later genocide regimes, using funds from Belgium, France, IMF, World Bank, Chinese and individual courage of individuals like Lt. Gen. Romeo Dallaire—who was UN force commander as well as the indifference of the UN Security Council, the secretariat and irresponsible leadership on the part of Boutros-Boutros Ghali who was the UN Secretary-General at the time.

Melvern also in a detailed and sobering manner describes how, despite Belgium through its Foreign Minister, Will Claes and his Permanent Representative to the UN, Paul Noterdaeme trying to convince the UN to change the mandate of UNAMIR to Chapter VII in the run up to the genocide—but were frustrated by Security Council members, particularly the US; and the Secretary-General whose behaviour and decisions during the genocide she describes as ‘inexplicable and irresponsible...and abdication of leadership’. (2006:139). She adds that, while Dallaire’s request to bolster his force and change its mandate was turned down, it was not presented forcefully to the Security Council. In addition, Dallaire was instructed not to use force except when directly shot at, he was instructed by DPKO’s deputy head, Riza not only to cooperate with foreign forces from Belgium, France, Italy and US to evacuate its nationals, but also, in the same breath, to use force if foreign nationals’ lives were in danger; but not Rwandans. As she notes, ‘In other words only in the rescue of experts could Dallaire take risks’ (2006:141). In addition, despite Belgium’s insistence that it would not rule out sending at least a battalion in case its troops were in danger, Melvern also documents that France warned them that at no account should they deploy in Rwanda. In the evacuation, while French soldiers, says Melvern also took families of extremist Hutus, Tutsis who managed to get in the cars were removed on roadblocks and killed by militias as French and Belgian soldiers looked on.

Discussing perpetrators of the genocide and why their project, at least partially succeeded, Gérard Prunier notes of how the passivity of UN helped them. He writes of the psychology of the plotters, ‘They had counted on foreign and, more precisely, UN passivity and got it. They had counted on domestic popular support for the genocide, and more or less got it too. They had counted on the unwavering support of the armed forces and got it with a few exceptions...’ (1995:228).

Writing as eyewitness to the genocide and first-hand account of the UN reaction, titled *Shake Hand with the Devil*, Lt. Gen. Roméo Dallaire indicts the UN, saying that from the start, the organization was bogged down by bureaucracy, lack of political will and information sharing;

including lack of relevant assistance to the Department for Peacekeeping Mission (DPKO) (2003). While outlining the fact that he pleaded with the UN to come to the rescue of Rwanda when he learnt of the impending genocide, pleas that were ignored and instead the force reduced leaving Rwandans to their fate, he notes that, even at the start, with the exception of Belgium, none of the UN Security Council Members was interested in Rwanda nor was even his home country that was interested in busking in the prestige that came with heading the force commander, but was not interested in sending troops for fear of the costs that would be involved (2003).

With all the five full permanent members of the UN-France, Russia, China, the USA and Britain, he notes they had full knowledge of what was happening through their well equipped and manned embassies in Kigali; and later, through his detailed briefing as well. As she notes, only China did not close its embassy in Kigali during the genocide; and was also well informed about what was happening; a factor it opposed the total withdraw of UNAMIR strongly supported by Belgium after the slaughter of its ten soldiers.

In similar fashion, Linda Melvern also says that UN was well informed of the deteriorating security situation, including the fact that, towards the end of February 1994, Belgium warned that UNAMIR would be unable to contain order unless it was bolstered and if this was not done, it would not remain passive when its soldiers were at risk. She cites a telefax of February 25, from Belgium foreign ministry noting that if peacekeepers would not be supported so they can be able to maintain public order, 'It would be unacceptable if Belgian troops were to find themselves as passive witnesses to a genocide about which the UN would do nothing. If the conditions deteriorated further, the UN and the Belgians can hardly, in reality, withdraw. UNAMIR must play a more active role...and reinforce the credibility of the international community' (2005:103-104). All this warning, and many more, including a capable force commander to UN headquarters detailing a genocide, says Linda Melvern, was ignored.

In all, to arm and equip the genocidal regime, cost US\$112m (2006:67). She also documents the fraudulently and manipulated audit system on the part of the Habyarimana regime to justify use of funds, Melvern notes that it is surprising that the World Bank, which sent a team to supervise the use of funds under SAP between June 1991 to October 1993 failed to detect systematic manipulation of the audit system, and continued to fund the genocide regime; at least until May 31, 1994.

4. Conclusion?

As noted, throughout this paper, the Rwandan conflict of the 1990s and the genocide of 1994 is largely documented historically in terms of causes, processes, effect, victim and perpetrator. Some minimally discuss rescuers. No research systematically, and exhaustively discuss the conflict, and indeed the genocide in relation to bystanders; although roles of external actors like UN, France, Belgium, Uganda and other countries is fairly presented.

In view of the largely acknowledged agency underlying the commission of the crime of genocide among researchers, and the ongoing state-engineered agency in reconciliation, we would recommend a systematic study into the nature, magnitude, actions/inactions of bystanders-both internal and external.