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Manipulating the Present to Recall the Past and Foretell the Future:

Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines Broadcasts in Pre-Genocide Rwanda

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction

of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

in African Studies

by

Theo B. Gragg

2012

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Manipulating the Present to Recall the Past and Foretell the Future:

Radio Télévision Libre des Milles Collines Broadcasts in Pre-Genocide Rwanda

by

Theo B. Gragg

Master of Arts in African Studies

University of California, Los Angeles, 2012

Professor Sondra Hale, Chair

This thesis examined Radio Télévision Libre des Milles Collines (RTLM) broadcasts that aired in Rwanda between October 1993 and April 1994, prior to the genocide that began on April 6, 1994. The goal was to determine how the RTLM, which was created by members of then President Habyarimana's inner circle, manipulated its reporting of events to create an extremist anti-Tutsi message.

The methodology of this thesis involved analysis of a collection of pre-genocide broadcasts and historical contextualization of these broadcasts using a number of relevant sources.

Two major themes predominated: the outside threat of the Rwanda Patriotic Front's purported desire to rule absolutely, a threat ultimately conflated with the overall notion of a Tutsi plot; and the presence of traitors within the country, portrayed as consisting of moderate Hutu politicians within the transitional government. The RTL M manipulated ongoing events to link to a past that supported an extremist message.

The thesis of Theo B. Gragg is approved.

Edward A. Alpers

Ghislaine E. Lydon

Sondra Hale, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2012

Table of Contents

I.	Introduction	1
II.	Thesis Statement and Research Questions	3
III.	Scholarship and the Role of the RTLM	5
IV.	Methodology	9
V.	Historical Background	11
VI.	Pre-Genocide RTLM Broadcasts	20
	<i>The Ndadaye Assassination and the Rise of “Hutu Power”</i>	22
	<i>Never Ending Violence</i>	30
	<i>History Lessons</i>	37
	<i>Going Forward: Themes Revisited</i>	40
VII.	Conclusion	49
VIII.	Appendix	54
IX.	Bibliography	56

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I

Introduction

By Easter Sunday, April 3, 1994, Rwanda was a country on the edge. It had been three and a half years since the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) had crossed the Ugandan border and started what amounted to a civil war. The RPF was composed mainly of Ugandan-based, Tutsi refugees and their children who had fled Rwanda in the 1960s following the Hutu Revolution of 1959.¹ However, by the late 1980s, facing an uncertain future in Uganda, the RPF began petitioning the government of Rwanda for the right to return. When negotiations stalled, the Tutsi-led guerrilla force crossed the Ugandan border into Rwanda in October 1990. There had been endless negotiations since a first ceasefire that same month and by April 3, 1994 the country was still awaiting the full implementation of a transitional government in the wake of the most recent peace agreement signed in Arusha, Tanzania in August 1993. However, despite the aforementioned peace agreement, the violence had never really ceased. An increasing number of attacks conducted by the RPF, extremist Hutu groups, and pro-government forces throughout March 1994 only increased the general sense of unease (Prunier 1995: 206-212).

Amidst this atmosphere of heightened tension, Radio-Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM), a semi-independent radio station, continued its broadcasting schedule. Radio show host Noel Hitimana² told his listeners the following:

¹ An explanation of the Hutu/Tutsi dynamic is provided in the Historical Background chapter below.

² Hitimana was a very popular broadcaster for the station. He had started his career in the late 1970s as a journalist for Radio Rwanda and developed a personable and playful style that resonated with his Rwandan listeners. Hitimana was eventually fired from Radio Rwanda for unspecified reasons. Some claim that it was because he insulted President Juvénal Habyarimana while under the influence of alcohol. Others believe alcohol was not involved but

I have accomplices within the RPF. Oh ho! There are accomplices, there are accomplices who have brought us news. They have told us that on the 3rd, the 4th, and the 5th there will be something in this city of Kigali ... even the 7th and the 8th. So you may hear the sound of bullets or the sound of grenades but I hope that the Rwandan Armed Forces are vigilant, there are cowards.” (RTLM Tape 129, April 3 1994)³

This oft-cited segment was played in front of the court at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) during the media trial several years later (Melvern 2004: 126). Hitimana’s statement and several other statements he made during the same broadcast have often been interpreted as a sign that the RTLM station had advance warning of coming events (Article 19 1996: 101-104).

Indeed, in light of what happened next, this broadcast seems oddly prescient. Rwanda President Juvénal Habyarimana’s plane was shot down on the evening of April 6th on its return from Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Within hours the Rwandan Armed Forces (FAR) had erected barricades in the streets of Kigali. With the help of the Interahamwe, a Hutu extremist militia, they began rounding up opposition Hutu and prominent Tutsis. Over the next hundred days, the FAR, the Interahamwe, and ordinary people identified as Hutus killed around 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus (Prunier 1995: 304) in what many have called a genocide.⁴

that he had simply exhausted the patience of his employers with all of his antics. There is general agreement that Hitimana did enjoy drinking. He has been described as having had a fondness for alcohol with some characterizing him as an alcoholic (Li 2007: 101-103; Monasebian 2007: 324-5).

³ The transcript of RTLM Tape 129 is part of a collection of one hundred transcripts collected by the International Monitor Institute. A more detailed explanation of the collection and my access to it is provided in the Methodology chapter below.

⁴ The international community’s response to the genocide was slow. The United States, for example, took great pains to avoid using the term as the death toll in Rwanda continued to rise between April and July 1994. However, as evidence that the killing of Tutsis in Rwanda was a targeted affair rather than the result of spontaneous violence, the world finally responded. On November 8, 1994, the United Nations Security Council created the ICTR. The court was “established for the prosecution of persons responsible for genocide and other serious violations of

II

Thesis Statement and Research Questions

General scholarship about the genocide in Rwanda has focused on the RTLM as a tool of Habyarimana's inner circle and the growing number of extremist Hutu political parties that came into being following the RPF invasion (African Rights 1995; Des Forges 1999; Prunier 1995). Other, more media-centric studies, have added layers of analysis that include how historical factors played a role in the RTLM broadcasts' interpretation of the events leading to the genocide and beyond (Article 19 1996; Chalk 1999; Chrétien 1995, 1995b, 2007; Des Forges 2007). Yet another group has included analyses of how the broadcasts were received by the public at large and drawn theories about the interplay between the radio station and its audience (Li 2007; Kellow and Steeves 1998; Kimani 2007; Mironko 2007; Monasebian 2007).

My thesis builds on the above work and the introductory quote highlights the importance of the RTLM broadcasts in setting up the genocide. However, this thesis will not focus on the question of the RTLM responsibility or the issue of the station's complicity with the genocidal regime. Instead, my primary questions involve how the broadcasts evolved and the way in which the broadcasters developed their focus. How did the pre-genocide broadcasts, beginning in October 1993, transform into a predictive segment that announced or foretold the imminent death of Habyarimana? How did the RTLM broadcasters interpret events? What links did they make to

international humanitarian law committed in the territory of Rwanda between 1 January 1994 and 31 December 1994." <http://www.unictr.org/AboutICTR/GeneralInformation/tabid/101/Default.aspx>

It should be noted that there is a community of genocide deniers that has consistently maintained that no such event took place. They tend to focus on the war with the RPF and claim either that the killings were a result of the chaotic situation on the ground or that the body count reflects an equal number of RPF victims. Though a fascinating subject, I did not focus on that scholarship in this thesis.

the recent and more distant past? How were these events manipulated to establish the dual themes of RPF dominance, the threat from without, and Rwandan politicians complicit with the RPF, the threat from within? How did these broadcasts set the tone for future broadcasts which grew increasingly virulent in tone?

The specific focus of this thesis relies on two pre-genocide broadcasts, though others will be cited, that established the tone for future RTLM broadcasts in the months leading up to the genocide. Following previous interpretations (African Rights 1995; Article 19 1996; Des Forges 1999), the assassination of the Burundian president in October 1993 was a starting point. Of equal importance was the attack that took place in the northern prefecture of Ruhengeri in November 1993. The two broadcasts that followed these events established the themes of the threat of RPF dominance, which almost from the beginning was conflated with a more general Tutsi threat, and the notion of an enemy within which targeted specific politicians in opposition to Habyarimana's political party. The latter position evolved to include any and all demonstrating a willingness to share power with the RPF. These two themes came to dominate all subsequent RTLM broadcasts.

III

Scholarship and the Role of the RTLM

Among those who have studied the Rwandan genocide there is little debate about the RTLM's key role. General accounts of the genocide invariably include passages if not entire sections devoted to the role of the radio station both before and after Habyarimana's death. For example: "Radio RTLM, which had incited to genocide before April 6, communicated the orders for implementing the killings after that date. It instructed people to erect barriers and carry out searches; it named persons to be targeted and pointed out areas which should be attacked" (Des Forges 1999: 25). Similarly: "After 6 April, RTLM did not mince its words. It told the Hutu population that 'the Tutsis need to be killed,' calling on the population to 'hunt out the Tutsi' and telling them that 'the RPF is coming to kill people; so defend yourselves'" (African Rights 1995: 80).

Detailed studies devoted to the role of RTLM have also been conducted from a variety of issues and theories. Several have focused on the logistics of the RTLM, how it came into being, where it fit into the larger media landscape, and its culpability in both inciting and helping to perpetuate the genocide (Chrétien 1995, Des Forges 2007, and Article 19 1996). These studies often note the immense initial popularity of the station and the fact that its initial programming consisted mostly of music and had little in the way of propaganda (Chrétien 1995: 69). Likewise, the station's "western-style radio talk show style" added to its popularity (Article 19 1996: 84-87). There is general agreement that the assassination of Burundian President Melchior Ndadaye on October 21, 1993 marked the beginning of RTLM's more vitriolic campaign against Tutsis and moderate Hutus (Article 19 1996: 87; Des Forges 2007: 45; Monasebian 2007: 310).

Likewise, that date also marked the beginning of RTLM's program of direct targeting of certain officials viewed as hostile to the station's message (Article 19 1996: 91-93; Chrétien 1995: 73; Des Forges 2007: 45; Monasebian 2007: 320-23). However, analysis of the broadcasts surrounding the assassination focus mainly on RTLM's gross misreporting of the event. Though the station's exaggerated depiction of the assassination is significant, I hope to demonstrate that the vitriol was only part of the problem. The more disturbing aspect of the broadcast was the links broadcasters made between the Burundian Tutsis and the larger Tutsi diaspora. This connection was essential to pave the way for future broadcasts that more clearly identified a so – called Tutsi problem.

Other studies have taken slightly different angles in attempts to explain the role of RTLM. For instance, one study linked the level of incitement in the station's broadcasts to the movements of the RPF and suggests that the station's programming evolved into a genocide-inciting tool. RTLM, according to this study, was not designed for mass murder but changed into such an entity as a result of its broadcasters reacting to events on the ground (Kimani 2007). This particular study focuses on the broadcasts after the April 6th murder of Habyarimana. Again, there is little to disagree with on the surface but I maintain that the reaction of the broadcasters, whether consciously or not, was to manipulate earlier events to introduce a focus on their primary themes: the Tutsi threat and the traitors within the country. In other words, a focus on the post April 6th broadcasts alone, the actual period of genocide, neglects the equally important period before the genocide when the station laid the groundwork for what was to come.

There is also a theory, that RTLM's role was a result of the country's dependence on radio for news and information. The study in question points to radio programming that appears

to have a causal link to specific moments of extreme violence. As such, what the authors term “media-dependency” is viewed as a root cause of the genocide though they make clear that the radio alone cannot explain the mass-participation in the violence (Kellow and Steeves 1998). Similarly, another study concluded that the RTLM programming was reaching as much as 90 percent of the rural population and was instrumental in inciting the genocide (Chalk 1999: 94-95). Other commentators have more explicitly rejected a causal relationship between RTLM’s programming and the violent actions of Rwandans during the genocide. Although acknowledging the station’s attempts and occasional success at inciting violence, the study, which consisted of almost 100 interviews with people who had confessed to acts of genocide, concluded that many people did not necessarily listen to the radio and others tuned out the message (Mironko 2007). This particular study focused on Rwandans outside of the major cities, which is to say the agricultural workers in rural parts of the country.

Then there are those who, although acknowledging the deplorable content of RTLM’s programming and the considerable influence it had, nonetheless suggest that the radio is only part of the story and grant it only so much agency. In one case, the RTLM is described as a vehicle through which the ordinary Rwandan engaged in a “dialogic process” in an attempt to achieve greater understanding of the chaotic and violent situation in which he/she found themselves. The radio “shaped” the actions of some but did not “determine them” (Li 2007: 103).

Finally, for some, the role of RTLM was unequivocal in that it played on certain historical themes that were part of the underlying dynamic of the genocide. The station’s broadcasts brought back the ethnic cleavages of the past which had become less dominant in pre-

1990 Rwanda (Chrétien 2007: 56). The notion advanced in this study is that RTLM reignited the “majority rule” campaign that was prevalent in the country at the end of colonization. This is particularly pertinent to this thesis as I will demonstrate the extent to which “history lessons” were emphasized as a warning to those who accepted the possibility of a power-sharing government with the RPF.

My intention here was not to refute any of these theories or studies but to build on those that lend themselves to a close reading of the RTLM transcripts at my disposal. In particular, I focus on historical themes and how the RTLM broadcasters used their interpretation of Rwandan history to provide context for their twin messages: the threat of RPF dominance and the dangers of traitors within the Rwandan government. A later section will outline the historical themes in question. I combine those themes with a second useful approach, that of viewing the programming through the lens of actual events, not so much in an attempt to explain the genocide or explain why so many people took part. Rather, I demonstrate through my analysis how manipulating history helped the RTLM broadcasters present their version of the present. That present included the existence of threats so extreme to their vision of Rwanda as to warrant the possibility of genocide as a response.

IV

Methodology

For my analysis, I used transcripts of pre-genocide RTLM broadcasts that aired between October 1993 and April 1994. These transcripts were gleaned from a database, the Rwanda Audio Archive that the International Monitor Institute (IMI), a Los Angeles-based NGO, put together for the ICTR. The court had collected hundreds of tapes of RTLM broadcasts recorded by various individuals and agencies. ICTR personnel then transcribed the tapes and translated them from Kinyarwanda into French and English depending on the translator's language abilities. In 1997, the court selected one hundred of what it deemed to be the most significant transcripts in its collection and commissioned IMI to build a database. A former prosecutor for the ICTR, Gregory Gordon, designed the database in accordance with the court's request. I was an analyst on the project and helped assemble the database while also doing much of the analysis of the transcripts.⁵

The work consisted of organizing the transcripts into logical passages and manageable lengths for entry into the database, providing analytic summaries of the passages with an emphasis on the themes the court was most interested in, and checking a series of boxes that highlighted themes such as "anti-Tutsi rhetoric," "direct targeting of individuals," "anti-RPF rhetoric," etc. The project was completed by early 1999 and the database was sent to the court. The database was used primarily in the ICTR's "media trial" in which two of the three defendants had close ties to RTLM. Ferdinand Nahimana and Jean-Bosco Barayagwiza were both founders of the station and part of its steering committee. The third defendant in the trial

⁵ For a list of the broadcasts used in this thesis, please see the Appendix.

was Hassan Ngeze a journalist and editor of *Kangura* one of the extremist newspapers that surfaced following the RPF attack on Rwanda in October 1990. Although indicted separately, the three men were tried as a group. In December 2003, the court issued a judgment declaring the three men guilty of several charges including genocide and conspiracy to commit genocide (ICTR 2003: 28-29). Shortly thereafter, the court sent a letter to the representatives of IMI commending the organization for its work on the Rwanda Audio Archive. IMI closed its offices in 2002 and the Rwanda Audio Archive was donated to the Duke University Libraries. The majority of the transcripts I am using are available online at the University of Texas Libraries Digital Repository.

The focus of my thesis is on two key events that took place prior to the genocide and the manner in which RTLM reported these events: the assassination of Melchior Ndadaye, the Burundian president, on October 21, 1993 and the attack that took place in the north of Rwanda in Ruhengeri prefecture on November 17-18, 1993. Examining these events through the lens of the RTLM broadcasts I suggest that certain historical patterns re-emerged which helped pave the way for the eventual genocide. I add to that the notion that the broadcasts painted with a broad brush and included anyone unsympathetic to Habyarimana's party as part of a traitorous group. In developing my analysis I depended heavily on the works of Des Forges and Prunier who, along with Africa Rights, produced the most detailed accounts of events on the ground.

Historical Background

The following is a brief background of Rwanda's pre-genocide history with an emphasis on the themes in the RTLM broadcasts that are the subject of this thesis. Also included is a brief description of RTLM's origins. Although not comprehensive, this primer is designed to help understand the analysis of the RTLM broadcasts that follows. As such, it touches on certain historical facts that re-surface during the broadcasts as well as the general state of Rwanda in the early 1990s.

Background to Genocide

The German colonization of Rwanda began in 1896. The territory had emerged as a major state in the 18th century and was composed of farmers and cattle-raising herders. At the time of colonization, the central state was still in the process of consolidating its power. Though the Rwandan kingdom had greatly enhanced its power through conquest, several territories in the northwest and northeast were resistant to central rule and maintained a kind of semi-independence. Under German colonial rule, that independence was sacrificed. The Germans ruled indirectly through the existing central state and those previously independent territories were rather suddenly included in the larger colonial entity. (Des Forges 1999: 31-34)

The Belgians took control of Rwanda following the end of the First World War. Where the Germans had been largely absentee rulers, the Belgians were more involved. Although they continued with the strategy of indirect rule, they first instituted some significant changes to Rwandan society. Among other things, the existing monarchy, which was the exclusive domain

of Tutsis but with certain checks and balances, became the instrument through which the Belgians ruled the country. If the Tutsi authorities had to answer to the Belgian power structure, they were left largely unchecked in their dealings with the Hutu and the majority of Tutsis who were not a part of the ruling clans. Hutus and Tutsis represent a pre-colonial caste system, and a quite fluid one at that, but the colonial authorities misinterpreted the situation. The Belgians, with the help of the French Catholic priests already on the ground and well-versed in Rwandan culture and politics, introduced a racial theory of Tutsi dominance. The Belgian *Ministères des Colonies* reported that:

The Mututsi of good race has nothing of the negro, apart from his color. He is usually very tall ... He is very thin ... His features are very fine: a high brow, thin nose and fine lips framing beautiful shining teeth ... Gifted with a vivacious intelligence, the Tutsi displays a refinement of feelings which is rare among primitive people. He is a natural-born leader, capable of extreme self-control and of calculated goodwill. (Quoted in Prunier 1995: 34)

In support of this description, much was made about the origins of the Tutsis as coming from the “North” or as having descended the Nile. They were “Egyptian” or “Ethiopian;” a clearly superior race that had colonized the Hutu.

As for the Hutu, the same institution reported that:

The Bahutu display very typical Bantu features ... They are generally short and thick-set with a big head, a jovial expression, a wide nose and enormous lips. They are extroverts who like to laugh and lead a simple life. (Quoted in Prunier 1995: 6)

The Tutsi were deemed superior because of their alleged similarities with the white European race and therefore meant to rule and placed in charge of the Hutus. Thus while pre-colonial

Rwandan society had previously included positions for Hutu chiefs, the Belgians eliminated all such positions in favor of Tutsis. Likewise, various forms of client relationships between Tutsi and Hutu were overturned. Whereas in the past, the Hutu client could expect a certain amount of material and social benefit from the Tutsi patron, the Hutu was now simply expected to work under the overseeing eye of the Tutsi administrator with all profits to the colonial administration. The same was true of education, which was almost the exclusive right of the Tutsi population. Although Tutsis assumed positions of power and gained land the Hutus were excluded from power and deprived of land holdings, and as a result resentment toward the Tutsis by Hutus began to grow. (Prunier 1995: 23-41, Des Forges 1999: 34-36)

Following the end of the second world war, it became clear that African states were intent on becoming independent states and, in sharp contrast to their policies in the neighboring Congo, the Belgians began preparing for a transfer of power. In 1957, a group of Hutu intellectuals published what came to be known as the “Bahutu Manifesto.” They viewed the problems in Rwanda as linked to the issue of “race” and the Tutsi desire to command at all costs. The Hutu writers stated that “the political, economic and social monopolies [created by the Tutsi] turn into a cultural monopoly which condemns the desperate Bahutu to be forever subaltern workers.” (Prunier 1995: 45-46) This manifesto was, in many respects, the first example of the discourse which led eventually to genocide. Curiously, a shift in attitudes towards the Tutsi-Hutu divide began to take shape as the Belgian colonial administrators increasingly began promoting Hutu rights and primacy with the following results: In November 1959, a group of Tutsis assaulted a Hutu sub-chief. In retaliation, Hutus attacked Tutsis across the country killing hundreds and forcing thousands to flee. The Belgians did little in the way to stem the violence. This was the beginning of what has been called the “Hutu Revolution” which lasted

until September 1961 at which point Rwandans voted to end the Tutsi monarchy and begin transition to a Hutu-dominated government. Then, in 1961, some of the Tutsis who were now refugees in the neighboring countries of Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi, and the Congo, began attacking Rwanda in an effort to re-claim their lost land. No less than ten attacks took place between 1961 and 1967. In a case of spiraling deterioration, Hutus attacked Tutsis and by 1967 some 20,000 Tutsis had been killed and an additional 300,000 had become refugees in the countries noted above (Des Forges 1999: 38-40).

The Rwandan Genocide

The genocide in Rwanda took place over a period of little more than three months, roughly between April and July 1994. It was the culmination of a series of events that began in October 1990 when a group of Tutsis calling themselves the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), crossed the Ugandan border and invaded Rwanda. The RPF was composed mainly of the descendants of Tutsi exiles who had fled to Uganda following the initial wave of killings in Rwanda between 1959 and 1967. These men and women had proved instrumental in Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni's rise to power and were well-versed in the art of guerrilla warfare. Responding to an uncertain future in Uganda, the RPF began contemplating a return to the homeland in the late 1980s. Rebuffed by the government of Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana, they saw little choice but to launch their invasion. With the help of the French, the Rwandan Armed Forces (FAR) were able to repel the initial attack, but the RPF re-grouped and eventually formed something of a base in the hills of Byumba in the northern part of Rwanda.

What followed was three and a half years of low-scale war as the RPF negotiated with Habyarimana's government. It is worth noting that Rwanda was already undergoing a period of turmoil, RPF or not. The end of the Cold War and the falling prices of coffee and tin combined with an exploding population had already resulted in an economic crisis. Further complicating the situation was French President Mitterand's insistence that Rwanda and the other Francophone African states conduct multi-party elections. Habyarimana had been in power since 1973 and had grown accustomed to the accompanying benefits. His one-party government, the Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement (MRND) had ruled with no opposition since coming to power. Interestingly, Habyarimana had changed the Hutu-Tutsi dynamic from one rooted in the notion of racial difference to a less stringent ethnic division. The differences between the two groups were noted but a system of quotas was established and Tutsis in Rwanda experienced greater opportunity and less oppression than they had under the previous regime. Nonetheless, Mitterand's call for multi-party elections was met with great enthusiasm within some circles in Rwanda and several new parties were formed. The RPF invasion of 1990 only added to the general state of upheaval.

In reaction to the new parties, the RPF attack, and the general spirit of change, Habyarimana's wife, Agathe Habyarimana, and some of her relatives, continued efforts which had begun in the 1980s to consolidate their power. In many ways, the RPF invasion was quite fortuitous for this little group which came to be known first as the "clan de Madame" and later as the "akazu," meaning "little house." Several factors contributed to the rise of the akazu. Habyarimana's ascension in 1973 signaled a shift in regional power dynamics. Whereas the previous regime was composed of Hutus from central and southern Rwanda, Habyarimana's loyalties lay in the north, specifically in Gisenyi prefecture. More importantly, the new president

was largely a self-made man with inauspicious origins. In fact there were persistent rumors that he was the descendant of Ugandan or Zairian immigrants. His wife Agathe, on the other hand, was the daughter of a powerful clan head in the north. She could claim lineage to a family that had held power in pre-colonial times and resisted German and Belgian incursion. This provided Habyarimana with the kind of social standing that was otherwise lacking from his personal history. Thus his inner circle, those who helped him rise to power and maintain his presidency, consisted largely of people related to or linked to Agathe Habyarimana. In the 1980s, as the Rwandan economy suffered, the akazu conspired to consolidate their hold on power and eliminate real and imagined enemies of the regime (Prunier 1995: 85-87). When Mitterand's call for multi-party elections threatened the status quo, the RPF invasion provided the akazu with a useful enemy to focus on.

Additionally, although Habyarimana proved to be a skilled politician when it came to his own survival, there was little doubt that eventually multi-party politics would become a reality thereby threatening the akazu's hold on power. The RPF and the constant threat of war provided fertile ground for more extremist points of view and the akazu obliged. This is the group most responsible for planning and implementing the genocide. They helped establish extremist parties and funded newspapers, magazines, and ultimately a radio station while initiating a virulent propaganda campaign against Tutsis. More importantly, once negotiations with the RPF resulted in a power-sharing agreement and it became evident that multi-party elections would eventually take place, the akazu was instrumental in helping Habyarimana extend the process indefinitely. As such, although an agreement with the RPF and opposition parties was reached in August 1993 (known as the Arusha Accords), establishing a transitional government with RPF representation, Habyarimana and the MRND were able to stall the process to such an extent that eight months

later there had been no visible progress. In fact, it was not until January 1994 that a contingent of RPF politicians and military leaders moved into Kigali. By this time several organizations, most prominently the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), had issued warnings that plans for large scale massacres were in place. Prunier has painted a picture of near chaos on the ground in Kigali and a population anticipating the worse. Gunshots could be heard almost every night, and every day people disappeared. There were rumors of lists and hidden weapon caches.

Then, on April 6, 1994, Habyarimana's plane was shot down on its arrival into Kigali. He was returning from Arusha and another round of regional negotiations. Within 45 minutes of the assassination, Rwandan troops began circulating around Kigali and rounding up Tutsis and moderate Hutus. Meanwhile the Interahamwe, the extremist Hutu militia, had begun setting up roadblocks. The genocide had begun and before the end of the week it was being implemented throughout Rwanda. Within two days, the RPF joined the fray and declared war on the Rwandan army. By July 1994 when the RPF finally took over the government in Kigali, some 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus had been killed.

Origins of the RTLM

It is worth briefly describing the context in which RTLM was established in April 1993. Prior to the RPF invasion of 1990, Radio Rwanda was the only radio station operating in the country. It was part of the state-controlled Office d'Information Rwandaise (ORINFOR), and offered a fairly bland and neutral slate of programs. However, in December 1990, two months after the RPF invasion, Christophe Mfizi, director of ORINFOR was replaced by Ferdinand Nahimana.

Nahimana was an intellectual and a historian of some repute in French and Belgian circles. It was therefore with some consternation that scholars witnessed his growing allegiance with the extremist Hutu philosophy. Indeed, almost as soon as he took over, Nahimana began allowing increasingly vicious anti-Tutsi propaganda over the airwaves. This culminated in March 1992 with five broadcasts reporting the discovery of a Tutsi plot to eliminate the Hutus. Radio Rwanda reported that a “human rights group” based in Nairobi, Kenya, had discovered a Tutsi authored leaflet advocating the massacre of the Hutu population. The broadcasts contained a warning to all Hutus and advised the population to defend themselves. On the basis of these broadcasts, a government ally in the region of Bugesera organized the local Hutu population and called on the Interahamwe to intervene. For five days in March, Tutsis were hunted down and massacred. A total of 300 Tutsis were killed (Chrétien 1995: 48-61).

Under international pressure, Habyarimana discharged Nahimana and Radio Rwanda returned to its previous programming. However, the damage had been done. Nahimana and the akazu had witnessed the power of radio broadcasts to engage and incite local populations. A member of the akazu tasked Nahimana with acquiring a radio tower. He was successful and in April 1993 RTLM was established. The majority of the station’s shareholders consisted of members of Habyarimana’s inner circle and staunch supporters of the MRND. In fact, forty of the fifty original shareholders were Rwandans from the three northern prefectures of Gisenyi, Ruhengeri, and Byumba and most had close ties to the akazu. Although Habyarimana had ostensibly “fired” Nahimana, there is no question that the historian retained his status as a close member of the president’s inner circle (Article 19 1996: 72). RTLM began broadcasting in July 1993. The programming was an immediate success throughout Rwanda. With the new radio station, Nahimana created a Western-style talk show format. A number of outgoing,

“professional personalities” were hired as hosts, some with apparently genuine comedic talents. RTLM successfully promoted itself as the “voice of the people.” As part of its strategy, it engaged the public in a kind of dialogue: guests were frequently invited to offer their views and experts would come on the radio to issue dire warnings about the Tutsi invasion, the “real” objectives of the RPF, and the complicity of certain moderate politicians and their political parties. It also made frequent “shout-outs” to local people or read letters purportedly received from the listening public relating its concerns about the Tutsi threat (Chrétien 1995: 61-73). The tone was light and humorous but could shift suddenly to angry warnings and vitriolic rhetoric.

VI

Pre-Genocide RTLM Broadcasts

As noted earlier, I propose that an analysis of RTLM's pre-genocide broadcasts reveals two major themes. The first is the RPF's agenda is to achieve control over Rwanda. The RPF, which gradually becomes synonymous with all Tutsis, uses "trickery" and deceit to lull opponents of the MRND into a false sense of security. All of the negotiations aimed at a power-sharing agreement are a mere front for the group's true goal: a return to colonial Tutsi domination of Rwanda. The second theme is that of prominent Hutu politicians within the transitional government and their alleged complicity with the RPF, or more simply, the enemy within. On the surface, this seems rather obvious and hardly surprising. If the RTLM was in fact the creation of a small group of individuals intimately involved with the ruling MRND and motivated by a desire to hold on to power, then these two themes seem logical. However, I believe the more interesting aspect of these broadcasts is the manner in which the themes were introduced and the mechanisms used by the broadcasters to draw these themes out in ever widening circles leading eventually to a "logic of genocide" (Chrétien 1995b). In presenting my argument, I focus closely on two transcripts, the first two in IMI's collection, with occasional references to later broadcasts, and then demonstrate how these set the stage for later commentary.

The analysis is organized into four sections. The first two focus almost exclusively on the two key broadcasts and how they established the dominant themes previously mentioned. Section three touches on specific aspects of two broadcasts and how they re-introduced certain concepts linking the RPF to the colonial past. The fourth section provides a review of the

remaining transcripts in IMI's pre-genocide collection emphasizing the themes introduced in the first two broadcasts.

The Ndadaye Assassination and the Rise of “Hutu Power”

The assassination of Burundian President Melchior Ndadaye on October 21, 1993 was one of the most significant events in the months leading to the genocide. In June 1993, Ndadaye was elected the first Hutu president of neighboring Burundi. He oversaw a peaceful transition and appointed a Tutsi prime minister. For Rwandan Hutus it signaled the possibility of peaceful co-existence with the RPF and also eliminated the threat of an RPF invasion from Burundi (Des Forges 1999: 101). Four months later, Tutsi officers of the Burundian military murdered Ndadaye during a failed coup attempt. This led to a wave of violence with Hutus killing Tutsis and the Tutsi-dominated Burundian army engaging in their own reprisals. An estimated 50,000 people were killed (60% Tutsi, 40% Hutu), 150,000 Tutsis were displaced internally, and 300,000 Hutus crossed the border into Rwanda (Prunier 1995: 199).

For Rwanda, the assassination had great significance. The Hutu population had celebrated Ndadaye’s election and his assassination renewed fears of a Tutsi empire. In the days following the incident, numerous attacks against Tutsis were reported throughout Rwanda. Similarly, extremist rhetoric became more commonplace. The Coalition pour la Defense de la République (CDR) was a Hutu extremist party established in March 1992. Following its inception, the party played the role of spoiler to the MRND’s willingness to negotiate with the RPF and establish a transitional government. However, as a result of its extremist position, the CDR had not been allowed to take part in the negotiations and was not included in the power-sharing agreement. With the assassination of Ndadaye, the situation began to change. At a rally on October 23, 1993, members of the previously moderate Mouvement Démocratique Républicain (MDR) and Parti Liberal (PL), as well as representatives of the CDR and MRND,

gathered to decry the assassination and formally reject cooperation with the RPF. Froduald Karamira, the second vice-president of MDR, gave an inflammatory speech which ended with him shouting “Hutu Power! MRND Power! CDR Power! MDR Power! Interahamwe Power! JDR Power! All Hutu are One Power!” (Des Forges 1999: 101-103). Thus began the rise of the “Hutu power” movement. Hutu power manifested itself as a division created in almost all of the parties between the more moderate segment of the party and a newly created Hutu power division that represented the extremist CDR position. An extremist view of the ethnic problem in Rwanda was suddenly part of the mainstream.

RTLM used these related events, Ndadaye’s murder and the rise of Hutu power to great effect beginning with distorted reports about how the Burundian president was killed. Simply stating that Tutsi officers had murdered Ndadaye in an attempted coup was not enough. Instead, RTLM broadcasters insisted that the president’s corpse was mutilated in an attempt to further humiliate Burundi’s Hutu population. The radio station’s reporting of the event was inflammatory to such a degree that the government took notice. On October 25, 1993, Minister Faustin Rucogoza of the Ministry of Information sent a letter to the station expressing the Ministry’s concern about the vitriol in RTLM’s reporting about Ndadaye (ICTR 2003: para.33).

Unbowed, RTLM used the confluence of all these events in its October 25th broadcast which is where this analysis begins. The transcript features Hitimana making oblique references to Rucogoza’s letter of condemnation without naming the minister. Rather he complains that there are “some who say that RTLM wants to sow discord.” He then bemoans the fact that:

Au Rwanda il n'y a qu'un seul problème, c'est que les gens ne veulent pas que nous nous entendons. Qui ne veut pas que nous ne nous entendons pas? Est-ce des Hutu gourmands? Est-ce

des Hutu qui ne se rappellent pas? Est-ce des Tutsi qui convoient le pouvoir? Est-ce ceux qui sont avides? Qui sont-ils? (RTLMTape 096, October 25, 1993)⁶

The significance of this passage cannot be understated as it introduces the concept of the enemy within, an especially effective tactic in light of Ndadaye's assassination. Hitimana does not answer his rhetorical questions. Instead he suggests that those people who are part of the problem "know themselves" and that "others also know who they are." In keeping the reference vague, he guards against any accusation of targeted attacks against a particular person or group while also suggesting that the enemy within has been identified. However, Hitimana leaves little doubt as to his intentions when he follows up with comments about a CDR gathering the previous day:

Je vous ai dit que comme je venais du stade, j'avais laissé un membre de la CDR, Ségéral Mugimba qui venait d'annoncer à tous les participants que ce qui est nécessaire et bon est que tous les Hutu, que importe leurs différents partis auxquels ils appartiennent puisqu'ils peuvent y rester si ils le veulent, ce n'est pas nécessaire qu'ils adhèrent à la CDR, mais il a prêché la création d'un collectif de leurs partis comme il y a le collectif des associations. Dans ce collectif, les Hutu doivent se reconnaître et savoir là où ils peuvent se rassembler, savoir leur secret. Leur secret, comme les Tutsi ont le leur. (RTLMTape 096, October 25, 1993)

This passage has two significant components. First, the CDR call for a Hutu "collective" is a clear reference to the recent Hutu power phenomenon. In referencing the CDR member's speech, Hitimana is laying the groundwork for a binary reality. At a time when the schisms

⁶ As noted in the Methodology section above, these transcripts were translated by ICTR personnel into French and English. As such, my quotes are in the language of the original ICTR transcript. Other than standardizing the spelling of names and places, IMI did not alter or edit the transcripts.

within Rwanda existed on multiple levels, that is to say between regions, interest groups, and the multiple parties vying for power, the Hutu power dynamic was a way to simplify the issue.

Regardless, of party affiliation or personal interest, Hitimana signaled that all Hutu must stand together. The second, equally important component was the open reference to the “Tutsi secret.” For the first time in the broadcast, Hitimana makes clear that there are two sides regardless of where one stands with respect to the country’s political future: Hutu and Tutsi.

To reinforce his point, Hitimana goes on to comment on the worldwide organizational capabilities of the Tutsi diaspora:

Le secret des Tutsi est connu comme je l'ai demandé aux adhérents et ils m'ont dit que leur secret s'appelle Fund Rising. Fund Rising ça veut dire, disons-le, tout Tutsi du monde où qu'il se trouve est membre d'une organisation, leur organisation, personne ne peut refuser à l'autre l'argent, personne ne peut refuser à l'autre une assistance, personne ne peut manquer à payer l'école à l'autre. Personne ne peut manquer à aider l'autre dans tout son malheur, le libérer de la prison, le défendre au tribunal et j'en passe. (RTLTM Tape 096, October 25, 1993)

The suggestion is clear: all Tutsis are bound together and have organized economically through their fundraising networks. This was an important point to make in order to emphasize the idea that the Tutsis within Rwanda were not above suspicion, even the many that were less than happy with the RPF invasion. Thus having started the passage with a reference to “the enemy within,” Hitimana moved the conversation forward and identified the enemy in broad and simple terms.

Finally, Hitimana is ready to reference Rucogoza openly and he does so, informing the RTLTM listeners that the minister has sent the radio station a letter of condemnation. Rather than

refute the charges himself however, he reads a letter of support sent by Karamira, the same MDR leader who introduced the concept of Hutu Power only days before. The letter reads:

Le Bureau du MDR dans la ville de Kigali, soutient totalement la façon dont la RTLTM a suivi pour nous les actes de tueries perpétrées contre nos frères Burundais. Secundo, constate que le Ministre Rucogoza a une mauvaise intention de cacher la vérité au Rwandais en entravant la presse privée. Tertio, demande au Ministre Rucogoza de bien comprendre et de savoir distinguer la presse gouvernementale, la presse privée et de sa pensée personnelle. Parce que ce qu'il appelle secret de l'État, il y a ceux qui sont chargés de garder ces secrets ainsi donc ne peut-il pas se mêler dans ce qui concerne la presse privée à part que si celle-ci commet des fautes, il peut déposer une plainte et elle serait punie selon les lois. (RTLTM Tape 096, October 25, 1993)

The reading of the letter serves several purposes. Hitimana has already introduced the concept of Hutu power and its significance. This letter allegedly sent by Karamira, firmly aligns RTLTM with the extremist point of view and does so while portraying the radio station as a victim of government interference. Furthermore, Karamira highlights the notion that certain truths are being hidden from Rwandans and that RTLTM is playing an integral role in making sure that the population is informed. Hitimana emphasizes that point in a follow-up comment during which he states that the station's policy is to give everyone a voice.

Having introduced the concept of Hutu power, informed the listeners of the government interference, and promoted the idea of an enemy within, Hitimana turns the broadcast over to

radio host Kantano Habimana⁷, one of the station's most popular broadcasters. He wastes little time and almost immediately begins commenting on the situation in Burundi:

Nous tous, nos yeux sont tournés vers le Burundi. Les mangeurs du chien, si peu nombreux soient-ils, salissent la famille. C'est le proverbe que le Ministre de la Fonction Publique Nyangoma a prononcé en disant que ces sanguinaires des Tutsi du Burundi ont tué la démocratie en tuant de façon atroce le Président élu Ndadaye. Ces mangeurs des chiens ont laissé l'homme et attaqué le cadavre. Nous avons su qu'ils ont enterré clandestinement le cadavre de Ndadaye pour que personne ne voie les mutilations avec lesquelles ces animaux l'ont enterré. De toute les façons qu'ils soient responsables de son sang. (RTLM Tape 096, October 25, 1993)

Quite clearly, Habimana decides to ignore the government warning about inflammatory reporting of the Ndadaye assassination. Instead, he boldly reiterates the claim that Tutsis mutilated the president's corpse. This passage serves a dual purpose. The radio station is clearly establishing itself as an independent force, a voice that will ignore a complicit government's condemnation and continue reporting "the truth." Habimana's comments highlight RTLM's obvious disdain for the government's criticism of their programming. Additionally, Habimana directly targets Burundian Tutsis. He could have emphasized their military background or their role in a small group vying for power. Instead, he says that "Tutsis from Burundi" have killed and mutilated the president. In light of Hitimana's earlier efforts to emphasize the commonality of all Tutsis, Habimana's comments lay the groundwork for the notion of a Tutsi group unbound by nationality.

⁷ Habimana was one of the more popular RTLM broadcasters and widely celebrated for his comedic talents. Previously he had worked for several government newspapers and was also an MRND leader in his home region of Butare (Article 19 1996: 77-78). On a personal note, my Rwandan colleague at IMI, a fluent Kinyarwanda speaker, found himself laughing on several occasions while listening to Habimana despite his own misgivings about the content.

The assassination of Ndadaye reverberates throughout the other pre-genocide broadcasts and is referenced with great frequency. For example, in a November 20, 1993 broadcast, Ferdinand Nahimana talks about the possibility of electing an RPF official as president of Rwanda. He claims that if the election is legitimate, the official would be allowed to take power. However, Nahimana states that the reverse is not true: “The problem will arise if Habyarimana is elected. In fact I fear that even if many candidates who are not RPF members are elected, we will have the same situation as in Burundi” (RTLM Tape 099B, November 20, 1993). With this quote, Nahimana has bridged the Burundi Tutsi – RPF gap. Without making specific claims about Tutsi hegemony, Nahimana has clearly suggested that the RPF will never accept a Hutu president. Their only goal is to achieve power for themselves. More to the point, there was little chance of an RPF official winning a nationwide election based on the RTLM’s notions of majority rule. As such, Nahimana’s proclamation comes across as little more than a prophecy of Habyarimana’s death.

A little over two weeks later, Habimana provides a report from Burundi where he is attending Ndadaye’s funeral. His view of the situation is bleak. He reports that the country is in chaos and that both Hutus and Tutsis have organized themselves into gangs who are carrying out acts of “banditry.” Habimana’s most telling comments, however, are about the increasing tensions between the two ethnic groups. He informs the listeners that during the funeral procession, Tutsis stayed away from the roads observing from afar. He then states:

One does wonder: where will that situation lead? In any case, it is clear that the problem based on ethnic lines has become crucial. I asked some of the government's civil servants how they worked. At night, the Tutsi are moving around on night patrols; then during day time, they cannot

work because they sleep. As for the Hutu, they spent the night in the bushes or change houses, so they sleep uncomfortably. (RTLTM Tape 144, December 8, 1993)

These comments are fairly straightforward and taken on their own represent an analysis of the situation in Burundi. The problem is ethnic tensions. Hutus are suffering as Tutsis spend their nights patrolling the country. However, he later makes the connection to Rwanda overt when he states that “the rule of greed is found everywhere and what we observe in Rwanda is also traceable in Burundi” (RTLTM Tape 144). In making that statement, Habimana leaves little doubt about the link he is making between the two countries and the fact that he is establishing all Tutsis as a threat.

Thus, the result of the Ndadaye assassination is a radicalization of the RTLTM position and an opportunity to introduce dynamics that had been largely absent from Rwanda since Habyarimana took power in 1973. Rather suddenly, the station ignores the notion that divisions, other than the most basic one between Hutu and Tutsi, are any longer in play. It informs its listeners that the time to choose has come. Furthermore, the programming links the Tutsis in Burundi to the RPF emphasizing that they are all, in fact one and the same.

Never Ending Violence

If the Ndadaye assassination provided RTLM with the opportunity to begin or increase its rhetoric about an overall Tutsi threat, the violence throughout Rwanda in the pre-genocide period was perfect for emphasizing the threat and tying it to the notion of an enemy within. In the months before the April 6th downing of Habyarimana's plane, there were numerous attacks on groups and individuals as Rwanda, peace agreement aside, was experiencing what at best could be termed a low intensity conflict. For example, on November 17-18, 1993 approximately forty people were killed in the northern prefecture of Ruhengeri following an organized attack by unidentified assailants. Included among the victims were several local authorities (Des Forges, 114). The August 1993 Arusha Accords had designated the area of Ruhengeri as a demilitarized zone (DMZ) and both the RPF and the FAR were allegedly in stand down mode. Nevertheless the attack took place and blame was assigned. On November 23rd, a human rights group called Association des Volontaires de la Paix issued a statement placing blame on the MRND and CDR. Not to be outdone, the CDR called for the resignation of Habyarimana and Prime Minister of the transitional government, Agathe Uwilingiyama, if they did not respond to the attacks and accused them of being accomplices of the RPF (Des Forges, 114).

In the context of these attacks, the RTLM strategy was to sow doubt that the RPF had any designs on peaceful co-existence. A second part of the strategy was to further divide the country, Hutus and Tutsis alike, between those in support of the RPF and those loyal to Rwanda. On the one hand, this meant explaining RPF policies to the listeners and on the other, it involved demonizing any member of the transitional government that continued to negotiate with the RPF. This is exemplified in a November 20, 1993 broadcast. Habimana reports that Uwilingiyama and

Faustin Twagiramungu, a prominent member of the moderate wing of the MDR party and a former prime minister in the transitional government, have sided with the RPF during a recent meeting. There is no description of the meeting and no explanation as to what was discussed, merely that these two Hutu opposition members (to the MRND) expressed loyalty to the RPF. However, Habimana does report that Uwilingiyama was asked about the attack in Ruhengeri and responded that “it is just an incident as many others and others will happen as well” (RTLM Tape 099A, November 20, 1993). Having established Uwilingiyama’s position, Habimana turns his attention to the RPF and states that:

However, we often live amidst the Inkotanyi politics which told us that there were good and bad Hutus. That there are the Bakiga and the Banyenduga. And the Inkotanyi said: “You Banyenduga, you are good people, we resemble each other, we lived and worked together ... For the Bakiga, they are thieves, let us take good care of them.” So, people did not realize that those residents who were lost, who live in refugee camps were Rwandans like the others. That is a pity. (RTLM Tape 099A, November 20, 1993)

Inkotanyi, which means “tough fighters,” was the RPF name for its soldiers (Prunier 1995: 401). Bakiga referred to people from the northern part of Rwanda and the Banyenduga were people from the central and southern part of the country (Des Forges 1999: 153). Habimana was making a direct reference to a non-Tutsi/Hutu cleavage within Rwandan society. As noted in the historical background section above, the north and south under Habyarimana were to some degree at odds with each other. Implicit in Habimana’s comments is the notion that the RPF will attempt to spread discord among Rwandans by openly soliciting one group, from the central and southern parts of the country, while rejecting the other from the north. It is equally evident that Habimana believes the RPF has had some success with this tactic but that people should now

realize that any difference among them is not nearly as strong as the difference between all Rwandans and the RPF. He was attempting to erase any sense of differing loyalties and make it clear that the Inkotanyi were not Rwandans and that those who worked with the RPF were guilty of turning their backs on their countrymen. The point was made clearer in the following passage:

The Inkotanyi also taught us that the parties who work with them are good parties while MRND was bad as well as the other parties they did not allow to participate in the government because they did not want to get close to them except for PDC, which they selected. So, they said: 'MDR, you are good; PSD, you are good; PL, you are good yet MRND is bad. Let us hunt it and crush it. After that, we will sit together and have a drink. You, you are good people.' Still, the one who believes this is stupid because what happens to the others will surely happen to him. So let me not linger over that issue. Maybe, what happened in Ruhengeri is really 'an incident like many others' as said Mrs. Uwilingiyama. (RTL M Tape 099A, November 20, 1993)

Again, the message is relatively clear. The RPF will seek to divide the country by accepting some Rwandans and not others. The Parti Démocrate Chrétien (PC), the Parti Social Démocrate (PSD), the MDR, and the PL were all considered relatively moderate parties willing to negotiate with the RPF and form a power-sharing government. More importantly, they were opposition parties to the MRND. In referencing these parties specifically, Habimana suggests not only that they are complicit with the RPF, which is to say that they deny the Hutu power movement, but that they are also being duped. His warning at the end of the passage is stark: anyone who does not see this dynamic for what it is will surely end up suffering the same fate as the victims of the attack in Ruhengeri. Furthermore, Uwilingiyama's previous quote is re-introduced as a counter-point to Habimana's warning, clearly targeting her as a part of the problem.

This strategy of coupling RPF violence with Hutu opposition members continues throughout this and other broadcasts. In the same November 20 broadcast, Nahimana is introduced as a guest and noted historian. He says he has recently visited the area of Ruhengeri where the attack took place and to have spoken with the local population. He begins by suggesting that the RPF was up to its “usual tricks.” Basically, Nahimana states that the RPF lulls the FAR into a false sense of security by calling ceasefires then ignoring the terms of the agreement. However, he then turns to a specific criticism of certain opposition members. More interestingly, he frames the recent attack in Ruhengeri within the larger context of a previous offensive launched by the RPF in early 1993:

I remember MRND saying that there were many erroneous things in those agreements [Arusha]. They even held demonstrations for that purpose in January. And Twagiramungu, Mugenzi and the Abakombozi commented: ‘MRND does not want peace.’ When hearing that, the Inkotanyi attacked under the pretext that MRND rejected peace. Those men now realize that there were really many erroneous things in those agreements. (RTLTM Tape 099A, November 20, 1993)

This is the beginning of a particularly important passage as Nahimana attempts to link a number of events and issues together in an attempt to push the RTLTM message about threats within the country. At the beginning of the statement, he is referencing a power-sharing agreement that was signed in Arusha on January 9, 1993 following a period of violence that began in late December 1992 in Byumba, another northern prefecture in Rwanda. The agreement called for the establishment of a transitional government with cabinet posts and parliamentary positions divided up between the RPF, MRND, MDR, PL, PSD, and PDC. The CDR, due to its extremist position, was excluded from the power-sharing agreement. When Nahimana states that the MRND said there were “erroneous things in those agreements” he is referring in part to the

party's official complaint about the exclusion of the CDR. The demonstrations Nahimana referenced were held by the MRND and CDR in the weeks that followed. These demonstrations turned violent and by January 26th about 300 people had been killed. The talks in Arusha broke down and on February 8, 1993, the RPF violated the ceasefire and launched an offensive (Prunier 1995: 173-174).

In the next part of the passage, Nahimana highlights the alleged duplicity of moderate politicians and groups at the time. Twagiramungu; Mugenzi, who was head of the PL; and the Abakombozi, the youth wing of the PSD, all of whom were involved in the power-sharing agreement, were among a number of individuals and groups that condemned the violent demonstrations held by the MRND. However, the resulting RPF offensive was even more disastrous in terms of holding together what had already been a tenuous peace. By early March 1993, 860,000 people had been displaced in the wake of the RPF advance. Furthermore, there were numerous and credible reports of RPF atrocities which marked a first since the initial October 1990 invasion (Prunier 1995: 175). The fighting stopped in March as a result of a French-brokered ceasefire but considerable damage had been done as the MRND, and to some extent the CDR, appeared justified in their reluctance to negotiate with the RPF. In Nahimana's account, the moderate politicians and the groups he names are accused of having provided the RPF with permission to launch their attack when they criticized the MRND. On the one hand, they were complicit; on the other hand they were fooled.

The very next part of the transcript in question brings the events back to the more recent November 1993 attack in Ruhengeri. Nahimana states that:

Yesterday, the residents said: “If we have really wanted to understand, we would have understood.” The politicians often told MRND: “It is a medicine. We are making it, drink it.” To tell your people, your supporters, that it is a medicine which they must drink! They said: “We should have then understood.” In fact, such kind of medicine squeezed from medicine herbs kills. It is a poison. So, the residents of the North are taking that poison. That it is what is killing them. (RTLTM Tape 099A, November 20, 1993)

In the above passage, Nahimana makes it clear that “the politicians,” that is to say the moderate opposition parties, forced the MRND into an agreement with the RPF which the latter violated. As a result, the people in the area, “the residents of the North” are suffering from the complicity of those moderate politicians. Any agreement with the RPF is “poison” that is forced down the throats of innocent Rwandans. Nahimana ends his commentary with the following statements:

However, in a political context, that medicine did neither benefit to those who made it. Look at the disorder within political parties. However, what one should say is that if we had been provident, we should have written those agreements in such a way that everybody finds them satisfactory. If not, as they are ... We signed them and now, we see that those who wrote and signed them are the first not to respect them. (RTLTM Tape 099A, November 20, 1993)

Here, Nahimana issues several clear warnings. First, the RPF “medicine” never benefits anyone. Those parties that took part in the negotiations and signed the agreement have suffered as a result. Furthermore, Nahimana suggests that any and all agreements should “satisfy” all parties. Although this appears to be a fairly innocuous statement, in reality it reflects an all or nothing position. The MRND and CDR objected to the initial power-sharing agreement in January 1993 and as a result, Nahimana implies, the agreement should never have been signed. Considering the hardline positions adopted by the MRND and the CDR, he seems to be

suggesting that no agreement with the RPF is possible. This of course is followed up with the notion that the RPF, for its part, may sign an agreement but will be the first to violate the terms.

Taken as a whole, the passage is truly remarkable. Nahimana conflates the November 1993 Ruhengeri attack with the February 1993 RPF offensive and places the blame on the actions of those political parties who elected to negotiate the power-sharing agreement with the RPF. In this way, the two dominant themes, RPF designs on power and the complicity of moderate politicians are intrinsically linked.

History Lessons

Another aspect of the pre-genocide RTLM broadcasts was frequent reference to the colonial past and linking the RPF to the Tutsi monarchy which held power until the 1959 Hutu Revolution. The November 20, 1993 broadcast featuring the historian Nahimana was overt in making that connection. He states:

There is no difference between the RPF and the Inyenzi because the Inyenzi are refugees who fled Rwanda after the mass majority Revolution of 1959, the fall of the monarchy and the establishment of a democratic Republic. Those who refused the Republic and the democracy went into self-imposed exile. Not long after, between 1962 and 1967, those refugees tried to replace the new Republic by the former monarchy. They launched attacks that killed people. However, Rwanda had then a national army, the national guard. Those sons of the nation did their best and drove those attacks out and in 1967, the Inyenzi stopped their attacks. They went and got organized. (RTLM Tape 099A, November 20, 1993)

The analysis is fairly straightforward. In referencing “Inyenzi,” Nahimana re-introduces a term that was used to describe the Tutsi who fled Rwanda in the early 1960s. Inyenzi means “cockroach” and was used to describe those Tutsi refugees who launched the cross-border raids during that period. The term was of course derogatory but also referred to the fact that the Tutsi raids generally occurred at night (Prunier 1995, 402). Nahimana’s assessment of the period is not altogether inaccurate but he frames it in such a way as to drive a specific narrative: the RPF will reject democracy just like their “Inyenzi” ancestors. Likewise, they will organize to launch attacks that will kill people. This is the same broadcast highlighted in the preceding section that focused on the November 1993 Ruhengeri attack and how Rwandan officials had been duped into signing an agreement with the RPF or had in fact been complicit in the attack. In light of

that, Nahimana's reference to the 1960s, a contentious period, is designed to reinforce the notion that the RPF is seeking one thing and one thing only: the power and control Tutsis enjoyed under the monarchy.

This notion of history being introduced into the RTLM rhetoric is made even more overt during a December 12, 1993 broadcast that featured a roundtable discussion about ethnicity between several Rwandan media figures, including Jean-Bosco Barayagwiza, one of the men convicted of genocide by the ICTR. One of the guests suggested that ethnicity was a thing of the past and should not be used to splinter Rwandan society. Barayagwiza disagreed vehemently. He referenced the colonial past and enumerated the various ways in which the Hutu had been humiliated by the Tutsi:

Moi, je suis né avant la révolution de 1959, j'ai trouvé que mon père faisait des travaux forcés, ma mère allait sarcler pour les femmes Tutsi qui étaient nos chefs. J'ai trouvé que mon grand-père payait des tributs/redevances en nature. J'ai vu tout cela. Je leur demandais pourquoi ils allaient cultiver et sarcler pour les autres alors qu'ils pouvaient travailler dans leur champs qui n'étaient pas en bon état. Ils me disaient qu'il en était ainsi et qu'ils devaient travailler pour les Tutsi. Ils regardaient les Tutsi comme leurs chefs. (RTLM Tape 101, December 12, 1993)

For Barayagwiza, living under Tutsi rule was almost a form of serfdom. He goes on to say that even among children the humiliation was acute. Tutsi children at his school always had better food but never shared with their Hutu counterparts. He claims that he was taught to fear the Tutsi. Taken alone, the passage suggests a bitter remembrance and perhaps even an accurate one. However, Barayagwiza takes the discussion a step further. He states that in his travels he

has visited with numerous Tutsis and that the same dynamics exist today. He calls it a “culture” suggesting that a quarter century after the end of Tutsi rule they still have not learned to share.

Barayagwiza then makes the same connection previously made by Nahimana. He links the past to the present:

ceux qui ont commencé les massacres ce sont des Inyenzi qui ont attaqué en 1990 ... ce qui est mauvais maintenant est qu'ils veulent monopoliser le pouvoir. Voici ce que j'ai dit sur ceux qui disent que les ethnies n'existent plus: leur intention est que nous ne sachions pas qu'ils veulent garder le monopole du pouvoir. Il s'agit entre autres ces gens du FPR qui veulent obliger les gens d'accepter que les ethnies n'existent pas. Ils disent que celui qui dit que les ethnies existent est un ennemi qui veut diviser le pays en deux parties. Parce que depuis que nous sommes assis ici nous avons montré publiquement que les ethnies existent. (RTL M Tape 101, December 11, 1993)

Again, Barayagwiza emphasizes the “historical” inability of the Inyenzi to share. Furthermore, he rejects any notion of ignoring ethnicity. The point of this section is less to highlight the fairly obvious connections made by Nahimana and Barayagwiza. They are bringing up self-serving issues meant to promote Hutu unity in the face of a perceived, and partly real, RPF threat. Had Barayagwiza limited his attack to just the RPF it might be easier to understand. But the more insidious message is the emphasis on a certain Tutsi “culture” that involves greed and a desire to rule over the Hutu. If Nahimana started the discussion with his linking of the RPF to the 1960s Inyenzi, Barayagwiza brings it full circle with his remembrance of a colonial past in which the Hutu was little more than a subject of Tutsi rule.

Going Forward: Themes Re-Visited

The themes established in the first two broadcasts, the threat of RPF dominance and that of traitors within Rwanda were revisited throughout the remaining pre-genocide broadcasts. For example, on November 24, 1993 the RTLM broadcast focuses on the November 1993 Ruhengeri attack and featured virulent attacks against Twagiramungu and the Minister of Defense James Gasana. Following the pattern established in the previous broadcast, Gasana in particular, is targeted for his opposition to the MRND. According to Habimana, in response to the attacks, Gasana “said that it was MRND’s behavior which backfires against them.” The broadcaster continues his criticism and suggests that Gasana did a poor job of enforcing the terms of the DMZ in Ruhengeri and that he allowed the RPF’s soldiers to maintain their positions in the area. Habimana then makes a connection between the event in Ruhengeri and former attacks carried out by the RPF in 1991. In doing so, he makes it clear that the RPF will continue to ignore the agreements it negotiates and turn to violence to achieve their goals. Likewise, Twagiramungu is accused of appeasing the RPF and seeking agreements with the group that will benefit his finances. Habimana warns Twagiramungu that he cannot “hide,” that his actions will eventually come to light (RTLM Tapes 139A and 139B, November 24, 1993).

Similarly, in a broadcast that aired about two weeks later, Habimana refers to Uwilingiyama’s recent complaints that certain people are trying to kill her. He suggests that she is mistaking political criticism for an actual plot to murder her. Additionally, referencing criticism of RTLM’s attacks against the prime minister, Habimana claims that RTLM is fulfilling its journalistic duty in refusing to accept the words of the transitional government as “gospel.” Finally, Habimana celebrates the recent division within the PL party. A faction of the previously

moderate party declared itself part of the Hutu power movement. The PL was the last of the parties involved in the transitional government to succumb to the Hutu power division (RTL M Tape 146, December 9, 1993).

The Ndadaye assassination is also revisited in later broadcasts. Habimana returns to the theme of Burundi as representative of a greater Tutsi plot a month after the event. He first alleges that another coup is in the works. More significantly he states the following:

As it has been said, that coup d'état of Burundi during which they killed Ndadaye was rooted here in Rwanda. Some people do not believe it, but you should believe it. That Burundi coup d'état was rooted here in Rwanda. Whether RPF denies it or accepts it, it is all the same. It is known that Kagame had a hand in the Bujumbura plan. It is in the same context that RPF is now alleged to be making up other plans in relation to that other coup d'état of Burundi. For example, it is going on killing people there in Ruhengeri, it is a precedent for creating troubles among the population or among the parties. So, it will get the opportunity to attack. (RTL M Tape 139A, November 24, 1993)

The implication is clear. Not content with its role in Rwanda, the RPF is involved with the troubles in Burundi and the attack in Ruhengeri is a part of their plan. Habimana goes on to suggest that the Ruhengeri attack is merely one front in an RPF plan to create a "Tutsi land" that will encompass all of Rwanda and Burundi. This is the first overt mentioning of the greater "Tutsi land" idea which RTL M repeatedly promoted during the actual genocide as a warning to those who would not participate.

About two weeks later, on December 9, 1993, Habimana introduces a new strategy in which the RTL M openly acknowledges criticism that the station is fomenting ethnic discord but

vehemently denies targeting Tutsis. However, the denials are almost always accompanied by later statements that are at best ambiguous about the state of Hutu-Tutsi relations. In this particular broadcast, Habimana addresses recent criticism that the RTLM “hates the Tutsis.” Although he maintains that this is not the case, he does suggest that many Tutsis believe the Inkotanyi will help them achieve power and control in Rwanda. As such, he declares that he cannot blame those Hutus who are now in conflict with the Tutsi. This broadcast represents one of the first instances during which the RTLM dropped all pretense of using the RPF as a go-between in its indirect attack on Tutsis. Instead, Habimana openly acknowledges an ethnic conflict between Rwandan Tutsis and Hutus (RTLM Tape 146, December 9, 1993).

Later broadcasts focus with increasing intensity on the RPF and its Tutsi make-up. For example, on January 6, 1994 Habimana provides a report about a gathering of RPF officials in Kigali. The significance of the broadcast, which consists entirely of a “humorous” Habimana monologue, is his description of the various officials and his use of Tutsi stereotypes in describing them. He starts by denying that he hates the Inkotanyi. He sarcastically claims that any misunderstanding has only to do with their tendency to use “bombshells” to chase people out of areas. Habimana then makes a point about the Inkotanyi youth and their unfamiliarity with the capital. In other words, he is emphasizing their foreignness and the fact that they are not really Rwandans (RTLM Tape 045, January 6, 1994).

As Habimana continues his monologue, he begins describing the various officials. For example, in accordance with the power-sharing agreement, Tito Rutaremara, a prominent leader of the RPF, was appointed a deputy in the FAR. The issue of RPF officials being appointed to the FAR was a contentious one and in the case Habimana states that Rutaremara holds a “degree

in territory fittings.” The implication is that the RPF is infiltrating the FAR with the intention of re-drawing boundaries for their benefit (RTLTM Tape 045, January 6, 1994).

Much of the broadcast continues in this manner as Habimana makes a number of references to Tutsi stereotypes. In describing Rutaremara, apparently a very tall man, Habimana refers to him as a Tutsi “prototype” and an example of the “haughty men” who make up the RPF. He later makes comments about the amount of much milk consumed during the festivities. This was a clear reference to the Tutsi role as cattle-herders during the colonial and pre-colonial periods when the Hutu were relegated to working in the fields. Other comments include references to the “elegant” manner in which Tutsis carry themselves (RTLTM Tape 045, January 6, 1994).

But perhaps the most significant part of this January 6 broadcast is Habimana’s insistence that everything he heard at the RPF gathering centered on their desire to achieve power. He states:

You can really feel that they want also to get to power. They want it. They want to integrate the administration and get a salary. They want to sensitize people about their ideas. They have especially their views and intentions to bring in changes. This is their sole concern. In fact, throughout their discussions, they say: “Our only concern is to become Deputies, nothing else.” (RTLTM Tape 045, January 6, 1994)

To this segment he adds that the RPF has formed an alliance with the PL and is counting on the backing of that party to achieve their goals. Once again, Habimana succeeds in delivering the message that the RPF is only concerned with its own ends and that they will use other Rwandans, in this case the moderate wing of the PL, to achieve their goals.

By January 21, 1993, the delay in establishing the terms of the Arusha Accords was beginning to wear on all parties and the RTLM rhetoric was reaching a higher pitch. In this broadcast, Habimana continues his criticism of the RPF and states that he hopes they will “forget” about disrupting the country since they are about to join the FAR and begin receiving salaries. Following a pattern established earlier, Habimana follows his relatively benign comments with an interview of Karamira, the MDR Hutu power official. As such he allows a different voice to articulate the more extremist position (RTLM Tape 159A, January 21, 1994).

Karamira does not disappoint. He attacks Twagiramungu, the nominal head of the more moderate portion of the MDR and states that the politician has proved that “he does not belong to MDR but to RPF.” In doing so, Karamira establishes two essential points. First, Twagiramungu is a traitor and “we will personally take good care of [him].” Second, there is only one MDR party, the party of Hutu power. Later in the broadcast, Gaspard Gahigi, another RTLM journalist, follows up the Karamira interview with a report of an assassination attempt against Justin Mugenzi, head of the PL Hutu power faction. Although the report was accurate, Gahigi fueled the flames by suggesting that Twagiramungu and the RPF were responsible for the attempt because Mugenzi was an “obstacle.” Regardless of who was behind the assassination attempt, Gahigi’s comments serve to further undermine any attempt to establish the transitional government of which Twagiramungu was a key figure. He goes on to suggest that the opposition and the RPF are “making political plays by killing or by having their political opponents killed” thus implying that democracy is no longer an option. Gahigi ends his segment suggesting that killing Habyarimana will not kill all the “Habyarimanas” much as killing Ndadaye in Burundi did not kill all the “Ndadayes” (RTLM Tape 159A, January 21, 1994).

Habimana follows Gahigi and is even more explicit. He warns of “Inkotanyi spies” and RPF plots to kill Rwandans. He reminds his listeners of 1959 and states that people must “be vigilant ... your property is being taken away, what you fought for in ’59 is being taken away.” Then, in a rhetorical twist that was frequently used, Habimana suggests that the RPF are planning killings and he denounces the use of violence by either side. In other words, after the stark warnings about a return to the colonial period when Tutsis dominated Rwanda, Habimana claims that violence for either side will not work. Nonetheless, he states that violence against the RPF is possible:

The mass is vigilant. Noel Hitimana said: “We know where the Inkotanyi stay, we know which number of them came.” So, people are noting all of this. The day they think that they will bring turmoil and kill those that they have listed and that then, everything will be all right... They are very wrong. That is a dangerous plan that can backfire. (RTLM Tape 159B, January 21, 1994)

Although Habimana appears to be speaking out against potential violence against the Inkotanyi I suggest that he is actually issuing a warning. He plays on the notion that he does not wish violence on anyone but nevertheless, the reminders of 1959 and the situation in Burundi are brought up throughout the broadcast. Twice, he brings up the idea that people are or should be vigilant. Likewise, although he states that he does not hate Tutsis he maintains that “I have to explain: ‘Beware, Tutsis want to take things from Hutus by force or tricks’” (RTLM Tape 159B, January 21, 1994).

There is a break in IMI’s collection between the January 21st broadcast and the remaining nine pre-genocide transcripts which begin with the March 15, 1994 broadcast. The change in tone in these broadcasts is remarkable. The same themes are in play, which is to say the RPF

threat, the traitorous politicians, and the dual specters of 1959 and Burundi. However, I suggest that the “logic of genocide” (Chrétien 1995b) is on full display. The RTLM broadcasters suggest that the RPF/Inkotanyi/Tutsi are the ones plotting mass killings but that they have been thwarted by the vigilance and the sheer number of responsive Hutus. Furthermore, the broadcasters openly state that continued violence will lead to the extermination of Tutsis. For example, Hitimana states:

Concernant le programme des Inkotanyi pour ce 15, tout le pays devrait avoir un torrent de sang, mais leur programme a été découvert à temps. Maintenant ils ont changé d'idées, ils disent qu'il ne vont pas mettre le programme en pratique, sinon tous les Tutsi seront exterminés dans ce pays. (RTLM Tape 164, March 15, 1994)

Although he suggests that the Inkotanyi have changed their plans they have done so only with the realization that the Tutsis would be exterminated. This is one of the first examples in the pre-genocide broadcasts of the use of the word “exterminate” and the idea that it will include all Tutsis, not just the RPF. For his part, Habimana is even more explicit in his statements about Inkotanyi goals. He comments:

The one who sent the news to us says that Inkotanyi do not want peace at all. Let's stop being careless. These are news from Sake and we got them from someone who really follow them closer. One ought to follow it closer and people must be watchful, they must check out the situation because it has been clear that Inkotanyi try everything, seeking but their final objective consists of controlling all the power. Then you understand that if they take over all the power, even those traitor who come to their assistance, you understand anyway how they would treat the ones they don't like and the ones they think were seriously opposed to them. (RTLM Tape 168A, March 16, 1994)

Then, on the same day, he states:

Anyway, Inkotanyi ought to know that they won't make Rwandan flee so that they go where they are coming from. It's impossible, we will fight inside this Rwanda till the end. Saying that they will wipe us out, wipe out intellectuals, wipe out people who speak out so that they can rule Rwanda, it's impossible. I don't know how one can swear that it's impossible. They ought to understand then that it's impossible and come so that we live together in this Rwanda in peace it they really want peace. But it's clear that they don't want it. They only want to wipe out people in order to rule Rwanda, to enslave people and colonize it. (RTLM Tape 168B, March 16, 1994)

These passages highlight the logic of genocide noted above. The breakdowns in negotiations and the failure to fully implement the terms of the Arusha Accords created a situation where the only logic is that full-scale violence. Further negotiations are no longer worth considering as it is clear that the RPF has plans to “wipe out people.” The early RTLM broadcasts highlighted in the above sections touched on these subjects but never so openly or so virulently. By mid-March, RTLM had bridged a considerable gap between the RPF as enemies not to be trusted to potential perpetrators of genocide.

These later broadcasts also explicitly state that Rwandans Tutsis are part of the enemy. On March 31, 1994, a broadcaster provides a list of Tutsi students from a school in Kigali and makes the claim that they have joined the RPF. He gives their names, location, age, and alleged RPF “code name.” Thomas Kabonabake, a cabaret owner and a guest on the RTLM broadcast, makes the connection even clearer:

Therefore, the reason why I think the situation is very serious, is those people and their accomplices, they're our Tutsi neighbors. Especially, they go to CND every morning to give reports to those Inkotanyi. (RTLTM Tape 189B April 1, 1994)

The three weeks of broadcasts that precede the April 6 assassination of Habyarimana are in fact little more than direct attacks against any politicians opposed to the CDR and MRND, claims of complicity with the enemy ranging from prominent politicians to local citizens, and reminders that the Inkotanyi have or have had plans to commit atrocities. I would argue that the RTLTM was no longer simply creating an atmosphere of distrust and anger but had developed into a harbinger of the events to come.

VII

Conclusion

The analysis of these broadcasts demonstrates a distinct pattern. Beginning with the first two broadcasts, the RTLM conflated ongoing events with certain selective historical memories to create a reality that evolved into the logic of genocide described above. For instance, Habimana and others issued false reports about the Ndadaye assassination claiming that the president's body had been mutilated. More importantly, they suggested that the murder was a sign of a greater Tutsi plot, one to establish dominion over both Rwanda and neighboring Burundi. In a similar manner, Nahimana used the attack in Ruhengeri in November 1993, to invoke the RPF offensive of February 1993, a well-documented event in which the RPF did commit atrocities. Nahimana then used the combination of these events to link even further back to the Hutu revolution of 1959 and the Tutsi rejection of Rwanda's evolving democracy ignoring that many of those who fled did so as a result of being attacked. Implicit in Nahimana's comments on the Ruhengeri attack was a warning about the true intentions of the RPF, the returning Tutsis of the 1960s: to establish dominion rather than participating in a power-sharing agreement. These two events and the RTLM reporting of them set the stage for future programming about the true intentions of the RPF which gradually broadened to include all, or most Tutsis.

RTLM broadcasters introduced a second narrative – focus on enemies within –to target certain political figures and portray them as complicit with the RPF. According to the first two broadcasts, Uwilingiyama, Twagiramungu, and others all but gave permission to the RPF to commit atrocities by criticizing the MRND and CDR. Likewise, merely negotiating with the RPF was viewed as a sign of complicity. These political targets – predominantly Hutu – did not agree

with the extremist positions of the CDR and MRND, and as a result found themselves accused of being traitors to their country. The rise of Hutu power gave further ammunition to the RTLM to create a simple division between Hutu and Tutsi. Thus, what had been a complicated political landscape with numerous political parties and the RPF negotiating a power-sharing agreement (and sometimes engaging in violent acts to achieve their goals) was reduced to a “them” against “us” dynamic.

The question remains, did the RTLM simply react to events as they unfolded or was the radio station plotting all along to unleash its programming message of division and ultimately hate? There is no easy answer. Certainly, RTLM’s origins suggest complicity with certain more extremist members of the MRND. Likewise, the station wasted little time following the emergence of the Hutu power movement to align itself with extremist politicians and to celebrate the CDR as the true defender of the country once Hutu power emerged. Likewise, the almost immediate reference to the 1959 Hutu revolution and the warning that the RPF would institute a return to the colonial period suggests that these ideas were never far from the surface of RTLM’s programming. Nevertheless it took three months of broadcasts before the station began revealing its true nature if that is in fact what happened. Was RTLM a trigger for the genocide or were the events it was reporting and commenting on the triggers? Did the broadcasters create the logic of genocide or merely react to one? I would suggest that there is a little of both going on in the pre-genocide broadcasts although I would add that RTLM’s increasingly vitriolic tone suggests that the station was more than a passive instrument.

This is less about the radio station’s role in the genocide which seems undeniable. If the tone was beginning to shift by mid-March, broadcasts after Habyarimana’s death left nothing to

the imagination. RTLM made direct calls to the population to “rise up” and no longer bothered to differentiate between the RPF and all Tutsis. However, the pre-genocide role, especially early on, is less clear. Certainly, RTLM broadcasters espoused a view of the situation that demonized some and raised others. But the reality is that Ndadaye was assassinated and the RPF had launched an initial attack in October 1990 and subsequent attacks in the years that followed.

If any of this sounds like an apology or an attempt to justify the content of the RTLM programming, that is not my intention. Instead, I am suggesting that the pre-genocide broadcasts, although virulent and exaggerated, were also, unfortunately, rooted in the very real realities of the situation on the ground in Rwanda. There is a desire to treat the genocide in Rwanda as an aberration but I cannot help but wonder if it was, in part, the result of a confluence of events, economic and political realities, and lingering issues that had not been addressed in a manner that would satisfy those with grievances. The specifics of the comprehensive situation in Rwanda are perhaps unique to that country but the various events and conditions that ended in genocide appear less so. In other words, perhaps the genocide in Rwanda is less a case of a unique, will “never happen again” horrific event, and more a situation in which certain circumstances that unfortunately exist in most corners of the globe, combined at the worst possible time to lead to genocide. In this context, the RTLM pre-genocide broadcasts certainly helped fuel the fire but it was hardly the first media outlet, and sadly has not been the last, to propagate themes of scapegoating and enemies within.

Despite my comments above, I am hesitant to draw parallels between the RTLM and contemporary media here or elsewhere. However, it does seem worth noting that in an age when media is increasingly available to all and when one can choose from any number of outlets to

listen, watch, or read those forums that express notions that conform to pre-existing ideas, there is danger in categorizing RTLTM as an extreme, outlying example. It would likewise be an error to dismiss the radio station as merely an instrument of banal propaganda that happened to coincide with an event as tragic as the genocide. Rather, it is important to note the substantial and important role the RTLTM played in setting the stage for the genocide while noting that perhaps there was little truly exceptional in how the radio station reported and commented on events. Certainly, there is no lack of extreme media throughout the world, even in this country. I am not suggesting that genocidal programming is everywhere, or that the threat of genocide looms in every corner. Nonetheless, I would posit that a steady stream of anti-immigrant discourse on America's airwaves has contributed to the passage of some of the more draconian immigration laws in recent memory in places like Alabama and Arizona.

Going forward, for comparative purposes, further research might examine the role, if any, that media had in the events in Burundi such as the Ndadaye assassination and the extent to which reporting included events in Rwanda. It might be particularly interesting to note how Burundian media covered the actual genocide. Likewise, an analysis of media coverage of Rwanda in what was then Zaire could also prove worthwhile. However, perhaps even more importantly, research of contemporary media in conflict zones and when possible in areas where violence seems imminent might serve an even more useful purpose. For example, how is Malian media reacting to the events in that country and what was the state of reporting prior to the recent violence? What is the current state of media coverage in Sudan and South Sudan as those two countries continue to negotiate their difficult partnership? How has media played a role in the ongoing instability in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)?

This last one in particular has particular resonance in the context of this thesis. There is little question that the transformation of Zaire into the DRC has its antecedents in the events in and surrounding Rwanda. And although there are organizations undoubtedly tracking and reporting on media coverage in any and all of the situations listed above, too often each African case is treated as an isolated event, inviolate and separate from the events in neighboring countries. In closing I suggest that a more comprehensive and interdisciplinary examination of the role of media in African conflicts would be worthwhile however difficult in practice.

VIII

Appendix

The following is a table listing the IMI transcripts which I cite in this thesis. The numbers denoting the tapes are the numbers assigned by the ICTR. Also included is the date the broadcast aired.

Title	Broadcast Date
RTLM Tape 045	January 6, 1994
RTLM Tape 096	October 25, 1993
RTLM Tape 099A	November 20, 1993
RTLM Tape 099B	November 20, 1993
RTLM Tape 101	December 12, 1993
RTLM Tape 129	April 3, 1994
RTLM Tape 139A	November 24, 1993
RTLM Tape 139B	November 24, 1993
RTLM Tape 144	December 8, 1993
RTLM Tape 146	December 9, 1993

RTLM Tape 159A	January 21, 1994
RTLM Tape 159B`	January 21, 1994
RTLM Tape 164	March 15, 1994
RTLM Tape 168A`	March 16, 1994
RTLM Tape 168B	March 16, 1994
RTLM Tape 187	March 30, 1994
RTLM Tape 188A	March 31, 1994
RTLM Tape 188B	March 31, 1994
RTLM Tape 189A`	April 1, 1994
RTLM Tape 189B	April 1, 1994

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