

# Forget The Guardian, the world will soon wake up to Michela Wrong's propaganda technics

Albert Rudatsimburwa

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If Michela Wrong had hoped that her recent book would change the world's perception of Rwanda, it appears President Macron's visit rained on her parade. Wrong's "The world is slowly waking up to Paul Kagame's brutal actions in Rwanda," falls short of elaborating on what "world", beyond her narrow definition, she is referring to. The Guardian is complicit because what should have been an opinion piece based on facts looks more like a desperate attempt to attach her hostile views of Rwanda to the world. It is, in the classical sense, what one would call propaganda hit job.

First, there is the repeated use of "anonymous western" commentators to give a veneer of legitimacy to her talking points. There are anonymous European diplomats, analysts and development officials who apparently cannot disclose their identities for reasons that only the author

knows. But given her hostility towards Rwanda's leadership, one can rightly assume that these sources are not just anonymous; they are fictional. Without them, the hit job falls flat since only two characters are left in the rest of the fiction.

One is Gerard Prunier, a French journalist who revealed his direct participation in a regime change project aimed at overthrowing the Rwandan government back in 1998 in one of his book titled "Africa's World war". The second is none other than David Himbara, a disgraced and self-exiled former official with an axe to grind, a narcissist who spends his days on the internet slandering the Rwandan government.

Wrong had to invent the anonymous analysts, European diplomats and development officials in order to create the impression that more and more people, beyond the usual circles of Rwanda bashers, are buying into

her narrative and that they are “waking up” to whatever distortion of facts and history she wants to sell.

Second, there is a cynical attempt to use the ethnic card to mobilize hostility towards Rwanda. “The fact that many of the regime’s targets have not been members of the Hutu majority but Kagame’s own Tutsi minority – many of them formerly trusted insiders at that – has not gone unremarked in the west,” Wrong claims while inadvertently revealing her narrow definition of the “world”. Indeed, if the world is circumscribed to the West, then, clearly, President Macron, a western leader, is not dancing to Wrong’s tune.

Moreover, the fact that Wrong projects her own racism – which espouses Hutu-Power ideals as demonstrated by British investigative journalist Linda Melvern - onto Rwandans has not gone unremarked in Rwanda. Yes, Diane Rwigara, Kizito Mihigo, Kayumba Nyamwasa and Patrick Karegeya - Wrong’s self-declared “seductive handler” whose “smooth honey” she fondly describes in her book – have all been charged in Rwandan courts. All, Except Diane Rwigara, were convicted. And, as it should be in any country governed by the rule of law, their ethnicity was irrelevant to the courts.

As for assassination attempts on the lives of some amongst those, we are still waiting for Wrong to provide

the evidence implicating the Rwandan government. So far, it has been one unfounded allegation after another, and The Guardian, a supposedly reliable newspaper, seems unwilling to hold her to account.

Third, there is the constant attempt to blame the RPF for the tragedy that befell the Democratic Republic of Congo. But Wrong is unable to blame Rwanda without departing from her racist lenses. For instance, in reference to the refugees that were held in hostage by genocidaires in Zaire’s refugee camps, Wrong quotes Gerard Prunier who affirms that “You can kill hundreds of thousands without it having much international impact, but jail an elderly mother, and it changes forever the way allies see you.”

The fact that Wrong and Prunier are allowed to distort the context in which historical events took place speaks to all that is still bad about their “world”. Twenty-seven years is not long enough to forget about how that “world” looked the other way while more than a million Tutsis were murdered. The same world looked the other way while genocidaires were being re-armed in those camps and launching attacks on Rwanda with the stated intention to finish the “work”. Yet, Wrong thinks that Rwanda – and not her “world” and the genocidaires it protected and still protect from prosecution – is to blame

for the deaths that occurred during the dismantling of the refugee camps in which people were made human shields as genocidaires openly reorganised to complete the genocide.

But we know better, don't we? The moving testimony of Rwandan Senator Marie-Rose Mureshyakano was a timely reminder of what we should hold dear. Her testimony gives informed insight into what actually happened in former Zaire.

"I told you how Inkotanyi (RPA soldiers) rescued me... I told you how they rescued my husband who was in critical condition and took us to Mbandaka airport and then took us back to Rwanda in a plane... Inkotanyi saved me from my Hutu identity. I felt like they would kill me because I was a Hutu. They changed my identity because they showed me their uniqueness," Senator Mureshyakano recalls.

It is this uniqueness that Wrong

disputes from the vantage point of her racism because she is unable to conceive Rwanda and Rwandaness beyond ethnic labels. Indeed, in the lenses of genocide deniers, Rwanda was and will remain the belligerence of tribes.

As President Kagame said during the press conference held jointly with his French counterpart, "Rwanda could easily have remained a failed state. Some may even have felt vindicated by that. Others actually worked to make sure that Rwanda failed." Rwandans know where, in those categories, to place Michela Wrong, although she might need to work harder if she wants other countries to join the U.S and the UK governments in the rewriting of Rwandan history. We are used to the lectures on human rights and can easily accommodate them. But no country is powerful enough, to change the historical facts around the Genocide against Tutsi.