POSTTRAUMATIC IDENTITIES:

DEVELOPING A CULTURALLY-INFORMED UNDERSTANDING OF POSTTRAUMATIC GROWTH IN RWANDAN WOMEN GENOCIDE SURVIVORS

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Abstract

In the 1994 Rwanda genocide, an estimated 800,000 people were brutally murdered in just thirteen weeks. This violence affected all Rwandans, but women experienced the genocide in very specific ways. They were frequently raped, tortured and physically mutilated. Yet, because of their sexual value, the number of women who survived the genocide far outweighed the number of men, leaving them largely responsible for rebuilding Rwandan society. While it may seem abhorrent to suggest that anything good could result from such tragedy, evidence from the women's testimonies analysed for this research project suggests that this is a reality.

Traditionally, the study of psychological trauma has been pervaded by an illness ideology with an emphasis on its pathological consequences. Throughout history and across cultures, however, the notion of positive changes resulting from human suffering has been recognised in literature and philosophy. Positive change following trauma, or posttraumatic growth, refers to the tendency of some individuals to establish new psychological constructs and build a new way of life that is experienced as superior to their previous one in important ways. Little research has been carried out on the concept of posttraumatic growth in other cultures and, to date, no research into posttraumatic growth has been carried out in Rwanda. However, empirical research in other contexts suggests that efforts to harness and promote posttraumatic growth may not only enhance health and well-being but also reduce future need for formal mental health services.

Through a discursive analysis of Rwandan women survivors' testimonies, this thesis reveals that, although there are countless tales of horror, pain and loss, there are also many stories about strength, recovery and growth. The thesis examines the impact of external factors, such as victimisation, stigmatisation and gender, which appear to encourage personal strength among these women, but have also gravely damaged their interpersonal relationships. It also examines the impact of the genocide on religious beliefs and demonstrates that individual interpretations of trauma within a religious framework can provide existential reassurance. However, because of Rwanda's history of theocratic leadership, religious interpretations can also give spiritual credibility to ideologies which have a negative impact on group identity. The final part of the thesis examines processes of growth at the collective level, exploring the impact of the genocide on these women's group identities both as survivors in Rwandan society and as Rwandans in an international society. It suggests that for growth to take place at the collective level, survivors require access to a platform from which they can develop counter ideologies and pursue their collective needs for agency on the one hand, and communion on the other. Drawing on the findings of this research, the concluding chapter offers culturally-informed advice to trauma practitioners, policy makers and non-governmental organisations as to how posttraumatic growth might be facilitated in the socio-political climate of Rwanda.

Publications

The following journal articles have been published as a result of this PhD research project:

- Williamson, Caroline, 'Towards a Theory of Collective Posttraumatic Growth in Rwanda: The Pursuit of Agency and Communion', *Traumatology*, (in press) (this article is a shortened version of Chapter 5)

- Williamson, Caroline, 'Accessing material from the Genocide Archive of Rwanda', *African Research and Documentation*, (2013), 17-24

- Williamson, Caroline, 'Assessing the impact of the genocide on Rwandan women's self-perception and identity: A discursive analysis of posttraumatic growth in survivors' testimonies', *Electronic Nottingham Quarterly for Ideas, Research and Evaluation*, 7, (2012), 3-22

Acknowledgements

Contents

Introduction

Vignette 1: LK

LK was born in Kigali in 1977. Before her birth, her parents had been living in exile to escape the violence committed in Rwanda against Tutsi in the 1960s and 70s. After living in Burundi and the former Zaire, her parents returned to Rwanda in 1975. LK's father studied at a Catholic Seminary School but was ejected from the Seminary after writing critical articles about the government for the Catholic newspaper, *Kinyamateka*. A founding member of the political party, *Parti Libéral*, and one of the 33 Rwandan intellectuals to sign a petition advocating democracy in Rwanda, LK's father eventually started his own critical newspaper called *Rwanda Rushya* (New Rwanda). Because of his outspoken criticism of the government and his connections with the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF),[1] LK's family suffered extreme persecution even before the genocide started. Her home was frequently raided, her father was attacked with machetes then imprisoned and LK was intentionally hit by a car. The family was not only persecuted by Hutu extremists, however. Tutsi families also discriminated against LK's family and would tell their children to avoid LK. When the genocide started, following President Juvénal Habyarimana's plane crash on 6 April 1994, LK's family was at the top of the killers' death list. Her father went to hide at the headquarters of *Kinyamateka* while LK, along with her mother and siblings, went to hide at the Sainte Famille Church in central Kigali. LK describes how she saw Tutsi collaborating with the killers and reporting to the commander of the Interahamwe,[2] Odette Nyirabagenzi. Nyirabagenzi provided these Tutsi with bullets to kill LK's father. Other Tutsi hiding at the church complained about LK's family and exposed them to the

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[1] The Rwandan Patriotic Front is the current ruling political party of Rwanda. It was created by exiled Tutsi refugees living in Uganda who had fled the violence of the 1960s in Rwanda.

[2] Literally, 'those who fight together', the Interahamwe began as the youth wing of former President Habyarimana's political party, the Mouvement Révolutionaire National pour le Développement (MRND), but became the primary militia group involved in killing Tutsi during the genocide.

killers in an attempt to earn their own safety. Eventually LK's mother and sister were taken by the Interahamwe and shot dead. As she tried to find their bodies to bury them, she was insulted by other Tutsi families. LK's father was also killed during the genocide, a fact that LK learnt on her 17th birthday. She managed to survive after being rescued by the United Nations but in the aftermath of the genocide, LK trusted no one because of the betrayal she had experienced by Hutu and Tutsi alike.

Vignette 2: RSM

When the genocide began, RSM was living in Byumba in the Northern Province. Her parents had also lived in exile in Burundi but returned to Rwanda after RSM's birth. She was the second of six children. Just 15 years old when the genocide started, RSM and her family were attacked in their home. They survived the first assault but on the second, the killers ordered all the boys to leave the house. Her older brother was not there but the killers found RSM with her parents and younger sisters. RSM had been hiding under the bed but they discovered her by probing under the bed with a club studded with nails. When RSM came out from her hiding place, she saw the killers take her parents and beat them to death with their clubs. The following day, the killers returned and took her younger sisters, boasting about how they had killed RSM's other family members. They beat her sisters then threw them into a pit latrine where they lay agonising until they died. Paying someone to help her, RSM escaped with her brother. Together, they walked around the whole country: from Byumba in the north, down to Gikongoro in the south, all the way across to Cyangugu in the far south west, some 300 kilometres in total. Together with her brother, the two children would hide during the day and walk through the night. They walked through forests, escaping wild animals with nothing to eat or drink. Each time they approached a roadblock, they would witness people being killed, often clambering over dead bodies to escape. RSM's entire family was

wiped out save a paternal aunt and some cousins. She explains that her most chilling memory is the death of her younger sisters who were too young to even know whether they were Tutsi or Hutu.

Vignette 3: RB

Before 1994, RB worked in family planning. Born into a family of eight children in Sahera Sector in the Southern Province, RB was married with three children. Traditionally a more liberal area, things remained quiet in Sahera until 22 April when military vehicles began arriving with policemen, Interahamwe and soldiers from surrounding areas. RB describes the chaotic scenes that followed their arrival: people being shot, beaten and even decapitated. In the first attack, thousands of people were killed while others lay injured among the dead. A day or so later, the killers returned to finish off the remaining Tutsi. Running through forests, RB managed to escape most of the Interahamwe and found a hiding place at the University Hospital of Butare. On 30 April, RB was picked up by the local Burgomaster who enslaved her. She was taken to this man's house and told that it was her special task to witness how the Tutsi would die. She was told that, once this work was finished, they would kill RB too. At the time, RB still had her three children with her but the extremists killed her daughter and threw her two sons to be eaten by dogs. RB later found her sons who had been bitten by the dogs but were still alive. She hid them near a cowshed in a large pot used for brewing Rwandan beer. For the following weeks, as part of her chores, RB would milk the cows then, clandestinely use the milk to feed her children. Living at the Burgomaster's house, RB saw much of the planning of the genocide in her area and it became her job to witness the brutal torture and killing of many people, including members of her family. The atrocities that RB was forced to witness are unspeakable. Her brothers were killed and she was forced to drink their blood. Her mother was laid out naked and stabbed in the vagina with a sword which was then used to stir her insides.

After having his hands chopped off, her uncle was castrated, skinned then thrown into a latrine. RB saw one woman raped by about a hundred men, who then put hooks inside her body and pulled out her intestines. Another woman, who was heavily pregnant, was speared in the uterus. The spear was pushed in so deep it came out of her mouth. RB describes how new-born babies were snatched from their mothers and fed to pigs; 'Pigs at the time lived off Tutsi babies', she explains.

Throughout the genocide, RB was kept as a sex slave. The Burgomaster would rub marijuana onto her buttocks, as he believed it would increase her libido. He would then force her to crawl along the floor. After being summoned to witness her rape, RB's husband attempted suicide but was intercepted by the Burgomaster who threw him into a pit latrine and left him to die a slow and painful death. RB was forced to go and watch him agonise every day until he eventually died. One day, RB was attacked by some Hutu women who believed that she was kept alive because of her sexual value. These women tried to force dried herbs into her vagina to destroy her sexuality so that the Burgomaster would have to kill her. She was saved by another Hutu man but only in exchange for him raping her. Eventually, the Burgomaster, along with other perpetrators, fled the area to escape the advancing forces of the RPF. RB was able to retrieve her children who were still alive but had begun to rot. They were just one year and nine months and four months old at the time.

The story of every survivor of the genocide that took place in Rwanda in 1994 is unique. The above examples are but three of the thousands of stories of horror and tragedy. While these women's experiences certainly go beyond the worst nightmares of most people, in 1994 the small nation of Rwanda erupted into what was the most efficient and complete genocide of the twentieth century, with no area of the country left untouched. It may seem abhorrent to suggest that anything good could result from such disaster and yet, positive

changes can be observed in each of the three women whose stories appear above.

For example, despite having no money after the genocide, LK made a living by buying food in bulk then selling it for a profit. She was eventually able to rebuild her house and pay her own way through university. She also published two books, one as a tribute to her late father and the other a history of the genocide aimed at revoking some of the myths about the causes of the genocide.[3] According to LK, the hardship that she endured during the genocide has made her realise that the problems of everyday life pale in comparison and thus, any challenge can be overcome. Moreover, her experience has enabled her to see that there are more important things in life than material wealth such as the limitless bounds of human perseverance and an appreciation for life itself:

> We don't own anything in this world. After grasping that, you realise that nothing is impossible. You may fail today but be patient, together if we try, there is nothing we can't achieve. We are left not only to bless our country but the world at large. All conflicts are based on property. People worry about tomorrow but no one can be sure of life. I saw people dying, they tried to kill them but they refused to die. They may have lost an eye, a nose or had their tongue cut out, but they survived. I've seen girls who'd been raped, left with absolutely nothing but still alive. When I see such people, I am reminded of how rich I am.[4]

RSM also demonstrates positive changes. She lives in hope for the future and believes that being a survivor makes her special because, as so many people died, there must be a reason for her survival. For RSM, this reason is to

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[3] The first of LK's books recounts how her father was killed during the genocide and discusses how those who lost their loved ones during the genocide can continue living without them. Laetitia Umuhoza Kameya, *Kami yanjye: Urwibutso rwa data* (Butare, 2009). Her second book is a history of the genocide written from a Rwandan perspective. Laetitia Umuhoza Kameya, *Rwanda 1994, le génocide: témoignages et réflexions* (Kigali, 2011).

[4] All testimonies cited in this thesis come from the Genocide Archive of Rwanda. Those cited in French were taken from the archive's digital database (http://www.genocidearchiverwanda.org.rw) while those cited in English are testimonies that are to be used for a project called 'Witness for Humanity', an exhibition on genocide developed by the Shoah Foundation at the University of Southern California (https://sfi.usc.edu/).

continue the legacy of her family members by taking on their qualities, being responsible and striving to accomplish her goals for the future.

> J'ai de l'espoir, je veux mener une vie meilleure par rapport à celle que je mène aujourd'hui. Je crois vous avoir dit aussi que je veux être à la place de mes parents, tous mes frères et sœurs victimes du Génocide. Je veux les représenter mais cela demande d'être une autre personne. Parvenir à cela est mon souhait.

As for RB, after her experiences during the genocide she co-founded an association of genocide widows from Mukura (Southern Province) named ABASA. RB recognised that a significant problem that continued to traumatise these widows was that many of them had become financially dependent on the very men who had killed their families and raped them. Many widows were even living with their former rapists because they had nowhere else to go. Despite the danger of reprisals and the enormous stigma that surrounds victims of sexual violence, RB had the courage to talk about these problems in public. She states in her testimony that, 'if you give yourself a target, you must achieve it. That is why I kept on saying things, discussing these issues of Genocide on TV'. Eventually her perseverance paid off as she attracted the attention of the Rwandan First Lady, President Kagame's wife, Jeannette Kagame, who helped RB to arrange for more housing to be built in the area so that genocide widows no longer had to share a house with former members of the Interahamwe. In addition to co-founding ABASA, RB has become the Elected Representative of Genocide Survivors in the Mukura Sector and received an African Women of Empowerment Award. Whenever she has the opportunity, RB continues to speak out about issues of genocide and rape on the television, on the radio and in local speeches, despite the fact that this is putting her life in danger.[5]

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[5] As a result of her outspoken comments about sexual violence and genocide, as well as her denouncement of people in positions of power, RB now has to live in a military camp in Butare and has had numerous attempts on her life.

Can Living through Genocide Lead to Positive Change?

While it may seem paradoxical to suggest that genocide could result in positive changes, these examples suggest that it is a possibility. A term commonly used to describe such positive change following a traumatic event is 'posttraumatic growth', where individuals establish new psychological constructs and build a new way of life that is experienced as superior to their previous one in important ways. It should be made clear that it was not the genocide that produced the positive changes observed in these women; rather the transformations came from within them, in their struggle to survive and come to terms with their experiences.[6] It should equally be made clear that the notion of posttraumatic growth does not imply the absence of distress, pain or suffering.[7] Indeed, for most survivors growth and pain coexist, as LK explains:

> It[8] doesn't mean that you are not hurt, it doesn't allow you to regain anything that you lost, but if you manage to think beyond what hurt you, your personality can become highly valued, your personality is your wealth.

Unfortunately these women's stories are not particularly exceptional; there are countless tales of horror, pain and loss in Rwanda. What is surprising, however, is that neither are their recoveries exceptional; there are also many stories about strength, recovery and growth. The purpose of this thesis is to examine the testimonies of women like LK, RSM and RB, to gain a culturally informed understanding of the psychological consequences of the 1994 genocide on Rwandan women survivors. Specifically, the thesis aims to determine what themes of posttraumatic growth emerge in the testimonies of Rwandan women survivors, which socio-cultural factors influence posttraumatic growth in

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[6] Lawrence G. Calhoun and Richard G. Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth: A Clinician's Guide* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. 1999), p. 67.
[7] Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, p. 20.
[8] LK is referring to the role of survivors in rebuilding themselves and society.

Rwanda, and how posttraumatic growth might be facilitated among Rwandan women survivors.

In addition to investigating the impact of the genocide on these women's lives as individuals, the thesis also examines an area of growth that has thus far been largely overlooked; the notion of growth at the collective or political level. Such an area cannot be neglected when considering the implications of genocide because this was a political, man-made trauma which targeted individuals on the basis of their group identity. As LK observes, 'Really I can't […] personalise my testimony because what happened to me was not personal'. In the analysis of posttraumatic growth at the collective level, the thesis highlights limitations of the current theory of posttraumatic growth; namely that it is too individualistic and unable to account for social or political changes that take place after trauma. The thesis will show how previous attempts to label certain collective changes following trauma as 'growth' in other contexts may be misguided. This is because such changes could also be explained as processes of ingroup enhancement, that is when group members to make more positive evaluations of their ingroup relative to outgroups. Some theorists have attempted to find a connection between processes of collective change and measures of posttraumatic growth on individualist, self-report scales, but fail to account for changes at the group level.[9] In its analysis of trauma and religious beliefs, Chapter 4 highlights the distinction between changes that take place at the collective level from those that take place at the individual level and Chapter 5 proposes a model of collective posttraumatic growth which accounts for social and political changes that take place following a traumatic event. Within the framework of the proposed model of collective posttraumatic, the thesis examines the growth themes that emerge and the impact of socio-cultural factors at the collective/political level, that is, how these women have been affected not just as individuals but as women, as survivors, and as Rwandans.

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[9] These self-report scales are discussed in the 'Posttraumatic Growth and Culture' section of this Introduction.

Despite revealing its limitations, the thesis also highlights the benefits of posttraumatic growth theory and how gaining an understanding of posttraumatic growth within a given context can provide insights into how positive changes might be facilitated both at the individual and at the collective level.

The women's testimonies which form the corpus of this thesis come from the Genocide Archive of Rwanda, which was established by the Aegis Trust in association with Rwanda's National Commission for the Fight Against Genocide (CNLG). The Aegis Trust is a Nottinghamshire-based non-governmental organisation which works to prevent genocide. It runs the UK Holocaust Centre and was selected by the Rwandan Government to establish and run the Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre, which was opened on the 10th Anniversary of the Rwandan Genocide in April 2004. The Genocide Archive of Rwanda forms part of the Memorial Centre and is located on the same site.

The position of the Aegis Trust in the political context of Rwanda is taken into account when analysing the testimonies collected by the organisation. Many scholars are critical of the Rwandan government for its authoritarian regime and the lack of free speech in Rwanda, particularly the freedom to criticise the government.[10] It is well documented that dissident Hutu politicians and members of civil society have been killed, arrested or removed from leadership positions.[11] The lack of free speech has also been documented among Tutsi

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[10] Timothy Longman and Théoneste Rutagengwa, 'Memory, Identity, and Community in Rwanda', in *My Neighbour, My Enemy: Justice and Community in the Aftermath of Mass Atrocity*, ed. by Eric Stover and Harvey M. Weinstein, (Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 162–182 (p. 162); Gérard Prunier, *From Genocide to Continental War: The 'Congolese' Conflict and the Crisis of Contemporary Africa* (London: Hurst Publishers Ltd., 2009), p. 23; Filip Reyntjens, 'Rwanda, Ten Years On: From Genocide to Dictatorship', *African Affairs*, 103. 411 (2004), 177–210 (p. 208).

[11] Alison Des Forges and Timothy Longman, 'Legal Responses to Genocide in Rwanda', in, *My Neighbour, My Enemy: Justice and Community in the Aftermath of Mass Atrocity*, ed. by Eric Stover and Harvey M. Weinstein, (Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 49–68 (pp. 61–62); Helen Hintjens, 'Reconstructing Political Identities in Rwanda', in *After Genocide: Transitional Justice, Post-Conflict Reconstrucion and Reconcilation in Rwanda and Beyond,* ed. by Phil

genocide survivors who, according to Filip Reyntjens feel that they have become 'second-rate citizens who have been sacrificed by the RPF'.[12] For example, genocide survivor, Joseph Sebarenzi, was formerly the Speaker of the National Assembly but resigned on 6 January 2000 under pressure from certain members of the RPF. He then fled the country, fearing for his life.[13] Tutsi survivors involved in civil society have also faced government intimidation and harassment. In the in the late 1990s, the umbrella group for genocide survivor organisations, IBUKA (Kinyarwanda for 'Remember'), became increasingly critical of the Rwandan government's neglect of genocide survivors, particularly the lack of economic opportunities for survivors.[14] Following these criticisms, the former prefect of Kibuye Prefecture was assassinated in 2000 and his brother, the vice president of IBUKA, Josué Kayijaho tried to leave the country but was detained by government officials.[15] He was eventually permitted to leave the country and was then joined by another of his brothers who was the executive secretary of the Fond d'assistance aux rescapés du genocide (FARG) along with Bosco Rutagengwa, the founder of IBUKA, and Anastase Muramba, IBUKA's Secretary-General. A member of the central committee of the RPF, Antoine Mugesera, has now taken over the presidency of IBUKA and, according to Timothy Longman, the organisation has since 'largely followed the RPF line'.[16] As Paul Gready notes, many civil society

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Clark and Zachary D. Kaufman (London: Hurst and Co., 2008), pp. 77–99 (p. 88); Timothy Longman, 'Limitations to Political Reform: The Undemocratic Nature of Transition in Rwanda', in *Remaking Rwanda: State Building and Human Rights after Mass Violence (Critical Human Rights)*, ed. by Scott Straus and Lars Waldorf (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011), pp. 25–47 (p. 30); Longman and Rutagengwa, p. 162; Susan Thomson, 'Whispering Truth to Power: the Everyday Resistance of Rwandan Peasants to Post-Genocide Reconciliation', *African Affairs*, 110. 440 (2011), 439–456 (p. 442); Lars Waldorf, 'Instrumentalizing Genocide: The RPF's Campaign against "Genocide Ideology"', in *Remaking Rwanda: State Building and Human Rights after Mass Violence (Critical Human Rights)*, ed. by Scott Straus and Lars Waldorf (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011), pp. 48–66 (pp. 52, 57–58).

[12] Reyntjens, 'Rwanda, 10 Years On', p. 180.

[13] Sebarenzi was not technically a 'survivor' as he left Rwanda in 1992 to join the RPF but he is considered an 'interior Tutsi' rather than a former Tutsi refugee. Ibid., p. 181.

[14] Longman, 'Limitations to Political Reform', p. 30.

[15] Ibid., p. 30.

[16] Ibid., p. 31.

organisations now 'act as mouthpieces for the government' and have become 'monitory and control devices' used to 'prevent independent civil society from emerging'.[17] Reyntjens goes so far as to say that '"civil society" is controlled by the regime'.[18] Even the Association des Veuves du Génocide d'Avril (AVEGA) is now run by a Tutsi returnee[19] rather than a Tutsi genocide survivor.

Given that it was chosen by the Rwandan government to establish and manage the Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre and the Genocide Archive of Rwanda, the Aegis Trust has also to toe the government line if it is to maintain its relatively privileged position.[20] Despite the potential limitations of basing my analysis on testimonies that are collected by such an organisation, however, there are also a number of benefits to using this archival material. For instance, the archive is given a degree of autonomy from governmental control as the primary purpose of the testimonies is to provide survivors with an outlet through which they may express themselves without coercion or intimidation from others. The archive began collecting testimonies in 2004, with survivors coming from a range of demographic groups and geographical locations. The interviews are conducted in Kinyarwanda by survivors working for the Genocide Archive of Rwanda using open-ended questions which encourage survivors to speak at length about their experiences before, during and after the genocide. There is very little intervention from the interviewer, whose questioning generally focusses on gaining as much detail as possible about events rather than trying to steer the survivor towards or away from certain topics. There is also a great benefit to the fact that these interviews were

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[17] Paul Gready, 'Beyond "You're with Us or against Us": Civil Society and Policymaking in Post-Genocide Rwanda', in *Remaking Rwanda: State Building and Human Rights after Mass Violence (Critical Human Rights)*, ed. by Scott Straus and Lars Waldorf (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011), pp. 87–100 (p. 90).

[18] Reyntjens, 'Rwanda, 10 Years On', p. 185.

[19] Tutsi refugees who had fled previous outbreaks of violence and returned to Rwanda in 1994 from Uganda and Tanzania

[20] For example, the exhibition in the Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre is consistent with the government's official narrative of the history of the genocide. See Chapter 5.

conducted by survivors with survivors. For example, Susanne Buckley-Zistel notes from her field research in the Nyamata region, that her position as an outsider, and more importantly as a foreign researcher, may have limited the responses she was given in interviews as interviewees may have hidden their true beliefs or feelings.[21] As discussed in Chapter 6 of this thesis, Rwandans often harbour feelings of resentment and mistrust towards outsiders which is why I chose to base my analysis exclusively on archival materials collected by Rwandans themselves. In 2011-2012 I worked closely with the survivors who run the archive, proofreading transcripts and translations of testimonies. I was able to build a strong working relationship with my colleagues but was aware that our relationship was established on the basis of trust, respect and equality. If I were to request interviews, treating my colleagues as research subjects, this would have changed the nature of our relationship and would probably not have yielded data as 'honest' or as 'raw' as that found in the interviews conducted by the survivors themselves.[22]

Indeed the testimonies themselves challenge the notions of 'silence' and 'secrecy' in Rwanda that have been observed by some scholars. For example, in addition to the lack of freedom of speech discussed above, Buckley-Zistel found in her interviews with convicted *génocidaires*, Tutsi returnees, and Tutsi survivors of the Nyamata district in Kigali, that although individuals were willing to discuss the genocide itself, many were silent on historical matters, particularly the causes of the genocide and previous episodes of violence and tension between Hutu and Tutsi. According to Buckley-Zistel, the omission of this history is a form of 'chosen amnesia' which is 'essential for [the] local coexistence' of these various groups.[23] Other scholars suggest that silence is

[21] Susanne Buckley-Zistel, 'Remembering to Forget: Chosen Amnesia as a Strategy for Local Coexistence in Post-Genocide Rwanda', *Africa: The Journal of the International African Institute*, 76. 2 (2006), 131–150 (p. 133).
[22] For a discussion on the perceptions of outsiders among staff members at the Aegis Trust, see Caroline Williamson, 'Accessing Material from the Genocide Archive of Rwanda', *African Research and Documentation*, 120 (2013), pp. 17–24
[23] Buckley-Zistel, p. 131.

imposed on the Rwandan population by the government which 'seeks full control over people and space'.[24] These testimonies reveal that survivors are willing to discuss their lives openly and are even critical of the government, suggesting that this notion of silence, whether voluntary or imposed, is dependent on contextual factors.

For this thesis, a total of 18 female survivors' testimonies were selected from the online archive or made accessible to me during my employment at the physical archive in Kigali in 2011-2012.[25] Only the testimonies with full Kinyarwanda transcripts and (English or French) translations were selected. The analysis was carried out on the original Kinyarwanda versions but the translations are presented in this thesis. I have amended translations if they do not correspond precisely to the original texts. All the women gave their testimonies on a voluntary basis and signed consent forms for their testimonies to be used in the public archive. For ethical reasons and to preserve anonymity, names have been abbreviated in this thesis. Because of the small sample size, the findings presented in this thesis are limited in terms of generalizability. The aim of the analysis is to gain an in-depth understanding of how posttraumatic growth is taking place in a small number of women on which further research may build. Before discussing how the testimonies will be analysed, the following sections will provide a brief background to the genocide and its impact on Rwandan women.

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[24] Filip Reyntjens, 'Constructing the Truth, Dealing with Dissent, Domesticating the World: Governance in Post-Genocide Rwanda', *African Affairs*, 110. 438 (2010), 1–34 (p. 2).

[25] In addition to the sample of 18 women's testimonies, I also refer to an additional testimony of a male survivor in Chapter 1 for its relevant content. Although the archive contains many more testimonies, the process of digitisation, transcription and translation is on-going and only a limited number are available with full transcripts and translations.

History of the Genocide

Before the arrival of Europeans, conflict rarely took place between the Tutsi and Hutu in Rwanda. Wars generally pitted the Banyarwanda as a group against outsiders.[26] With the same language, religion and cultural practices, the terms Hutu and Tutsi did not refer to distinct ethnic groups, as such, but to political status and occupation.[27] However, most scholars agree that the 'ethnicisation' of these groups had begun before the arrival of Europeans, at least in some areas of the country.[28] For example, the administration of Tutsi King, Rwabugiri (1860-1895), 'engendered a process of ethnic self-consciousness' and 'rigidified social distinctions in ethnic terms' among groups of Tutsi in central Rwanda.[29] German and later Belgian colonists confirmed these ethnic divisions making 'all Tutsi superior, all Hutu inferior. Twa formed the bottom group in the hierarchy'.[30] These group divisions were further reinforced by the colonial policy of introducing identity cards in the 1930s which explicitly stated the individual's ethnic group.[31] At a time when discriminatory colonial practices increased the significance of ethnicity over other forms of group identity, the explicit documentation of ethnic group on identity cards made changing ethnicity impossible.[32] Alongside these reforms, the Belgians

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[26] Gérard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 1997), p. 39.

[27] The Hutu majority make up about 85% of the population and are tranditionally land-working famers. The Tutsi make up around 14% of the population and are traditionally pastoralists. The third ethnic group of Rwanda, the Twa, represents just 1% of the population and are traditionally hunter-gatherers and potters.

[28] Villia Jefremovas, *Brickyards to Graveyards. From Production to Genocide in Rwanda* (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 2002), pp. 59–61; Catharine Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression: Clientship and Ethnicity in Rwanda, 1860–1960* (New York: Columbia University Press 1988), p. 208; Johan Pottier, *Re-Imagining Rwanda: Conflict, Survival and Disinformation in the Late Twentieth Century* (West Nyack, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 111–112.

[29] Pottier, p. 112.

[30] Ibid., p. 112.

[31] Timothy Longman, 'Identity Cards, Ethnic Self-Perception, and Genocide in Rwanda', in *Documenting Individual Identity: The Development of State Practices in the Modern World* ed. by Jane Caplan and John Torpey (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001), pp. 345–359 (p. 352).

[32] Ibid., p. 353.

established Tutsi supremacy by reserving educational opportunities for Tutsi and replacing all Hutu in power with pro-European Tutsi chiefs.

In the 1950s, a sense of injustice and inferiority among Hutu, in combination with their numerical predominance, began to draw sympathy from Flemish missionaries and a Hutu counter-elite began to emerge. Anti-Tutsi rhetoric grew in intensity and the Belgian authorities began switching their allegiances to the Hutu majority, replacing Tutsi chiefs with Hutu ones. Following the 1959-1961 revolution, the Parmehutu Party was elected to power with Grégoire Kayibanda as president.[33] Parmehutu propagated a pro-Hutu racist ideology, claiming that Hutu held the racial right to rule Rwanda.[34] Despite a growing number of killings and human rights violations, this government was perceived by Belgium and later France as democratic because the notion of ethnic majority was equated with democratic majority.[35] Over the next few decades, the government reversed the ethnic hierarchy that had been established during the colonial period and corruption concentrated access to resources, opportunities, and power into the hands of a tiny Hutu elite.[36] Several outbursts of anti-Tutsi violence in the 1960s resulted in bloodshed and many Tutsi were driven into exile in surrounding countries.

During his presidency, Kayibanda relied heavily on people from his southern home town of Gitarama where, in return, he concentrated economic resources. In the face of increasing poverty, Hutu from the north of the country began to criticise the regime. Kayibanda lost control in a northern coup d'état on 5 July

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[33] Parmehutu or Parti du Mouvement pour l'Emancipation Hutu was the political party established by Grégoire Kayibanda to counter Tutsi supremacy.

[34] Throughout this thesis, I use the term 'ideology' in accordance with Teun van Dijk's definition, that is, 'the basis of the social representations [beliefs and knowledge] shared by members of a group'. See Teun van Dijk, *Ideology: A Multidiciplinary Approach* (London: Sage Publications, 1998), p. 8.

[35] Alison Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda* (Human Rights Watch Report 1999), <http://addisvoice.com/Ethiopia%20under%20Meles/Rwanda.pdf> [accessed 15 October 2013], p. 22.

[36] Jefremovas, p. 73.

1973 which placed Juvénal Habyarimana in power. At the time, the coup was immensely popular as it reduced ethnic violence and government corruption.[37] In the early days, the regime saw an improvement in Hutu-Tutsi ethnic relations and intermarriage became more common. However, in the late 1980s, Habyarimana faced a similar economic crisis to Kayibanda in 1973. Then in 1990, the RPF, consisting mostly of Tutsi refugees from Uganda invaded northern Rwanda and sparked a civil war. Seeing this as a propaganda opportunity to abate the growing discontent, Habyarimana deflected criticism of his regime onto all Tutsi. In an attempt to retain power, the government fostered policies of ethnic hatred and fear of the RPF and all Tutsi. Habyarimana used racist propaganda and incited hatred through radio broadcasts, popular magazines, newspapers, songs and even school textbooks. Tutsi were portrayed as inherently evil, foreign conquerors who wanted to enslave the Hutu people.[38] Under intense international pressure, a ceasefire was called and the Hutu government signed a power sharing agreement with the RPF as part of the Arusha Accords. However, by the time Habyarimana's plane was shot down on 6 April 1994, the plans for the genocide of the Tutsi were already in place.

Hutu extremists blamed the RPF for the plane crash and a killing campaign ensued. Hundreds of thousands of ordinary people participated in the genocide and victims were frequently raped, tortured and slaughtered by their neighbours. As soon as the killings began, the RPF rekindled the civil war and won within three months, establishing a new government. But by the time the

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[37] Filip Reyntjens, *L'Afrique des grands lacs en crise. Rwanda, Burundi: 1988– 1994*. (Paris: Karthala, 1994), pp. 35–36.

[38] Human Rights Watch/Africa, Human Rights Watch Women's Project, Fédération Internationale des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme, *Shattered Lives: Sexual Violence during the Rwandan Genocide and its Aftermath* (New York, Washington, London, Brussels: Human Rights Watch, 1996), p. 15; Beth Lewis Samuelson and Sarah Warshauer Freedman, 'Language Policy, Multilingual Education, and Power in Rwanda,' *Language Policy*, 9 (2010), 191–215 (p. 198). For detailed analyses of the types of media used and the ways in which Tutsi were depicted, see Jean-Pierre Chrétien, *Rwanda: Les Medias du Génocide* (Paris: Karthala and Reporters Sans Frontières, 1995) and *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, ed. by Allan Thompson (London: Pluto Press, 2007).

RPF won the civil war, as many as three quarters of the Tutsi population had perished as well as thousands of moderate Hutu.[39]

It would be difficult to overstate the scale and impact of the genocide. In a period of just three months around 800,000 people were brutally murdered. In the immediate aftermath, some two million Hutu, perpetrators and others, fled to neighbouring Zaire in fear of retribution and around 600,000 Tutsi refugees returned from neighbouring Uganda, Tanzania and Burundi.[40] While the influx of Tutsi refugees created an increase in criminality at home, the outflow of Hutu refugees led to a security threat as members of the former regime began retraining their army and threatened to launch a full-scale invasion. Meanwhile, the human material that made up the rest of the Rwandan population was psychologically traumatised. There were Tutsi and Hutu survivors who had lost their families, friends and property; thousands of children who had lost their parents; perpetrators of the genocide who had blindly followed orders and now lived in fear of being arrested or killed and killers who had believed in the genocidal ideology.[41] To make matters worse, the country's economy was non-existent and, with 40 per cent of the population dead or in exile, ripe crops were left to rot for want of people to gather them.[42] In short, the genocide left Rwanda devastated. However, although the violence committed during the genocide affected all Rwandans, women suffered differently.

Women and the Genocide

The extremist propaganda targeted Tutsi women very specifically, identifying their sexuality 'as a means through which the Tutsi community sought to

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[39] Des Forges, pp. 6, 18.
[40] Dorethea Hilhorst and Mathijs van Leeuwen, 'Emergency and Development: the Case of Imidugudu, Villagization in Rwanda', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 13. 3 (2000), 264–280 (p. 266); Human Rights Watch, p. 14.
[41] Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis*, pp. 326–327.
[42] Ibid., p. 307.

infiltrate and control the Hutu community'.[43] Tutsi women were considered more beautiful than their Hutu counterparts, and it was more common for Europeans to marry Tutsi women than Hutu women. This led to an excessive jealousy and hatred of Tutsi women who were portrayed as arrogant and dangerous because they would use their sexual prowess to manipulate the United Nations peacekeepers who were deemed supporters of the RPF.[44] One extremist magazine, *Kangura*, warned Hutu men to be on guard against Tutsi women who, it claimed, were being used by the RPF to conquer Rwanda.[45]

It was partly this propaganda campaign that fuelled the widespread sexual violence committed against women during the genocide.[46] Rape was used as a tool to dehumanise all Tutsi (although often Hutu women fell victim to sexual crimes also). Many women died after the genocide because they were targeted for rape by Interahamwe known to be infected with HIV. However, in addition to dehumanising and terrorising the Tutsi community, as Jennie Burnet explains, sexual violence also took on a symbolic meaning.[47] Women's bodies were mutilated, their breasts cut off, their vaginas pierced with sharp objects or burnt with acid and their faces disfigured. Pregnant women had their foetuses cut from their bodies. As discussed in RB's story, some women had their lives saved in exchange for becoming 'wives' or sex slaves to Hutu men. Because of their commodified value as sexual objects, however, fewer women than men were killed in the genocide. Moreover, many men fled in exile after the genocide while others were imprisoned, so the aftermath saw a significant

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[43] Human Rights Watch, p. 2.
[44] Ibid., p. 17.
[45] Ibid., p. 17.
[46] For more on the depiction of women in extremist propaganda, see Binaifer Nowrojee, 'A Lost Opportunity for Justice: Why Did the ICTR not Persecute Gender Propaganda?', in *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, ed. by Allan Thompson (London: Pluto Press), pp. 362–372.
[47] Jennie E. Burnet, *Genocide Lives in Us: Women, Memory and Silence in Rwanda* (Madison, Wisconsin: Wisconsin University Press, 2012), p. 62. See also Christopher Taylor, 'A Gendered Genocide: Tutsi Women and Hutu Extremists in the 1994 Rwanda Genocide', *Political and Legal Anthropological Review*, 22. 1 (1999), 42–53; Christopher Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror: The Rwandan Genocide of 1994* (Oxford: Berg, 1999), pp. 157–170.

demographic imbalance.[48] With fewer men, women were left to head households and had no option to continue with traditional gender roles. They were forced to take on new responsibilities which, in the past, would not have been socially or culturally acceptable. Women from all social groups joined cooperatives and organisations for mutual support, many of which have become important and powerful institutions in Rwandan civil society, advocating for legal and political changes.[49] Many ordinary Rwandan women have also benefited from the overall improvement in gender parity seen in political reforms.[50]

Before the genocide, women's rights were both economically and politically circumscribed. Inheritance, for example, was governed under customary law under which women could not inherit property unless they were designated as beneficiaries.[51] Indeed, women had virtually no access to property. While men were responsible for cash crops and other commercial enterprises, women's roles revolved around subsistence agriculture. If a woman earned any money from surplus production it would be taken by her husband, making it virtually impossible for women to accumulate wealth. Married women could vote but needed their husband's consent to engage in commerce or buy land.[52] According to Villia Jefremovas, if women wanted to engage in commercial activity, they had to subscribe to various stereotypes (such as loose women, virtuous wives or timid virgins) in order to negotiate the limitations of control over labour, resources and surplus.[53] These economic restrictions on women engendered a veritable social crisis in the aftermath of the genocide, as thousands of widows and daughters had no legal claims over their late

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[48] Burnet, *Genocide Lives in Us*, p. 65; Heather B. Hamilton, 'Rwanda's Women: The Key to Reconstruction', *The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*, (2000), <http://www.jha.ac/greatlakes/b001.htm> [accessed 15 October 2013], pp. 2–3
[49] Burnet, *Genocide Lives in Us,* p. 220.
[50] Ibid.*,* p. 219.
[51] Ibid.*,* p. 76; Human Rights Watch, p. 4.
[52] Jefremovas, p. 98.
[53] Ibid., p. 97.

husband's or father's homes, land or finances.[54] In response, women's groups and the gender-conscious RPF have made gender equality a cornerstone of the 2003 constitution and many laws that previously excluded women have now been reversed.[55]

Since 1994, Rwanda has achieved enviable economic growth every year and made significant steps towards achieving its UN Millennium Development Goals. Although as Burnet notes, Rwanda's economic success has only benefitted some women; the disruption in gender relations has enabled a number of women to pursue careers or commercial activities without the risks previously associated with such endeavours.[56] Moreover, many ordinary women have benefitted from the overall improvement in gender equality.[57] The improvements in gender relations that followed the genocide are not universal, however, as many rural women now have to shoulder a heavier workload with lower yields and a reduction in social status.[58] Rwanda's increasing Gini Coefficient also indicates that the poorest in Rwandan society are falling further behind the burgeoning wealth of the urban middle class.[59]

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[54] Human Rights Watch, p. 4.

[55] Elizabeth Powley, 'Case Study Rwanda: Women Hold up Half the Parliament' in *Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers*, ed. by Julie Ballington and Azza Karam, rev. edn (Stockholm, Sweden: The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2005), pp. 154–163 (p. 155).

[56] Burnet, *Genocide Lives in Us,* pp. 66, 219.

[57] Ibid., p. 219.

[58] Ibid., p. 66.

[59] The Gini Coefficient is a measure of statistical dispersion which may be used to indicate the degree of inequality of income in a given population. A Gini Coefficient of 0 expresses perfect equality while a Gini Coefficient of 1 indicates maximum inequality. According to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Rwanda is currently ranked 32nd most unequal country in the world (CIA, The World Factbook, Country Comparison: Distribution of Family Income - Gini Index <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2172rank.html> [accessed 15 October 2013]). Rwanda's Gini coefficient increased from 0.27 in 1985 to 0.507 in 2000/1 and again to 0.522 in 2005/6. It has since decreased slightly to 0.490 in 2010/11. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Rwanda, Millenium Development Goals: Overview, (2013) <http://www.rw.undp.org/content/rwanda/en/home/mdgoverview/overview/mdg1.html> [accessed 15 October 2013], para. 3 of 6.

The differential impact of the genocide on women and the repercussions of this for Rwandan society in general mean that the voices of women are of particular interest for understanding the consequences of the genocide. Indeed many of the changes that have taken place in post-genocide Rwandan society revolve around women, gender roles and the changing state of families and communities. By analysing their testimonies, this thesis is able to offer a bottom-up understanding of the ways in which women have responded to the genocide and the ways in which it has affected their lives. Testimonies are a particularly interesting site for such analysis because of the close relationship between narrative and identity.

Narrative, Trauma and Identity

Theorists of identity are increasingly turning their attention towards narrative because it is through stories that we gain a sense of coherence and are able to make sense of our worlds.[60] Stories serve as a vehicle for communicating and understanding human experience. As Deborah Schiffrin and Anna De Fina observe, 'we dream, plan, complain, endorse, entertain, teach, learn, and reminisce by telling stories. They provide hopes, enhance or mitigate disappointments, challenge or support moral order, and test out theories of the world at both personal and communal levels'.[61] Personality psychologist, Dan McAdams, suggests that identity may itself be 'viewed as an internalised and evolving life story, a way of telling the self, to the self and others, through a story or set of stories complete with settings, scenes, characters, plots, and

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[60] For example, Michael Bamberg, Anna De Fina and Deborah Schiffrin, 'Introduction to this Volume', in *Selves and Identities in Narrative and Discou*rse, ed. by Michael Bamberg, Anna De Fina and Deborah Schiffrin (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2007), pp. 1–8 (p. 1); Jerome Bruner, 'The Narrative Construction of Reality, *Critical Inquiry*, 18. 1 (1991), 1–21 (p. 4); Dan P. McAdams, *The Redemptive Self: Stories Americans Live By* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 271; Deborah Schiffrin and Anna De Fina, 'Introduction', in *Telling Stories: Language, Narrative, and Social Life*, ed. by Deborah Schiffrin, Anna De Fina and Anastasia Nylund (Georgetown University Press, 2010), pp. 1–6 (p. 1).

[61] Schiffrin and De Fina, p. 1.

themes'.[62] According to McAdams, this unfolding narrative is internalised and revised to give life a sense of direction, meaning and continuity. In a similar vein, Bamburg, Schiffrin and De Fina note how, 'narrative functions as the glue that enables human life to transcend the natural incoherence and discontinuity of the unruly by imposing a point of origin and an orientation toward closure, and thereby structuring the otherwise meaningless into a meaningful life'.[63]

People's life stories are being continually reflected upon and updated on the basis of new experiences and feedback from others. Most new experiences are processed in a fairly orderly fashion and people's life stories evolve slowly and subtly over time. New events are internalised into our life stories with sequence and logic so that they may be recalled at a future date. As McAdams notes, however, major life changes such as marriage, divorce, having children, changing jobs, losing loved ones, or retirement may call into question our assumptions and in response, we may recast our life story 'to embody new plots and characters and to emphasise different scenes from the past and different expectations for the future. We may set new goals. The sense of an ending may change substantially, and as the envisioned ending changes, the narrative may be reoriented'.[64] Traumatic events are particularly problematic to assimilate into our internal narratives because trauma causes the parts of the brain usually concerned with memory and language to 'shut down'.[65] Usual patterns of memory encoding fail to function leaving memories of a traumatic event lacking in coherence or meaning. According to Stephen Joseph, 'trauma has the effect of rendering our life stories obsolete – and because we base our sense of

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[62] Dan P. McAdams, Ann Diamond, Ed de St. Aubin and Elizabeth Mansfield, 'Stories of Commitment: The Psychosocial Construction of Generative Lives', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72. 3 (1997), 678–694 (p. 678).
[63] Bamberg, De Fina and Schiffrin, p. 5.
[64] Dan P. McAdams, *The Stories We Live By: Personal Myths and the Making of the Self* (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1993), p. 109.
[65] Stephen Joseph, *What Doesn't Kill Us: The New Psychology of Posttraumatic Growth* (Hachette Digital: London, 2011), p. 101.

who we are through the stories we tell, we feel that we are losing our very identity'.[66]

Traumatic episodes are often difficult to assimilate into our stories because they challenge our existing patterns of belief and assumptions. As Ronnie Janoff-Bulman argues, throughout our lives, we develop certain 'positive illusions' about ourselves and about the external world.[67] She asserts that we adhere to abstract beliefs according to which the world is benevolent and meaningful.[68] Extremely traumatic events, such as genocide, have the power to shake up, or even shatter these assumptions.[69] Janoff-Bulman observes that to experience a traumatic event 'is to powerfully, [and] experientially, confront mortality, danger and our "creatureliness". The result is terror'.[70] After a traumatic life experience, the psychological coherence and protection once afforded by an individual's basic assumptions is often in a state of upheaval as they experience the disintegration of these assumptions.[71]

The initial dissolution of cognitive-emotional structures often sets in motion a significant amount of thinking about the event. Initially this ruminative process is automatic and unintentional then, in later stages, it may become effortful and intentional and play a role in developing new schemas.[72] In order to make sense

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[66] Joseph, *What Doesn't Kill Us,* p. 144.

[67] Janoff-Bulman bases her assertions on the work of Shelley E. Taylor, *Positive Illusions: Creative Self-Deception and the Healthy Mind* (New York: Basic Books, 1991); Shelley E. Taylor and Jonathon D. Brown, 'Positive Illusions and Well-Being Revisited: Separating Fact from Fiction', *Psychological Bulletin*, 116. 1 (1994), 21–27; Ronnie Janoff-Bulman, *Shattered Assumptions: Towards a New Psychology of Trauma* (New York: The Free Press, 1992), p. 23.

[68] Janoff-Bulman, p. 6.

[69] Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, p. 2.

[70] Janoff-Bulman, p. 61.

[71] Ronnie Janoff-Bulman and Cynthia McPherson Frantz, 'The Impact of Trauma on Meaning: From Meaningless World to Meaningful Life', in *The Transformation of Meaning in Psychological Therapies: Integrating Theory and Practice*, ed. by Mick Power and Chris R. Brewin, (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1997), pp. 91–106 (p. 94).

[72] A schema is a mental structure that consists of pre-existing theories about some aspect of the world and may 'vary in level of abstraction and inclusiveness' (Janoff-Bulman, p. 28). Although schemas may change gradually with the acquisition of new knowledge, the theory-, rather than data-driven nature of our cognitive processes means that schemas have a tendency to remain relatively unchanged. Traumatic life experiences, however, have the power to

of their experience and restore a sense of meaning, control and order, it becomes crucially important for survivors to reconstruct their experience through narrative. Research has demonstrated the importance and value of communicating accounts of trauma as a way of coping with major life events.[73] In light of this, new therapies, such as narrative exposure therapy, aim to help trauma survivors construct a chronological account of their experience, and transform it into a coherent narrative.[74] This new narrative is likely to diverge greatly from previously constructed life stories because of the ways in which traumatic events challenge previously held beliefs, philosophies of life, goals, perceptions of self and interpersonal behaviour.[75] The result of this struggle with a traumatic life event is frequently personal transformation. Changes occur in different people in different ways and can be both positive and negative.[76] Joseph and Linley's Organismic Valuing Theory predicts that, in some cases, the output of this rumination may result in old schemas assimilating the traumatic event into pre-existing schemas.[77] In other cases, however, this rumination may result in the development of new (positive or negative) schemas. It is when individuals are able to positively accommodate their worldview to the trauma-related information that posttraumatic growth becomes possible.

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dramatically alter people's self-schemas. Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, pp. 17–19.

[73] James W. Pennebaker, 'Emotion, Disclosure, and Health: An Overview', in *Emotion, Disclosure and Health*, ed. by James W. Pennebaker (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 1995), pp. 3–10 (pp. 5–6).

[74] Joseph, *What Doesn't Kill Us,* p. 171.

[75] Richard Tedeschi, 'Violence Transformed: Posttraumatic Growth in Survivors and their Societies', *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 4. 3 (1999), 319–341 (p.312).

[76] Ibid., p. 321.

[77] Stephen Joseph and P. Alex Linley, 'Positive Psychological Perspectives on Posttraumatic Stress: An Integrative Psychosocial Framework' in *Trauma, Recovery, and Growth: Positive Psychological Perspectives on Posttraumatic Stress*, ed. by Stephen Joseph and P. Alex Linley (Hokboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 2008), pp. 3–20 (pp. 12–13).

Posttraumatic Growth and Culture

Although it was not until the 1990s when systematic attempts were made by psychologists and other researchers to investigate and understand the nature of what is now commonly termed 'posttraumatic growth', the notion of positive changes resulting from human suffering has been recognised throughout history and across cultures.[78] The writings and ideas of ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Hebrews as well as many early religions including Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity and Islam have all addressed the possibility of good resulting from trauma and suffering.[79] Positive changes following adversity have also been a recurrent theme in great European literature,[80] as well as in the writings of existential philosophers.[81]

Despite the recognition throughout history of positive responses to human suffering, in the recent past much emphasis has been placed on the negative cognitive, behavioural and emotional responses to trauma which have been interpreted as pathological.[82] Joseph and Linley argue that because clinical psychology is generally placed under the umbrella of psychiatry, the science

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[78] Katie Splevins, Keren Cohen, Jake Bowley and Stephen Joseph, 'Theories of Posttraumatic Growth: Cross-Cultural Perspectives', *Journal of Loss and Trauma*, 15 (2010), 259–277 (p. 262); Tzipi Weiss and Roni Berger, 'Posttraumatic Growth around the Globe', in *Posttraumatic Growth and Culturally Competent Practice: Lessons Learned from around the World,* ed. by Tzipi Weiss and Roni Berger (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons Inc, 2010), pp. 189–196 (p. 191).

[79] Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, pp. 10–11; Joseph and Linley, 'Positive Psychological Perspectives', pp. 7–8; Richard G. Tedeschi, Crystal L. Park and Lawrence G. Calhoun, 'Posttraumatic Growth: Conceptual Issues', in *Posttraumatic Growth: Positive Changes in the Aftermath of Crisis*, ed. by Richard G. Tedeschi, Crystal L. Park and Lawrence G. Calhoun, (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. 1998), pp. 1–22 (pp. 3–4).

[80] Joseph and Linley cite examples such as Dante Alighieri's description of his search for his lost love Beatrice, taking him through Hell and Purgatory to reach Paradise in *The Divine Comedy* as well as Fyodor Dostoevsky's redemption of the murderer Raskolnikoc when he embraces the suffering of the prison camps to atone for his actions in *Crime and Punishment*. Joseph and Linley, 'Positive Psychological Perspectives', pp. 7–8.

[81] See, for example, Søren Kierkegaard, *The Sickness unto Death*, trans. by Alastair Hannay (London: Penguin Books, 1989); Rollo May, *Freedom and Destiny* (New York: Norton, 1981); Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1956).

[82] Joseph and Linley, 'Positive Psychological Perspectives', p. 4.

and practice of clinical psychology have been pervaded by an illness ideology which has led it to become analogous to the practice of medicine.[83] The dominance of the medical model for explaining the psychosocial distress associated with traumatic experiences is problematic for two reasons. Firstly, it assumes that negative responses to trauma are the result of individual psychiatric dysfunction rather than natural responses to the individual's environmental context (which some scholars argue have the potential to generate positive change).[84] Alternative discourses of trauma, such as those provided by theorists of posttraumatic growth, are inclusive of contextual factors and account for both the positive and negative changes that take place following trauma.[85] Secondly, the medical model may not always be relevant in cross-cultural situations. For example, Irene Rizzini and Andrew Dawes note that it is not possible to homogenise distress and that, by drawing on a medical model, Western mental health workers risk imposing culturally alien diagnoses on local people.[86] The ways in which individuals deal with suffering is often determined by social, cultural and political aspects of their situations and thus the Western interpretation of psychological distress as a mental health problem may, in many circumstances, be misplaced.[87] Because the field of posttraumatic growth emphasises the importance of constructing a narrative, it may be more cross-culturally meaningful. Lynne McCormack, for example, argues that gaining a sense of meaning from life events through storytelling is familiar across cultures and enables people to bring understanding and relevance to their

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[83] Ibid., p. 5.

[84] Lynne McCormack, 'Primary and Vicarious Posttraumatic Growth following Genocide, War and Humanitarian Emergencies: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis', Thesis submitted to the University of Nottingham for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, (2010) < http://etheses.nottingham.ac.uk/2142/1/FINAL_THESIS_-
corrections%26_dedication_18.11.10.pdf> [accessed 15 October 2013], p. 53.

[85] Stephen Joseph and P. Alex Linley, 'Growth Following Adversity: Theoretical Perspectives and Implications for Clinical Practice', *Clinical Psychology Review*, 26 (2006) 1041–1053 (pp. 1045–1046).

[86] Irene Rizzini and Andrew Dawes, 'Editorial: On Cultural Diversity and Childhood Adversity', *Childhood*, 8 (2001), 315–321 (p. 316).

[87] McCormack, p. 37.

experiences.[88] Richard Tedeschi and Ryan Kilmer suggest that listening to people's narratives for evidence of strengths, interests, and hopes as opposed to focusing on deficit and dysfunction may ultimately facilitate positive change, enhance health and wellbeing as well as reduce future needs for formal mental health services.[89] McCormack suggests that such an approach may have cross-cultural validity because it is supportive of individuals' lived experience, enabling a person-centred interpretation of events rather than imposing diagnostic labels based on a discourse of individual psychopathology.[90]

Although the concept of posttraumatic growth appears to be understood as a universal phenomenon, the basic assumptions affected by trauma, the cognitive processes that follow and the ways in which growth is manifested may be culture-specific.[91] In the US, Tedeschi and Calhoun have identified five dimensions of growth: personal strength, new possibilities, relating to others, appreciation of life, and spiritual change.[92] As Tzipi Weiss and Roni Burger note, however, 'studies in other cultures [have] identified between two and five domains of growth'.[93] While similar domains of growth to those observed in the US have been observed in some cultures, different dimensions arise in others. For example, it was found in the Netherlands that feelings of pride are considered growthful while in Japanese culture, where modesty is highly valued, posttraumatic growth is conceptualised as an increased self-awareness of one's weaknesses and limitations and a loss of desire for possessions.[94] Weiss and Burger also note how values such as self-control and patience are

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[88] Ibid., p. 41.
[89] Richard G. Tedeschi and Ryan P. Kilmer, 'Assessing Strengths, Resilience, and Growth to Guide Clinical Intervention', *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 36. 3 (2005), 230–237 (p. 235).
[90] McCormack, p. 53.
[91] Splevins, Cohen, Bowley and Joseph, p. 262; Weiss and Berger, p. 191.
[92] Richard Tedeschi and Lawrence Calhoun, 'The Posttraumatic Growth Inventory: Measuring the Positive Legacy of Trauma', *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 9. 3 (1996), 455–471 (p. 460).
[93] Weiss and Burger, pp. 191.
[94] Ibid., p. 191.

emphasised in cultures where the family plays a central role.[95] In addition, while spiritual growth is highly valued in American culture, in atheistic societies such as Germany, the Netherlands and Australia, it could be considered irrelevant or even offensive to suggest growth in such a domain.[96] Calhoun and Tedeschi conceive of the context of an individual suffering from trauma in terms of proximate culture, that is, one's local community and social network; and in terms of distal culture, that is, the broad cultural themes that are prominent within a society, country or geographic region.[97] In their opinion, both 'primary reference groups' and broader domains of culture should be considered when trying to understand the nature of posttraumatic growth.[98]

In the West, there have been a number of empirical measures or scales developed to articulate the different domains of posttraumatic growth and provide a measure of wellbeing, resilience, coping and change following trauma. Among the most well-known and most commonly used are:

• Joseph and Yule's Changes in Outlook Questionnaire (CiOQ), a 28-item self-report questionnaire that considers both positive and negative perceived changes which was developed from a population of survivors of shipping disaster in the UK;[99]

• Tedeschi and Calhoun's Posttraumatic Growth Inventory (PTGI), a 21-item inventory with five subscales (relating to others, new possibilities,

[95] Ibid., p. 191.
[96] Lawrence G. Calhoun, Arnie Cann, and Richard G. Tedeschi, 'The Posttraumatic Growth Model: Sociocultural Considerations', in *Posttraumatic Growth and Culturally Competent Practice: Lessons Learned from Around the World,* ed. by Tzipi Weiss and Roni Berger, (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons Inc, 2010), pp. 1–14 (p. 4); Weiss and Burger, pp. 191–192.
[97] Lawrence G. Calhoun and Richard G. Tedeschi, 'The Foundations of Posttraumatic Growth: An Expanded Framework, in *Handbook of Posttraumatic Growth: Research and Practice*, ed. by Lawrence G. Calhoun and Richard G. Tedeschi, (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, 2006), pp. 3–23 (p. 12).
[98] Ibid., p. 12.
[99] Stephen Joseph, Ruth Williams, and William Yule, 'Changes in Outlook Following Disaster: The Preliminary Development of a Measure to Assess Positive And Negative Responses', *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 6. 2 (1993), 271–279.

personal strength, spiritual change, and appreciation of life) which was developed based on a population of undergraduate students in the US having experienced a range of events (including bereavement, injury/accident, criminal victimisation, academic problems and unwanted pregnancy);[100]

- Park, Cohen and Murch's Stress-Related Growth Scale (SRGS), a 50-item measure of psychological growth following a stressful experience, developed from a population of undergraduate students in the US;[101]

- McMillen and Fisher's Perceived Benefits Scale (PBS), a 30-item self-report questionnaire which measures positive changes in eight domains (lifestyle changes, material gain, self-efficacy, family closeness, community closeness, faith in people, compassion, and spirituality) developed from a population of adult spectators at a children's baseball game in the US;[102]

- Abraido-Lanza, Guier and Colón's Thriving Scale (TS), a 20-item questionnaire that measures growth in eight domains (appreciation of family, life, and friends, positive attitude, personal strength, enhanced spirituality, empathy, and patience) developed from a population of Latina women in the US suffering from poverty and chronic illness.[103]

Although all of these scales were developed in Western contexts (i.e. the US or the UK), the variation between them suggests that cultural context may not be the only factor affecting posttraumatic growth and that the nature of the event may also impact on the way posttraumatic growth takes place. As McCormack observes, the above scales are based on populations of undergraduate students, survivors of a shipping disaster and people suffering from illness.[104] There have been no scales developed to determine domains of growth associated with

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[100] Tedeschi and Calhoun, pp. 459–460.

[101] Crystal L. Park, Lawrence H. Cohen and Renee L. Murch, 'Assessment and Prediction of Stress-Related Growth' *Journal of Personality*, 64. 1 (1996), 71–105 (pp. 76, 78).

[102] J. Curtis McMillen, and Rachel H. Fisher, 'The Perceived Benefits Scale: Measuring Perceived Positive Life Changes Following Negative Events', *Social Work Research*, 22. 3 (1998), 173–187 (p. 178).

[103] Ana F. Abraido-Lanza, Carolina Guier and Rose Marie Colón, 'Psychological Thriving among Latinas with Chronic Illness', *Journal of Social Issues*, 54 (1998), 405–428 (p. 413).

[104] McCormack, p. 68.

populations having survived war, genocide or humanitarian disasters. However, war and genocide are qualitatively different to most traumatic events because they expose people to multiple events in a persistently dangerous environment.[105] Some studies have, however, been carried out on post-conflict culture. For example, McCormack investigates processes of posttraumatic growth in Vietnam War veterans and their wives as well as in humanitarian aid workers who have been exposed to war and genocide. Using a phenomenological approach,[106] she has identified growth in domains such as empathy, love, gratitude and humility.[107] However, the psychological impacts of war and genocide are also likely to depend on other factors. For example, soldiers or aid workers who go abroad to fight or assist in combat zones typically leave their families behind in a comparatively safe environment. In contrast, for civilians caught in a war or genocide-afflicted country, their families may also be affected.[108] Moreover, while soldiers or humanitarian aid workers may have chosen to go to war or work in a warzone, a civilian affected by war may not have made such a decision. Although some studies have investigated processes of posttraumatic growth in victims of war and genocide, these have relied on the pre-established self-report methodologies discussed above.[109] Such self-report measures are unlikely to provide detailed, culturally specific accounts of individual experiences. This thesis will be the first research

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[105] Rita Rosner and Steve Powell, 'Posttraumatic Growth after War', in *Handbook of Posttraumatic Growth: Research and Practice*, ed. by Lawrence G. Calhoun and Richard G. Tedeschi, (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, 2006), pp. 197–214 (p. 200).

[106] The Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) method applied by McCormack is a critical realist approach that offers an understanding of human experience by focusing on how a given person, in a given context, makes sense of a given phenomenon. The approach places emphasis on the researcher striving to make sense of the participant striving to make sense of their world. McCormack, as other phenomenologists, gathered data from research participants using open-ended interviews. See McCormack, p. 78.

[107] Ibid., p. 248.

[108] Rosner and Powell, p. 200.

[109] Rachel Lev-Wiesel and Marianne Amir, 'Posttraumatic Growth among Holocaust Child Survivors', *Journal of Loss and Trauma*, 8 (2003), 229–237 (p. 232); Janine Karen Lurie-Beck, Poppy Liossis and Kathryn Gow, 'Relationships between Psychopathological and Demographic Variables and Posttraumatic Growth among Holocaust Survivors', *Traumatology*, 14. 28 (2008), 28–39 (p. 31); Rosner and Powell, p. 202.

project to use qualitative methods to investigate the impact of genocide on survivors of genocide as well as the first to investigate processes of posttraumatic growth in Rwanda.

Qualitative methods can provide 'rich descriptive detail and deep understanding of the experiences of individuals who have faced major life crises'.[110] It would seem, therefore, that qualitative methodologies are useful for gaining an understanding of growth in a new cultural context, as such analyses enable bottom-up, data-driven insights into the nature of posttraumatic growth without imposing *apriori* worldviews or cultural assumptions.[111] Pals and McAdams suggest that the analysis of narrative accounts 'may constitute the most valid way of assessing posttraumatic growth'.[112] This is because 'posttraumatic growth may be best understood as a process of constructing a narrative understanding of how the self has been positively transformed by the traumatic event and then integrating this transformed sense of self into the identity-defining life story'.[113]

A similar understanding of identity can be found among discourse analysts who tend to argue that identity is embedded within language and discourse.[114] In particular, these analysts have looked at various forms of narrative including life story and oral histories to examine how aspects of selves and social identities are revealed. Schiffrin, for example, suggests that narrative offers a sociolinguistic 'self-portrait, a linguistic lens through which to discover people's own […] views of themselves as situated in a larger social

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[110] Calhoun and Tedeschi, 'The Foundations of Posttraumatic Growth', p. 16.

[111] This approach for investigating processes of posttraumatic growth in other cultures is advocated by Splevins, Cohen, Bowley and Joseph p. 270.

[112] Jennifer L. Pals and Dan P. McAdams, 'The Transformed Self: A Narrative Understanding of Posttraumatic Growth', *Psychological Inquiry*, 15. 1 (2004), 65–69 (p. 65.)

[113] Ibid., p. 65.

[114] Bamberg, De Fina and Schiffrin, p. 2; Bruner, pp. 1–21; Norman Fairclough, *Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research* (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 8–9; Deborah Schiffrin, 'Narrative as Self-Portrait: Sociolinguistic Constructions of Identity', *Language in Society*, 25. 2 (1996), 167–203 (p. 199); Schiffrin, De Fina and Nylund, pp. 1–6.

structure'.[115] Discourse analysis is a useful tool for analysing themes of growth within the testimonies of female genocide survivors as it enables the analyst to look for linguistic signs which connect verbal utterances to extra-linguistic reality to create and recreate identities.[116] This is particularly useful for the analysis of identity and belief systems in Rwanda because many topics are socially, politically or culturally sensitive and are often unsayable. By using discourse analysis to assess what is presupposed or implied by the speaker, it becomes possible to gain an insight into her underlying belief system.

In this thesis, the analysis of the testimonies takes a multidisciplinary approach, attending to linguistic, cognitive, social and cultural aspects to gain an understanding of individual and group identity in Rwanda. To begin with, the testimonies were coded according to semantic macrostructures (topics or themes). These include: the position of survivors in Rwandan society; the self-perception of Rwandan women; women's interpersonal and family relationships; religious beliefs; perceptions of society more broadly; and perceptions of the international community. Following this macroanalysis, local meanings were scrutinised via a microanalysis of syntactic and semantic structures in order to ascertain what growth themes emerged and how these interact with socio-cultural factors. The microanalysis focused on use of agency, use of silence, implicit presuppositions (that is, implied or assumed meanings), social attributions, use of pronouns, lexical choices (such as the choice of a noun-phrase to evoke a person, place or thing), extreme case formulations (that is, formulations that take evaluative dimensions to an extreme limit[117]) contrastive pairs (that is, two consecutive items of discourse which contrast with each other in some way[118]) and other rhetorical structures (that is, the use of stylistic features such as metaphor or euphemism). The

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[115] Schiffrin, p. 199.

[116] Bamberg, De Fina and Schiffrin, p. 2.

[117] See, Anita Pomerantz, 'Extreme Case Formulations: A New Way of Legitimating Claims', *Human Studies* (Interaction and Language Use Special Issue), 9 (1986), 219–229 (p. 219).

[118] Victoria Lee and Geoffrey Beattie, 'The Rhetorical Organization of Verbal and Nonverbal Behavior in Emotional Talk', *Semiotica*, 120. 1/2 (1998), 39–92 (p. 61).

analysis in Chapter 5 focuses primary on the women's use of personal pronouns to assess the ways in which they conceive of post-genocide reconciliation, the process of rebuilding relationship. As discussed in Chapter 5, reconciliation can be interpreted as an inter-personal process, a person-to-group process or a group-to-group process. While the macroanalysis was carried out on the translated versions of the testimonies, the local analysis focused on the Kinyarwanda transcripts with the assistance of a native speaker.

Structure of Thesis

The thesis comprises six chapters, each of which examines a different aspect of Rwandan women survivors' identity. In Chapter 1, the analysis focuses on the ways in which these women, as survivors, are perceived by others in Rwanda, taking a view from the outside looking in. Negative attitudes are found to be associated with survivors because they were orphaned, they bear physical scars or because they were victimised by sexual violence. Chapter 1 also discusses how the very identity of survivors has become tainted in Rwandan society, with survivors being considered suspicious, mentally unstable, and parasitic. Two reasons are identified as playing a role in the stigmatisation of Tutsi survivors. On the one hand, their stigmatisation provides a source of system legitimation to the RPF-led government. On the other hand, the stigmatisation results from the anxiety and fear that survivors invoke by reminding people of Rwanda's traumatic past and highlighting human mortality. Ironically, while both of these reasons play a role in stigmatising survivors, they also provide a source of strength for Rwandan women; this is explored in Chapter 2.

Chapter 2 focuses on self-perception and examines the ways in which women survivors have experienced posttraumatic growth in this domain, such as through gaining an enhanced sense of personal strength and a renewed optimism for the future. Many of the positive changes observed in this chapter

are linked to the desire to dispel the genocidal ideology, as well as the stigma surrounding survivors. Gender relations and the position of women in post-genocide society are also shown to have positively impacted upon these women's perception of self. Before the genocide, women had severely circumscribed rights but the post-conflict situation in Rwanda has resulted in rapidly changing women's roles. Although Rwanda's women still face an on-going struggle, this chapter reveals how the post-genocide crisis has ironically resulted in a situation not only of great challenges but also of great opportunity.

The ways in which women survivors represent their interpersonal and family relationships are the object of the third chapter. Given the rapidly changing roles of Rwandan women and the diminished population of men, this exploration of representations of family provides insights into post-genocide social and cultural identities. While Chapter 2 demonstrates that women have experienced posttraumatic growth in the domain of personal strength, Chapter 3 discusses how social isolation and stigma have inhibited interpersonal growth. The combination of these findings suggests that the genocide has resulted in a shift towards individualism in Rwanda.

The relationship between religious beliefs and trauma is explored in Chapter 4. This chapter provides a bridge between the first part of the thesis, which focuses on individual forms of growth, and the second part which focuses on collective forms of growth. The chapter shows that religion appears to have a differential impact on processes of collective/political growth compared with individual growth. For example, while faith provides individuals with a coping mechanism for understanding their experiences, religion can also promote the legitimation of a system in which survivors as a group are stigmatised and subordinated.

The notion of collective or political growth is further explored in Chapter 5. This chapter examines how survivors as a group may experience posttraumatic

growth in the domains of freedom and reconciliation. It analyses how women survivors represent society and assesses the impact of the genocide on inter-group relations. Chapter 6 continues the investigation of posttraumatic growth at the collective/political level but considers these women's identities in even broader terms by examining the ways in which the world beyond Rwanda is perceived. The chapter shows that the dominant ideology in the West represents Rwandan survivors as passive, voiceless victims and, although women survivors contest such an ideology, the interventions made by translators and editors obstruct this contestation.

The concluding chapter collates the findings of my analysis into a model for understanding posttraumatic growth in Rwanda and provides suggestions as to how growth may be facilitated in a manner that is culturally and politically sensitive. Before examining the processes of posttraumatic growth among Rwandan women; however, it is first necessary to gain an understanding of the socio-cultural context surrounding survivors which is explored in the following chapter.

Chapter 1

The Stigmatised Identities of

Genocide Survivors

Since the 1994 genocide, the Rwandan government has launched a campaign to eradicate genocide ideology.[1] According to the government, there are no Hutu or Tutsi ethnic groups; there are only 'Rwandans'. New crimes such as 'divisionism' and 'ethnic ideology' have been added to the penal code and, although the use of the terms 'Hutu' and 'Tutsi' is not explicitly forbidden, 'Rwandans interpret these laws as mostly requiring public silence regarding ethnicity'.[2] At least officially, Rwandan society is no longer divided according to ethnicity. As Helen Hintjens notes, the

> sanctioned categories of social and political identification […] are derived from the official reading of the genocide and related refugee movements. The main categories are: (1) survivors; (2) old caseload returnees [Tutsi refugees who had fled previous outbreaks of violence and returned to Rwanda in 1994 from Uganda and Tanzania]; (3) new caseload returnees [Hutu refugees who had fled in fear of retribution after the genocide and returned in 1996-7 from the camps in Tanzania and Zaire]; [and] (4) suspected *génocidaires*.[3]

Despite this official categorisation of society, however, unofficial divisions and tensions continue to exist between Hutu and Tutsi, moderates and extremists, old and new caseload returnees and even between Tutsi returnees and genocide survivors.[4]

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[1] Helen Hintjens, 'Post-Genocide Identity Politics in Rwanda', *Ethnicities*, 8. 5 (2008), 5–41 (p. 10); Samuelson and Freedman, p. 198.

[2] Nigel Eltringham, 'The Past is Elsewhere: The Paradoxes of Proscribing Ethnicity in Post-Genocide Rwanda', in *Remaking Rwanda: State Building and Human Rights after Mass Violence (Critical Human Rights)*, ed. by Scott Straus and Lars Waldorf (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011), pp. 269–282 (p. 274).

[3] Hintjens, 'Post-Genocide Identity', p. 14.

[4] Hamilton, p. 12.

The current government is predominantly made up of Tutsi who have attempted to remove the stigma previously associated with this ethnic identity by delegitimising the use of ethnicity as a form of identification.[5] However, members of the government are, for the most part, not genocide survivors but returning Tutsi refugees. Unlike Tutsi returnees, genocide survivors are generally not in positions of political power. Survivors also have limited access to social resources, as Anne-Marie de Brouwer and Sandra Ka Hon Chu observe, with so many of their loved ones dead, survivors have had to forge a solitary path.[6] This is particularly pertinent to women as often the remaining members of their family have shunned them because of the shame associated with sexual violence and HIV.[7] Women survivors in particular also face economic difficulties as many of them lost their male relatives on whom they had previously relied for economic support.[8] In sum, survivors have been separated into a distinct category, they are in positions of low social, political, and economic status and they have tense relationships with those in power. This combination of factors suggests that survivors are vulnerable to social processes such as stigmatisation.

This chapter will present evidence from the testimonies of female survivors to demonstrate that there are social stigmas associated with survivors for numerous reasons including: orphanhood, physical scars, sexual violence, victimhood and survivorhood. By examining the ways in which female survivors are perceived in the eyes of Rwandan society, this chapter provides a basis for understanding the ways in which survivors view themselves, their relationships and their social identity; issues which are explored in subsequent chapters.

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[5] Hintjens, 'Post-Genocide Identity', p. 10.

[6] Anne-Marie de Brouwer and Sandra Ka Hon Chu, *The Men Who Killed Me: Rwandan Survivors of Sexual Violence*, (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2009), p. 145.

[7] De Brouwer and Ka Hon Chu, p. 145. See also the section on *Sexual Violence, HIV and Stigma* in this chapter.

[8] Human Rights Watch, p. 3.

Social Stigma

The term stigma was originally used in ancient Greece to refer to signs which were cut or burnt into the body in order to expose something unusual or wicked about the moral status of an individual.[9] The signs advertised that 'the bearer was a slave, a criminal, or a traitor – a blemished person, ritually polluted, to be avoided especially in public places'.[10] During the medieval period, bodily wounds known as stigmata were thought to signify a special grace.[11] In *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, Erving Goffman argues that the term has for the most part retained its original Greek meaning but is now applied more to the disgrace itself rather than to its bodily evidence. For example, references to stigma during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries used the term to describe nonphysical characteristics such as the stigmata of 'old maidenhood'[12] or the 'stigmata of degeneration'.[13] Perhaps the best known and most enduring theoretical analysis of stigma is provided by Goffman who describes stigmatised individuals as possessing 'an attribute that is deeply discrediting' which reduces the individual 'from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one'.[14] He argues that a stigma is the relationship between this attribute and a stereotype.

Since the publication of Goffman's seminal essay, the term stigma has been applied in widely varying circumstances and alternate or elaborated definitions have also varied considerably. Following Goffman, Edward Jones and

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[9] Erving Goffman, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1963), p. 11.

[10] Ibid., p. 11.

[11] For example, during the thirteenth century Saint Francis of Assisi was said to have received the stigmata while praying during the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross. Gregory M. Herek, 'Illness, Stigma, and AIDS', in *Psychological Aspects of Serious Illness*, ed. by Gary R. VandenBos (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 1990), <http://www.heart-intl.org/Comp/Illness,Stigma,andAIDS.pdf> [accessed 15 October 2013], p. 2.

[12] The Oxford English Dictionary (1859), cited in Herek, p. 2.

[13] An unnamed 1907 textbook of psychiatry, cited in Herek, p. 2.

[14] Goffman, pp. 12–13.

colleagues describe stigma as a 'mark' that links a person to an undesirable characteristic or stereotype. Such marks encompass a range of conditions considered deviant by a society.[15] In a later definition, Jennifer Crocker, Brenda Major and Claude Steele highlight the importance of social context. According to the authors, 'the problem of stigma does not reside in the stigmatising attribute, or the person who possesses that attribute, but rather in the unfortunate circumstances of possessing an attribute that leads to devaluation in a particular social context'.[16] Definitions of the term stigma have varied because the concept has been applied to an enormous array of circumstances in a field of study that is multidisciplinary.[17] In an attempt to produce a conceptualisation that captures a fuller set of meanings for the term stigma, Bruce Link and Jo Phelan return to Goffman's definition, focusing on the relationship between an attribute or label and a stereotype or undesirable characteristic.[18] To this model they have added the component of discrimination. Their conceptualisation consists of four interrelated components. First, while the vast majority of human differences such as finger length or favourite vegetable are ignored or deemed irrelevant, certain differences such as skin colour can become highly salient in a given social or cultural context. This is described as the human tendency to distinguish and label human differences. Second, these differences may be linked to undesirable characteristics or stereotypes by dominant cultural beliefs. Third, labelled persons are placed in distinct categories so as to accomplish some degree of separation of 'us' from 'them'. The linking of undesirable attributes can become the rationale for believing that negatively labelled people are fundamentally different from those who do not share the label. In extreme

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[15] Edward E. Jones, Amerigo Farina, Albert H. Hastorf, Hazel Markus, Dale T. Miller and Robert A. Scott, *Social Stigma: The Psychology of Marked Relationships* (New York: W. H. Freeman and Company, 1984), p. 8.

[16] Jennifer Crocker, Brenda Major and Claude Steele, 'Social Stigma', in *The Handbook of Social Psychology*, ed. by Daniel T. Gilbert, Susan T. Fiske and Gardner Lindzay, 3 vols (Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill, 1998), II, pp. 504–553 (p. 506).

[17] Bruce Link and Jo Phelan, 'Conceptualizing Stigma', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 27 (2001), 363–385 (p. 365).

[18] Ibid., p. 365.

cases, the stigmatised person is thought to be so different from 'us' as to be not really human and all manner of horrific treatment of 'them' becomes possible. Finally, successful negative labelling and stereotyping generally results in labelled persons experiencing discrimination and status loss.

The model proposed by Link and Phelan maintains that stigmatisation is entirely contingent on access to social, economic, and political power. According to the authors, stigma exists when all four of these components converge within what they call a 'power situation that allows the components of stigma to unfold'.[19] Specifically, they argue that power is necessary to ensure that labelled human differences are broadly accepted within a culture and that the stereotypes associated with these labelled differences are recognised and accepted. Equally, power is required to separate 'us' from 'them' so that this social distinction endures. Furthermore, it takes power over life domains such as educational institutions, jobs, housing and healthcare to implement discrimination and status loss within a social structure. Thus, even if some of the cognitive components of stigma were present, if potential stigmatisers were not in positions of relative social, economic or political power, 'what we generally mean by stigma would not exist'.[20]

However, positions of power do not only enable certain individuals and/or groups to enact stigmatisation; they can also motivate the stigmatisation of subordinate groups. As John Jost and Mahzarin Banaji suggest, people of a higher status use negative stereotypes to stigmatise members of the lower status in order to justify their advantages and maintain the status quo; a process known as 'system justification'.[21] Social Dominance Theory, developed by

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[19] Ibid., p. 367.

[20] Ibid., p. 376.

[21] John T. Jost and Mahzarin R. Banaji, 'The Role of Stereotyping in System-Justification and the Production of False Consciousness', *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 33. 1 (1994), 1–27 (p. 1); John T. Jost, Mahzarin R. Banaji and Brian A. Nosek, 'A Decade of System Justification Theory: Accumulated Evidence of Conscious and Unconscious Bolstering of the Status Quo', *Politial Psychology*, 25. 6 (2004), 881–919 (p. 883).

Felicia Pratto, Jim Sidanius and colleagues, also posits that, in order to minimise intergroup conflict, inequalities within a society must be legitimated. Pratto and colleagues argue that:

> Societies minimise group conflict by creating consensus on ideologies that promote the superiority of one group versus another. Ideologies that promote or maintain group inequality are the tools that legitimate discrimination. To work smoothly, these ideologies must be widely accepted within a society, appearing as self-apparent truths; hence we call them 'hierarchy-legitimating myths'.[22]

The components of stigma highlighted by Link and Phelan, (labelling human differences, linking undesirable stereotypes to those differences, placing labelled persons into distinct categories and discriminating against them) have been applied to create hierarchy-legitimating myths in Rwanda since the colonial period, if not before. European colonisers introduced the mythical idea that the Tutsi were evolutionarily closer to Europeans and thus superior to the Hutu. According to the Hamitic hypothesis, which was introduced by European colonists, the Tutsi were descendants of Noah's son Ham who had migrated to Africa from the Middle East. They eventually arrived in Rwanda from Somalia or Ethiopia and conquered the Hutu and Twa as a result of their natural superiority.[23] The Tutsi, Hutu and Twa were considered to be of completely different ethnic groups and the Europeans even invented physical stereotypes for each.[24] For example, the Tutsi were thought to be taller in stature with thin, aquiline noses and a fine mouth. The Tutsi were considered 'the most beautiful and most interesting [race] of Equatorial Africa. In physique, the Mututsi is perfectly constructed. […He] is a European under black skin'.[25] The Hutu, on

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[22] Felicia Pratto, Jim Sidanius, Lisa M. Stallworth and Bertam F. Malle, 'Social Dominance Orientation: A Personality Variable Predicting Social and Political Attitudes', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 67. 4 (1994), 741–763 (p. 747).

[23] Longman, 'Identity Cards', p. 351.

[24] Ibid., p. 352.

[25] Joseph Gahama, *Le Burundi sous administration Belge* (Paris: CRA, Karthala, ACCT, 1983), p. 276. Cited in Liisa H. Malkki, 'From Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory, and

the other hand, were considered 'Negros properly speaking' with 'negroid characteristics' such as a round face, thick lips, an astounding nose and a short stature.[26] The reality, however, is that these distinctions were elaborated cultural constructions. Given the alleged superiority of Tutsi over Hutu, the Europeans believed that the Tutsi were the natural rulers of Rwanda. But in the midst of growing anti-Tutsi rhetoric, Europeans switched allegiance to the Hutu and the 1959 election saw a Hutu government overthrow Tutsi dominance.[27] In the years preceding the genocide, the Hamitic myth was reformulated by Hutu extremists who emphasised the exploitative nature of Tutsi rule during the pre-colonial period and considered Tutsi to be an 'outsider' group who had invaded Rwanda.[28] The idea that the Hutu were the 'natural inhabitants' of the land formed the basis of 'Hutu Power' ideology and propaganda which spread lies about the Tutsi, deeming them inherently evil, foreign conquerors.[29] The Hamitic hypothesis and its reformulation were used successfully to maintain social hierarchy both by the Tutsi prior to Rwanda's independence and by the Hutu in the years preceding the genocide. In the post-genocide period, Tutsi returnees, who now dominate most positions of social, political, religious and economic power, also justify their relatively advantageous position in society. As will be explored in more detail in Chapter 5, the ideology which appears to prevail in post-genocide society portrays Hutu as collectively guilty for the genocide. As the following sections will show, however, Tutsi survivors also face a series of stigmatised identities.

National Cosmology among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania', in *Violence in War and Peace: an Anthology*, ed. by Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Phillippe Bourgois (Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004) pp. 129–135 (p. 130).

[26] Malkki, p. 130.

[27] Jefremovas, p. 72.

[28] This idea was adopted, for example, by Ferdinand Nahimana, a Rwandan historian who was co-founder of the radio station Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM). RTLM became the mouthpiece for the ideals of the Hutu Power extremist movement of which Nahimana became a virulent supporter. RTLM was responsible for propagating the ethnic hatred against the Tutsi which formed the ideology of Hutu Power and fuelled the genocide. Nahimana was prosecuted at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda for his involvement with the radio station. See Ferdinand Nahimana, *Le Blanc est arrivé, le roi est parti* (Kigali: Printer Set, 1987)

[29] Jefremovas, p. 72.

The Stigmatised Identities of Rwandan Genocide Survivors

(i) The Stigma of Being an Orphan

The genocide resulted in a huge increase in street children. As Angela Veale and Giorgia Donà found in their study of street children, the vast majority of these lost one or both of their parents and about half of them are homeless.[30] Rwanda now has one of the world's highest rates of orphanhood and, in addition to losing their parents and families, Rwandan orphans generally live in less favourable socioeconomic conditions, are more likely to be poor and malnourished, are less likely to be enrolled in schools and do less well in school when they are enrolled than non-orphaned children.[31] A term commonly used to refer to orphaned children is 'mayibobo', which refers to 'a child without any address, who lives and sleeps anywhere he finds' or 'a child who has no adult to take care of him'.[32] Veal and Donà found that the perception of the 'mayibobo' in Rwanda is a 'homeless, orphaned or aimless child, one without a guardian, without a regular job, and therefore at risk of engaging in antisocial activities'.[33] There is evidence from the women's testimonies to suggest that these generalised perceptions of orphanhood have led to a stigma surrounding this identity. For example, MCK lost both her parents during the genocide and even refers to herself as a 'mayibobo'. In the following extract of her testimony, the stigma associated with this term and with orphanhood is clearly observable:

> In my studies, at no point did I repeat the year. I completed secondary school even though I had problems like that. But nobody, not even my fellow students, knew that I had such problems. No

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[30] Angela Veale and Giorgia Donà, 'Street Children and Political Violence: A Socio-Demographic Analysis of Street Children in Rwanda', *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 27. 3 (2003), 253–269 (p. 254).

[31] Kevin A. J. Thomas, 'Family Contexts and Schooling Disruption among Orphans in Post-Genocide Rwanda', *Population Research and Policy Review*, 29. 6 (2010), 819–842 (p. 821).

[32] Veale and Donà, p. 259.

[33] Ibid., p. 259.

> one could know that I was an orphan because I thought that something called 'an orphan' was like an insult because when you are an orphan you are discredited. Anyone can… I didn't show anyone my orphanhood.

MCK's description of orphans as 'discredited' also demonstrates the status loss associated with these negative beliefs surrounding orphanhood. The emotional impact of this stigmatisation is suggested by her apparent unwillingness or inability to finish certain sentences. MCK also uses a number of methods for managing her stigmatised identity. For example, her hard work and persistence at school could be considered a compensation strategy for managing her stigmatised identity.[34] Moreover, the deliberate concealment of her orphan status is a form of what Goffman refers to as 'passing'. Stigmatising attributes which are not visible, known about or obtrusive are described by Goffman as 'discreditable'.[35] Goffman argues that individuals bearing a discreditable stigma must learn to manage information about the stigma by attempting to conceal it so as to promote normal interaction with others.[36] By not informing others about the fact that she is an orphan and by working extra hard to counter expectations that orphans are more likely to fail in school, MCK demonstrates the (information management) strategy of passing. Even while talking overtly about the topic in her testimony, MCK refers to her orphanhood first as 'problems like that' then 'such problems' before actually uttering the word 'orphan', further suggesting that this term is laden with alternative meanings. Unfortunately, orphanhood appears to be just one of the many stigmatised identities held by survivors. The violence that took place during the genocide not only wiped out many survivors' family members but also left physical scars of various forms.

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[34] Learning new skills and being more assertive or persistent is an example of what Margaret Shih describes as a compensation strategy for managing a stigmatised identity. See Margaret Shih, 'Examining Resilience and Empowerment in Overcoming Stigma', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 591 (2004), 175–185 (p. 178).

[35] Goffman, p. 57.

[36] Ibid., p. 125.

(ii) Physical Manifestations of Violence

The violence that took place during the genocide left many survivors with lasting disabilities, physical scars or disfigurement. In fact, there were so many injured people after the genocide as a result of this violence, that it has been argued that the genocide actually made Rwandans more accepting of physical disability than they had been before.[37] However, as Phillippa Thomas argues, disability in Rwanda is still seen as a source of shame.[38] According to Thomas, people who are disabled are considered useless and meaningless and need to be cared for because they cannot do things for themselves.[39] Moreover, it is often believed that disabled women are sterile or would give birth to disabled children.[40] This stigma has probably been exacerbated because many of the victims of sexual violence during the genocide suffered injuries to their genitals and reproductive organs resulting in permanent disabilities and in some cases infertility.[41] As a result of the negative attitudes towards them, disabled people often face discrimination. For example, Thomas contends that disabled women in particular often have difficulties finding a spouse because of the beliefs held about them.[42] Some of these negative attitudes may be observed in the testimony of ED.[43] During the genocide, the leg of ED's daughter was blown off in a landmine and, in this extract from his testimony, the stigma surrounding people with disabilities comes to the fore:

The boy said, 'She is mine even though she is disabled, I will stay

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[37] Pearls of Africa, *Disability and the Rwandan Genocide: 15 Years on* (2009), <http://pearlsofafrica.org/blog/2009/01/15/disability-and-the-rwandan-genocide-15-years-on/> [accessed 15 October 2013], para. 5 of 7.

[38] Phillippa Thomas, *Mainstreaming Disability in Development: Country-level Research: Rwanda Country Report* (Disability Knowledge and Research, 2005), pp. 21–23.

[39] Ibid., p. 21.

[40] Ibid., p. 21.

[41] Hamilton, p. 5.

[42] P. Thomas, p. 21.

[43] The testimony of ED is not included in the overall sample studied because he is male (and women are the focus of this thesis). The extract is used here for its relevance to the subject matter.

with her whatever'. I told them, 'Look, how will I be able to take care of two disabled people? Look at you, you still have bullets in your head and your girlfriend is disabled, how will you manage?' They told me, 'But we are in love'. And then they set a trap for me. The boy had impregnated her. Then they told me, 'Now, you have to allow us to marry'. The boy said, 'I impregnated her' and the girl said, 'Look, I am pregnant'. It was clear that there was no way to solve the problem because they were in love, I could not do anything about it. There was no choice. I told the boy, 'Go and talk to your family so we can arrange a marriage for you. I'll help you' because there was nothing else I could do. He went to talk to his family but they refused. His relatives refused saying, 'What is that disabled person worth? What will you do with a one-legged person?' They had spoiled the plan.

While the questions that ED asks his daughter's partner demonstrate the stereotypes of disabled peopled being unable to care for themselves; the questions asked by the boyfriend's parents portray the stereotypes of people with disabilities being worthless. Some of the sexual stereotypes are also apparent in ED's use of language. For example, throughout the extract, ED invariably refers to his daughter as the 'disabled person' or the 'one-legged person' while at other points in his testimony, which do not refer to her relationship with a man, he describes her as 'my daughter'. There appears to be something particular about the context of his daughter in a sexual relationship which brings her disability to the fore. Moreover, although translated as 'we are in love' and 'they were in love', the verb that ED uses to describe the couple's feelings for one another, 'kwuzura', actually means to agree with one another. The usual word used for 'to love' in Kinyarwanda is 'gukunda' or 'gukundana' (to love each other). It is as if the traditional word for love is somehow inappropriate for use between two people with disabilities. His daughter's desire to marry, especially to marry someone who also has a disability clearly creates a 'problem' to be 'solved' but the fact that she is pregnant, leaves ED with 'no choice'. ED is held at an impasse because, although the idea of his disabled daughter in a sexual relationship with a man makes him ill at ease, he is also faced with another stigma. As David Newbury explains, pregnancy

before marriage in Rwanda is considered an extreme humiliation not only to the woman, but also to her entire extended family.[44] This could explain why ED describes the pregnancy as a 'trap' because he knows that the stigma of being pregnant before marriage reflects not only on the daughter but also on their family. Further evidence of negative stereotypes surrounding people with disabilities caused by the genocide may be observed in the testimony of OM.

During the genocide, OM was shot in the face which has left her with a lasting disfigurement as well as other enduring health problems, such as headaches, causing her to describe herself as 'malade' and 'handicapée'. Unlike other women, OM does not discuss marriage, maternity or make any other reference to her own femininity in her testimony, which is perhaps a reflection of the stereotypes regarding disabled women and sexuality. OM's testimony also reflects the stereotypes of disabled people being unable to care for themselves ('je ne peux rien faire de moi-même'). Other statements from her testimony, such as 'normalement ma bouche devait apparaître ainsi mais elle apparaissait comme ceci' suggest that OM views her face as something outside of the norm. The clearest sign that she feels stigmatised because of her injuries; however, is the fact that OM wears a scarf to mask the lower half of her face. When asked directly by the interviewer about this, she avoids speaking about it explicitly, referring to the scarf simply as 'ceci'. She states that, in order to reveal her face to somebody, she has to have known the person for a long time and yet even at home she does not always remove the scarf:

> Je ne la montre [ma mâchoire inférieure] qu'à ceux avec qui je suis
> très familière, ceux que j'ai connus depuis de longues années. […]
> Je [le porte] toujours ainsi même à la maison.

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[44] David Newbury, 'Understanding Genocide', *African Studies Review*, 41. 1 (1998), 73–77 (p. 92).

Disguising her disfigurement using a scarf is an example of what Goffman refers to as 'covering'.[45] In contrast to non-visible, discreditable stigmas, such as MCK's orphanhood, stigmatising attributes which are visible, known about or obtrusive (that is, interfere with the flow of interaction, such as a stutter) are described by Goffman as 'discredited'.[46] While individuals bearing a discreditable stigma must implement an information management strategy ('passing') to conceal their stigma, individuals bearing a discredited stigma must adopt a strategy for managing the tension that their stigma causes in social situations. So called 'covering' is when individuals make efforts to prevent their stigma from 'looming large' in order to reduce this tension by making it easier for both the individual and others to draw attention away from the stigma and sustain spontaneous involvement in the official content of the interaction.[47] For example, blind individuals may make efforts to learn 'motor propriety' to reduce clumsiness and perform motions in a way considered 'normal' by the sighted world. Blind people may also learn to look directly at a speaker in order to prevent themselves from staring into space or violating the etiquette of social interaction. Similarly, persons who are hard of hearing may learn to talk at a degree of loudness that is considered appropriate for a conversation.[48] In OM's case, covering refers to the physical masking of her disfigurement. Taken together, OM's covering behaviour, as well as ED's reaction to his daughter's relationship, provide evidence that the physical manifestations of the violent acts committed during the genocide have caused victims to become stigmatised.

(iii) Sexual Violence, HIV and Stigma

One form of violence that has left genocide survivors in particularly difficult positions in post-genocide Rwanda is sexual violence. Sexual violence was

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[45] Goffman, pp. 125–128.
[46] Ibid., p. 57.
[47] Ibid., p. 125.
[48] Ibid., pp. 126–128.

widespread during the genocide. The Organisation of African Unity suggests that almost all females who survived were the direct victims of rape or were affected by sexual violence in some way.[49] Furthermore, an estimated seventy per cent of all rape victims were infected with the HIV/AIDS virus.[50] Patricia Weitsman argues that rape is a particularly potent form of torture in patriarchal societies like Rwanda because women's standing derives from their relationships to men. In such societies, a woman's value derives from her sexual 'purity' and, once raped, society no longer deems her marriageable or socially acceptable.[51] Survivors of sexual violence have been reported to perceive themselves as dirty, morally inferior and ashamed.[52] HIV infection is also stigmatised in Rwandan society because of its associations with sex and promiscuity which are considered immoral.[53] These negative stereotypes associated with victims of sexual violence can lead to discrimination, causing them to be ostracised and excluded from both their families and communities.[54] Amnesty International reports that this discrimination can result in loss of employment, difficulty in asserting property rights and a loss of civil and political rights.[55]

Despite the high proportion of women who were raped during the genocide, the stigma surrounding sexual violence has resulted in many survivors being reluctant to admit to having been sexually assaulted for fear of such

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[49] Organisation of African Unity, *Rwanda: The Preventable Genocide* (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: OAU, 2000), para. 16.20.

[50] Catharine Newbury and Hannah Baldwin, *Aftermath: Women in Postgenocide Rwanda* (U.S. Agency for International Development, 2000), <http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pnacj323.pdf> [accessed 15 October 2013], p. 70.

[51] Patricia A. Weitsman, 'The Politics of Identity and Sexual Violence: A Review of Bosnia and Rwanda', *Human Rights Quarterly*, 30. 3 (2008), 561–578 (p. 564).

[52] Donatilla Mukamana and Petra Brysiewicz, 'The Lived Experience of Genocide Rape Survivors in Rwanda', *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 40. 4 (2008), 379–384 (pp. 380–383); Weitsman, p. 382.

[53] Amnesty International, *Rwanda: 'Marked for death': Rape Survivors Living with HIV/AIDS* (Amnesty International Report, 2004), p. 25.

[54] African Rights, *Rwanda: Broken Bodies, Torn Spirits: Living with Genocide, Rape and HIV/AIDS* (African Rights Report, Rwanda, 2004), p. 68; Amnesty International, p. 7; Hamilton, p. 4; Human Rights Watch, pp. 72–75; Mukamana and Brysiewicz, pp. 380–383.

[55] Amnesty International, p. 2.

discrimination.[56] Unfortunately, this reluctance to come forward results in women survivors being mistrusted. As Human Rights Watch discover in their interviews with Annunciata Nyiratamba of the Association des Veuves du Génocide d'Avril (AVEGA), there is always the unspoken question asked of survivors: 'What did you do to survive?'[57] Thus even if a woman survivor does not openly admit to being raped, she may not be believed by others in her community and may therefore still face negative stereotyping and discrimination.[58] The stigma associated with sexual violence may be observed in the following extract from the testimony of EN in which she discusses her sister's experiences during the genocide:

> - She died after the genocide. She got sick and passed away.
> - As they took away Antoinette back and forth... Did they rape her?
> -They did bad things to her... They killed her badly, though she didn't die in the genocide, it's like... She didn't live long after the genocide. She died right after the genocide.
> - Was her death related to what happened to her during the genocide?
> - Absolutely. It is very much related. She got very sick and... She had sworn to never marry. She said, 'I will never marry ever! Why would I marry? EM, you married but have no husband.' She hated herself. She had no more trust in life anymore.
> - Was she infected?
> - Yes, she was infected. They infected her with incurable diseases. That's what killed her.
> - The virus?
> - They infected her with HIV. They would come to take her and she would say... They would come and do to her whatever they wanted... At one point, they ordered us to stay in that house... where we are currently staying. 'Stay there. We'll protect you'. They told us. And we stayed. That's where they would find us. And they came in shifts. One group after another. There were so many Interahamwe. A single move and you would bump into another Interahamwe. And they did whatever they wanted wherever and whenever they found you.
> - Did what happen to Antoinette happen to you, too?

[56] African Rights, *Rwanda: Death, Despair and Defiance* (London: African Rights, 1995), p.749; Hamilton, p. 4; Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, *Rwanda's Women and Children: The Long Road to Reconciliation* (New York: Women's Commission, 1997), p. 8.
[57] Human Rights Watch, p. 3.
[58] Amnesty International, p. 25.

- Yes, exactly.

In this extract, both the interviewer and EN avoid making direct references to either sexual violence or HIV/AIDS. Although translated as 'did they rape her', the interviewer in fact says, 'baramukoreraga ibya mfura mbi?' which could more accurately be translated as, 'did they commit violence against her'. EN replies simply that they did 'bad things'. Despite this indirect use of language, it is clear that both EN and the interviewer know that they are talking about sexual violence. Similar uses of indirect, euphemistic language are found in this extract when EN and the interviewer talk about HIV/AIDS, referring to EN's sister as 'infected' with the 'virus' or 'incurable diseases'. It takes several exchanges of indirect language between them before finally EN uses the word 'HIV' to clarify their discussion. What is particularly interesting about this extract is that, at the end, we see that EN is in fact telling her sister's story to relay her own experience. The interviewer and EN engage in a form of collective 'covering', combining indirect language with the story of EN's sister as a proxy to explain an experience that in fact happened to EN herself. This collaborative effort serves to reduce the tension caused by the stigma surrounding sexual violence and HIV/AIDS and enables EN to communicate her experience. The 'covering' behaviour used by EN could also be considered a strategy for avoiding the position of victim. In addition to the stigma of sexual violence, physical scars and orphanhood, survivors also face negative stereotypes surrounding victimhood and even survivor status.

(iv) Victimhood as Stigma

Veronika Burcara and Malin Kerstr suggest that the position of victim may have associations with weakness of character and lack of control.[59] Although

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[59] Veronika Burcara and Malin Kerstr, 'Negotiating a Victim Identity: Young Men as Victims of Violence', *Journal of Scandinavian Studies in Criminology and Crime Prevention*, 10. 1 (2009), 37–54 (p. 39); Similar suggestions are made by James A. Holstein and Gale Miller,

this has not been explicitly documented in Rwanda, a stigma associated with victimhood has been found in a number of cross-cultural studies in other countries. For example, Anie Kalayjian and colleagues suggest that Armenian survivors of the Ottoman Turkish genocide avoided disclosing their victimhood as a result of anticipated devaluation and stigma.[60] The notion that a victim identity is associated with negative attributes or stigma has also been found in a study in Northern Ireland. The Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey (NILT) is an annual survey that monitors Northern Irish attitudes and behaviour on a range of social policy issues. In the 2004 survey of a random sample of 1,800 Northern Irish adults, the NILT measured victimhood and direct and indirect experiences of the Troubles. It was found that a large proportion of respondents who claimed to be victims had not had direct or indirect experiences of the conflict while many of the respondents who had had these experiences did not consider themselves to be victims. Although other factors are undoubtedly involved, Marie Smyth and Marie-Therese Fay argue that this reflects a stigma associated with victimhood which they suggest illustrates the complexity of self-identification as a victim.[61] Similarly, Malin Åkerström found that Swedish interviewees talking about acts of physical aggression towards them do not necessarily portray themselves as victims. For example, when discussing acts of physical aggression from patients, nurses call attention to their professionalism rather than their position as victims.[62] In an interview with a woman prisoner who had been attacked, Åkerström found that the woman highlighted factors such as competition and mutual provocation rather than portraying herself as a

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'Rethinking Victimization: An Interactional Approach to Victimology', *Symbolic Interaction*, 13. 1 (1990), 103–122 (p. 106).

[60] Anie S. Kalayjian, Siroon P. Shahinian, Edmund L. Gergerian and Lisa Saraydarian, 'Coping with Ottoman Turkish Genocide: An Exploration of the Experience of Armenian Survivors', *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 9. 1 (1996), 84–97 (p. 95).

[61] Marie Smyth and Marie-Therese Fay, *Personal Accounts from Northern Ireland's Troubles: Public Conflict, Private Loss* (London: Pluto Press, 2000), p. 4.

[62] Malin Åkerström, 'Slaps, Punches, Pinches – But not Violence: Boundary Work in Nursing Homes for the Elderly', *Symbolic Interaction*, 25 (2002), 515–536

victim.[63] Similarly, in their discursive analysis of Swedish men discussing incidences in which they had been the victims of violence, Burcara and Kerstr observe how these men carefully balance their identity as victims with the desire to be associated with 'hegemonic manliness'.[64] The authors suggest that victimhood can undermine 'manliness' as it is associated with weakness. They argue that, as a survivor of violence, one has 'a desire to be portrayed as a competent and strong individual and not as a victim, even though one has been subject to physical abuse'.[65]

Many of the Rwandan women whose testimonies are included in this thesis have in common their refusal to represent themselves as victims. As previously discussed, EN avoids the position of victim by discussing her sister's victimisation rather than her own. In a similar vein, OM also speaks indirectly about her victimisation:

> Il y a eu de très grands changements dans ma vie. Avant 1994, l'accident qui m'est survenue, ne m'était pas encore arrivé! Après 1994, il y a eu un grand changement, mais encore très grand! […] Aujourd'hui, je reste à la maison, je suis tout le temps malade.

Here, rather than presenting herself as a victim who was injured, OM presents herself as a person who became sick ('je suis tout le temps malade') and describes her experiences during the genocide as an 'accident', as if her injuries were a chance event rather than the result of her victimisation. It is worth noting that she makes no mention of the genocide here, and refers to the time of her so called 'accident' as '1994'. By describing herself as 'malade' and speaking of her 'accident', OM does not attribute agency to the perpetrators and thus conceals her identity as a victim of genocide. Moreover, this focus on OM's

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[63] Malin Åkerström, 'Annie – en motberättelse [Annie – a Counter Narrative]' in *Det motspänstiga offret* [*The Reluctant Victim*]*,* ed. by Malin Åkerström and Ingrid Sahlin (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2001), pp. 265–281
[64] Burcara and Kerstr, p. 37.
[65] Ibid., p. 38.

'sickness' rather than on her victimhood is an example of what Margaret Shih describes as drawing on an alternate identity, where individuals strategically emphasise one identity over another in an attempt to reduce the negative effects of a stigmatised identity such as victimhood.[66]

Using a different strategy but achieving the same outcome, many survivors deflect the position of victim by avoiding being associated with related stereotypes such as weakness or loss of control. For example, survivors may portray themselves as defiant against the perpetrators ('Si tu veux me tuer, vas-y!', (RSM); 'Si tu veux me tuer, fais-le', (JN); 'I refused, I was ready to die with them' (LK)) or as having a lack of fear ('je n'avais peur de rien', (RSM)). Many survivors also attempt to reclaim control by adopting compensation strategies in order to avoid the negative stereotypes associated with victimhood. For example, despite the fact that she walks with crutches, BN manages to find accommodation and works to support herself and her child. Other survivors, such as RSM and MCK work exceptionally hard at their education to avoid being perceived as weak ('s'il faut aller à l'école, je le fais, s'il faut travailler, je le fais', (RSM); 'I completed secondary school even though I had problems' (MCK)). Part of the motivation for avoiding being perceived as a victim is to counteract the action of the killers. For example, RSM states quite explicitly that her desire to present 'une bonne image extérieure' is so that the killers see that she is 'une personne forte'.[67] Overall, the cross-cultural research on victimhood seems to suggest that the identity of victim may be associated with undesirable social attributes in a number of countries. The fact that many of the women in this study avoid the identity of victim suggests that it is also an undesirable social identity in Rwanda.

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[66] Shih, pp. 179–180.

[67] RSM uses the term 'umuntu w'umugabo' which is a turn of phrase commonly used by Rwandans – literally to be 'a man' – it means someone who is strong and does not show emotions.

(v) The Stigma of Being a Survivor

In Rwanda the position of victim is not a desirable one because of its associations with weakness or lack of control. The term 'survivor' generally has more positive implications as it refers to a person who continues to function or prosper in spite of opposition, hardship or setbacks. In the case of Rwanda, 'survivor' also connotes an official social category.[68] There is evidence to suggest, however, that even the identity of survivors is associated with negative stereotypes and stigma.

Certainly among Tutsi returnees there appears to be little sympathy for Tutsi genocide survivors. According to Heather Hamilton, survivors feel as if they are being asked by returnees to 'forget and forgive too quickly'.[69] In turn, survivors have been reported to 'voice resentment against the returnees, including those in government, and criticise them for, among other issues: neglecting the problems of the genocide survivors; falsely denouncing the survivors as genocide "collaborators"; [and] illegally appropriating the land and property of the survivors'.[70] Gérard Prunier notes that the RPF 'did not distinguish Tutsi from Hutu when they killed people, seeming to assume that the remaining Tutsi were "collaborators" of the *interahamwe*'.[71] According to Prunier, one RPF ideologue even declared that the 'the "interior" Tutsi deserved what happened to them'.[72] In response to the suspicion surrounding survivors and the pressure on them to 'move on', Burnet observes how survivors have learnt to cope with their violent memories by adopting the culturally appropriate coping mechanism of silence by avoiding crying or

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[68] Hintjens, 'Post-Genocide Identity', p. 14.

[69] Hamilton, p. 12.

[70] After the genocide, women survivors had no legal right to claim the property, land or bank accounts of deceased male relatives, making it easier for returnees to appropriate these assets. Survivors were also viewed with mistrust by returnees who assumed that survivors must have collaborated in the genocide in order to have survived. See Human Rights Watch, p. 3.

[71] Prunier, *From Genocide to Continental War*, p. 19.

[72] Ibid.*,* p. 19.

sharing their painful memories.[73] This is perhaps to avoid the labels associated with survivors as, according to Burnet, those who do express their pain lead marginal lives, 'labelled "insane", "addled" or "traumatised"'.[74] Alexandre Dauge-Roth suggests that 'survivors embody a disturbing memory, which revives a chapter of Rwanda's history that most people would like to see closed'.[75] In a study of the published testimonial literature on Rwanda, Dauge-Roth discusses how a number of survivors have become aware of their unwanted and disturbing presence in a country that is so desperate to move on. For example, although just nine years old in 1994, an orphan of the genocide presented in Yolande Mukagasana's *Les Blessures du silence* states in relation to survivors: 'Personne ne nous aime. Nous sommes devenus un problème de la société rwandaise'.[76] Similarly, in *La Fleur de Stéphanie*, Esther Mujawayo makes it clear that she shares this awareness of survivors being a disturbance:

> Depuis un certain temps, déjà, des politiciens ou des citoyens anonymes nous suggèrent, par un bruissement de lèvres excédé, qu''il faut qu'on avance tous maintenant. Oui, "ça" s'est passé, et on comprend que c'est terrible pour vous, mais il faut qu'on avance tous maintenant…' […] Alors, c'est certain, ils [les rescapés] encombrent. Tu as un pays qui doit avancer et toi, le survivant, tu es un peu la tumeur qui l'empêche de se prétendre en bonne santé.[77]

Further evidence suggesting that there is a certain discomfort surrounding genocide survivors may be found in the testimony of Innocent Rwililiza in Jean Hatzfeld's *Dans le nu de la vie*:

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[73] Burnet, *Genocide Lives in Us*, p. 116.
[74] Ibid., p. 78.
[75] Alexandre Dauge-Roth, *Writing and Filming the Genocide of the Tutsis in Rwanda: Dismembering and Remembering Traumatic History* (Lanham/Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2010), p. 8.
[76] Yolande Mukagasana, *Les Blessures du silence. Témoignages du génocide au Rwanda* (Arles: Actes Sud and Médecins Sans Frontières, 2001), p. 110. Cited in English in Dauge-Roth, *Writing and Filming the Genocide*, p. 262.
[77] Esther Mujawayo and Souâd Belhaddad, *La Fleur de Stéphanie: Rwanda entre réconciliation et déni* (Paris: [Éditions] Flammarion, 2006), p. 217. Cited in English in Dauge-Roth, *Writing and Filming the Genocide*, p. 251.

> Moi, je vois qu'aujourd'hui il y a toujours une gêne à parler des rescapés, même au sein des Rwandais, même au sein des Tutsi. Je pense que tout le monde voudrait bien que, d'une certaine façon, les rescapés aillent se mettre à l'écart du génocide. Comme si on voulait qu'ils laissent à d'autres, qui n'ont pas risqué de se faire tailler directement à coup de machette, la tâche de s'en occuper. Comme si nous étions dorénavant un peu de trop. […] Nous, les rescapés, on devient plus étrangers, dans notre propre pays que nous n'avons jamais quitté, que tous les étrangers et expatriés qui nous regardent avec les yeux inquiets.[78]

According to Dauge-Roth, 'survivors like him [Rwililiza] are seen as a parasitic presence today, a disturbance that prevents others from fully embracing the present by obliterating the traumatic legacy of the genocide'.[79] The recognition of the stigma surrounding survivors may also be observed in the testimonies discussed in this thesis. For example, BN recounts a time when a woman from AVEGA approaches her. She explains that her initial reaction is to avoid this woman and to refuse to believe that she could have anything in common with her. BN states: 'Elle m'a dit: "Je suis veuve de Génocide moi aussi." Mais à cause de sa façon d'être, je trouvais qu'elle n'avait rien de commun à moi'. In her account, BN makes it clear that other survivors react to each other in similar ways:

> Chacun s'occupe de ses affaires, depuis 1998 jusqu'à présent, je n'ai eu le concours de personne en vue de parler de nos problèmes ou de nous raconter mutuellement nos passés afin d'aboutir à quelque chose, rien. Chacun vit dans son monde.

This avoidance of other survivors could be interpreted as a form of social withdrawal or social isolation which is a strategy that stigmatised individuals often adopt in order to reduce problematic interactions.[80] In BN's case, her

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[78] Jean Hatzfeld, *Dans le nu de la vie: récits des marais rwandais* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2000), pp. 107, 111. Cited in English in Dauge-Roth, *Writing and Filming the Genocide*, p. 9.

[79] Dauge-Roth, *Writing and Filming the Genocide*, pp. 8–9.

[80] Jones, Farina, Hastorf, Markus, Miller and Scott, pp. 200–202.

social withdrawal and avoidance of other survivors could be considered a form of disidentification or dissociation from her social identity as a survivor.[81]

Adopting a different stigma management strategy, RSM overtly acknowledges her stigmatised position as a survivor by saying: 'Je ne constitue pas un fardeau pour la société rwandaise ni pour ceux avec qui je vis'. This is an example of a coping strategy known as disconfirming stereotypes which is often adopted when a stigmatised individual anticipates prejudice.[82] Clearly RSM recognises that others may view survivors as a burden, so she explicitly states that she is not a burden in order to disconfirm any preconceptions about her identity as a genocide survivor. The same strategy is adopted by LK, who says about survivors, 'We are not a burden to the country, we are a blessing'. MCK also attempts to avoid becoming a burden by working to support herself: 'At ULK but I was working as well to avoid being a burden anyone'. MCK even attempts to conceal her identity as a survivor, adopting the information management strategy of passing:

> One of them joked asking about the different ways of killing a snake, then another one said that you hit it on the head.[83] They started hitting me on the head, there is a scar but I lie to people, and tell them that it is a birthmark.

Although she has been scarred by the physical violence that she endured during the genocide, MCK clearly attempts to hide the fact that this was the case by lying about her scar. A further inspection of OM's testimony also reveals that, much like MCK, not only does OM 'cover' to reduce the tension caused by her

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[81] Crocker, Major and Steele, pp. 528–530; Goffman, p. 60.

[82] Cheryl R. Kaiser and Carol T. Miller, 'Reacting to Impending Discrimination: Compensation for Prejudice and Attributions to Discrimination', *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 27. 13 (2001), 1357–1367 (p. 1358)

[83] Extremist propaganda frequently characterised Tutsi as 'snakes' before (and during) the genocide as a means to dehumanise them. Linda Melvern, *A People Betrayed: The Role of the West in Rwanda's Genocide* (London: Zed Books, 2004), p. 227.

discredited stigma of disfigurement, but she also 'passes' to conceal her identity as a genocide survivor:

> Je le porte toujours ainsi, à moins qu'on me demande de le retirer mais je n'accepte pas de le retirer non plus pour toute personne! Ou lorsqu'on me demande ce qui s'est passé? Je réponds rarement parce que si je dis que j'ai eu un accident, la personne voudra en savoir d'avantage.

OM clearly feels uncomfortable revealing the true cause of her injuries, suggesting that there is indeed a negative perception of survivors.

It would appear that references made to survivors as 'burdens' in the women's testimonies as well as the metaphors presented by Dauge-Roth describing survivors as 'parasitic'[84] characterise the stereotype of genocide survivors and constitute what Goffman would call 'specific stigma terms' which become part of a 'stigma theory', an ideology that justifies and explains the negative stereotype that a stigmatised individual represents.[85] As a result of these negative stereotypes, survivors face discrimination. In her work on the effects of trauma and victimisation, Janoff-Bulman suggests that victims of violence are often avoided because societies tend to emphasise success and happiness and deemphasise failure and suffering.[86] She argues that there is no cultural role for survivors except as outsiders. According to Janoff-Bulman, the victim of violence is an invisible person, an individual who is not culturally acknowledged, a person who is avoided or unnoticed by others.[87] In the Rwandan context, this type of discrimination or social exclusion is recognised by Mujawayo who states 'quand tu sens que la société veut clore le lourd

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[84] Dauge-Roth, *Writing and Filming the Genocide*, p. 9.
[85] Goffman, pp. 14–15.
[86] Janoff-Bulman, p. 154.
[87] Ibid., p. 154.

chapitre du génocide, parfois en trépignant, tu comprends que les rescapés, eux, resteront en marge'.[88]

In summary, survivors are generally in positions of low social, political and economic status and have tense relationships with those in power, creating the power imbalance that Link and Phelan argue is necessary for stigmatisation to take place. Furthermore, survivors have been singled out as an officially distinct social category which could constitute the labelling of human differences and the separation of 'us' from 'them'. The evidence presented in this chapter clearly demonstrates that survivors are associated with negative stereotypes as a result of orphanhood, sexual violence and HIV, the physical manifestations of violence such as disfigurement and disability, victimhood and survivor status. This combination of factors results in survivors facing a form of discrimination that marginalises them from the rest of society.

Whether or not the stigmatisation of Tutsi survivors is an explicit goal of Rwandans in position of power (predominantly Tutsi returnees), the evidence presented in this chapter suggests that this is a dominant ideology or at least that survivors perceive it as such. The power imbalance between survivors and Rwandans in positions of power certainly makes processes of stigmatisation possible and may also motivate such processes as a way of maintaining this imbalance.[89] By stigmatising Tutsi genocide survivors (as well as other groups such as Hutu, see Chapter 5), Tutsi returnees and the Rwandan government are able to justify the status quo and maintain the existing power structure. However, the legitimisation of power is probably not the only reason underlying the stigmatisation of survivors. The stigma surrounding survivors appears to hinge on what survivors represent, that is, a traumatic history of death and destruction; a history that others in Rwandan society prefer to forget.

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[88] Mujawayo and Belhaddad, *La Fleur de Stéphanie*, p. 207.
[89] As in accordance with Social Dominance Theory, Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth and Malle, p. 747.

As discussed in the Introduction, people tend to adhere to abstract beliefs according to which the world is benevolent and meaningful.[90] Janoff-Bulman argues that those who have victim status in a given society are regarded as 'deviants' and stigmatised because they are 'manifestations of a malevolent universe rather than a benevolent one' and this violates the expectations established by people's illusions.[91] Similarly, according to Terror Management Theory, people subscribe to cultural worldviews to gain a sense of order and meaning and as a way of escaping the anxiety provoked by the awareness of mortality.[92] According to Solomon and colleagues, individuals who remind us of our mortality by violating our self-protecting worldviews are stigmatised in order to reduce the sense of terror that such individuals evoke.[93] In order to minimise the personal threat posed by victims, non-victims tend to engage in blaming the victim for their misfortunes.[94] By blaming the victim, people are able to maintain their own illusion of invulnerability and core assumptions about the benevolent nature of the world.[95] The social stigma that surrounds Rwandan genocide survivors no doubt results from the fear that these individuals evoke by reminding others of the genocide and making them aware of their own vulnerability.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter provides insights into the cyclical nature of the suffering endured by Tutsi survivors who became victims of violence because

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[90] Janoff-Bulman, p. 6.

[91] Ibid., p. 148.

[92] Sheldon Solomon, Jeff Greenberg and Tom Pyszczynski, 'A Terror Management Theory of Social Behavior: The Psychological Functions of Self-Esteem and Cultural Worldviews', in *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, ed. by Mark P. Zanna, 46 vols (San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 1991), XLVI, pp. 93–159 (p. 95); Abram Rosenblatt, Jeff Greenberg, Sheldon Solomon, Tom Pyszczynski and Deborah Lyon, 'Evidence for Terror Management Theory: I. The Effects of Mortality Salience on Reactions to Those who Violate or Uphold Cultural Values', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 57. 4 (1989), 681–690 (p. 681).

[93] Solomon, Greenberg and Pyszczynski, 'A Terror Management Theory', p. 125.

[94] Janoff-Bulman, p. 150–153; see also William Ryan, *Blaming the Victim* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1971), p. 28.

[95] Janoff-Bulman, p. 150–153.

they were the targets of stigma (as Tutsi) and have become victims of stigma because they were the targets of violence. The stigmatisation of the Tutsi in pre-genocide Rwanda served to justify and maintain political and social hierarchy. The stigmatisation of genocide survivors also serves this purpose, however, survivors may also be stigmatised because they threaten people's assumptions about the world. Paradoxically, as will be discussed in the following chapter, the stigmatisation of survivors also serves as a source of strength and empowerment for survivors as they react against their stigmatisation.

Chapter 2

The Impact of the Genocide on Self-Perception: From Stigma to Strength

The genocide in Rwanda could undoubtedly be considered a 'seismic event' for those who survived it. Calhoun and Tedeschi describe devastating events such as genocide as 'seismic' because they have the destructive power to produce a severe shaking, and in some cases shattering, of an individual's internal world.[1] The authors base their 'seismic event' theory on the earlier work of Janoff-Bulman, according to which, the foundation of individuals' cognitive-emotional system is made up of basic assumptions about themselves, the external world and the relationship between the two.[2] At the core of these assumptions, people believe that the world is benevolent, safe, predictable and meaningful and that the self is worthy. According to Calhoun and Tedeschi just as earthquakes produce a significant threat to physical structures, so-called 'seismic events' pose a threat to these cognitive-emotional structures. In the absence of an individual's usual modes of belief about the self and the world, typical means of coping are overwhelmed and the aftermath of such a disaster is frequently marked by significant distress, incredulousness, denial and a struggle to come to terms with posttraumatic reality.[3]

Although not in all cases,[4] traumatic events often produce negative responses in people. These responses can include distressing emotions such as anxiety and depression as well as anger, irritability, sadness, guilt and fear. Troubling

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[1] Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, p. 2.

[2] Janoff-Bulman, p. 6; Janoff-Bulman and McPherson Frantz, pp. 92–93.

[3] Leslie A. Morland, Lisa D. Butler, and Gregory A. Leskin, 'Resilience and Thriving in a Time of Terrorism', in *Trauma, Recovery, and Growth: Positive Psychological Perspectives on Posttraumatic Stress*, ed. by Stephen Joseph and P. Alex Linley (Hokboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 2008), pp. 39–61 (p. 43).

[4] See George A. Bonanno, 'Loss, Trauma, and Human Resilience: Have We Underestimated the Human Capacity to Thrive after Extremely Aversive Events?', *American Psychologist*, 59. 1 (2004), 20–28 (p. 12).

thoughts, such as repetitive, ruminative and intrusive, event-related thoughts are another common feature of the cognitive aftermath of a traumatic event. In response to these distressing emotions and thoughts, survivors of traumatic experiences may engage in problematic behaviours such as social withdrawal, consumption of legal or illegal drugs, sexual difficulties or aggressive behaviour. The aftermath of a traumatic experience may also result in physical reactions such as fatigue, muscle tension and aches, difficulties with breathing, feelings of jumpiness or difficulty sleeping.[5]

Although many theorists in the field of trauma tend to focus on these negative consequences, proponents of posttraumatic growth consider the distressing emotional, cognitive and behavioural responses to trauma to be 'normal, natural cognitive processes that have the potential to generate positive change'.[6] According to Joseph and Linley's Organismic Valuing Theory, in the wake of a traumatic event, a person moves through a cycle of appraisals, emotional states and coping. Within the framework of traditional clinical psychology, the factors involved in this cycle would be seen as indicative of disorder.[7] For Joseph and Linley, however, the cycle serves as a way of processing trauma-related information, that is, information with the potential to shatter an individual's assumptions about the self and the world.[8] Organismic Valuing Theory proposes that this information may either be assimilated within existing models of the world, or that existing models of the world may accommodate the information.[9] In the case of assimilation, an individual is able to assimilate the trauma-related information into previously held beliefs about the nature of the world and the self through the application of cognitive strategies (such as self-blame). As discussed in Chapter 1, non-victims tend to engage in blaming

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[5] The negative effects of trauma are described in more detail in Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, pp. 5–10.

[6] Stephen Joseph and Lisa D. Butler, 'Positive Changes Following Adversity', *PTSD Research Quarterly*, 21. 3 (2010), 1–8 (p. 2).

[7] Joseph and Linley, 'Positive Psychological Perspectives', p. 11.

[8] Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, p. 2; Janoff-Bulman, p. 6.

[9] Joseph and Linley, 'Positive Psychological Perspectives', pp. 12–13.

victims for their misfortunes in order to retain the belief that people get what they deserve and deserve what they get. In much the same way, victims may also blame themselves in order to maintain these belief systems.

Accommodation of trauma-related information can be made in either a positive or negative direction. Negative accommodation refers to the depressogenic reaction of hopelessness and helplessness. Martin Seligman's observations of 'learnt helplessness' in animals offer a useful analogy for understanding feelings of helplessness in humans.[10] Seligman and his colleagues trained dogs to jump out of the way of electric shocks. The researchers then raised a barrier so that the dogs could no longer jump out of the way. In a second experiment, the barrier was removed so that the dogs could once again escape the shocks, but rather than jumping, the dogs lay down and passively absorbed them. Seligman and colleagues argue that the dogs had learnt that nothing they did had any effect on the shocks. Similarly in humans, learnt helplessness and hopelessness is the acquired belief that the world is completely random and that individuals are powerless to influence their environment.[11] In contrast, positive accommodation involves the recognition that although negative and random events are possible, there is reason to believe that life is to be lived for the here and now and it is possible to regain some control over one's life.[12] It is when individuals are able to positively accommodate their worldview to the trauma-related information that posttraumatic growth becomes possible. Broadly speaking, posttraumatic growth is associated with positive changes in three domains including the perception of self, interpersonal relationships and life philosophy.

Through discursive analyse of their testimonies, this chapter focuses on the impact of the genocide on Rwandan women's self-perception. In Western

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[10] Described in Janoff-Bulman, pp. 142–143. See also Martin E. P. Seligman, *Helplessness: On Depression, Development, and Death* (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman, 1975).
[11] Joseph and Linley, 'Positive Psychological Perspectives', p. 13.
[12] Ibid., p. 13.

literature, positive changes in self-perception generally concern themes of agency such as increased personal strength (the notion that given 'one has survived the worst, […] one is indeed quite strong')[13] and new possibilities (the notion that, in light of one's newfound strength, new interests, activities and optimism can develop for the future).[14] This chapter will show that, while generally the same themes of personal agency appear to emerge among Rwandan women, these themes interact in quite specific ways with socio-cultural factors in Rwanda including: victimhood and the desire to disprove the genocide ideology; survivorhood and the desire to disprove the dominant perception of survivors in society; and gender and the specific ways in which women were affected by the genocide. As Burnet observes, many women 'faced a double burden of marginalisation, first as girls, wives or widows and second as ethnicised targets of violence whether before, during or after the genocide'.[15] This forced them to learn skills of self-reliance. Remarkably, despite the difficulties faced by these women, there are almost no examples of negative accommodation, and all but one of the women in the corpus displays some degree of positive change in the domain of self-perception. The fact that these women openly denounce the various ideologies that stigmatise them also implies that notions of 'chosen amnesia'[16] and full governmental control over people may be contextually bound.[17]

Victimhood as a Source of Strength

Paradoxically, despite the negative stereotypes surrounding victimhood, this identity appears to have been a source of posttraumatic growth for many survivors. According to Calhoun and Tedeschi, an important step towards

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[13] Calhoun and Tedeschi, 'The Foundations of Posttraumatic Growth', p, 5.
[14] Dimensions under the domain of 'self-perception' in the Posttraumatic Growth Inventory, Tedeschi and Calhoun, p. 460.
[15] Burnet, *Genocide Lives in Us*, p. 194.
[16] Buckley-Zistel, p. 131.
[17] Reyntjens, 'Constructing the Truth', p. 2.

growth is the change in self-perception from 'victim' of trauma to 'survivor' of trauma.[18] The survivor appellation, they argue, provides recognition of the special status and strength that individuals gain from their experience of such trauma. Howard Tennen and Glenn Affleck suggest that by recognising such benefits and by 'de-victimising' themselves, victims are able to restore self-esteem and mitigate feelings of stigmatisation.[19] This has been observed to be the case among survivors of the war in Bosnia, Herzegovina and Croatia. Using an adapted version of the Change in Outlook Questionnaire called the Positive and Negative Consequences of War questionnaire (PANCOW), Mirjana Krizmanić and Vladimir Kolesaric found that a strong motivation for positive change was the desire to avoid victim status and to stay healthy out of spite for the enemy.[20] The rejection of victim status also seems to be a strong motivation behind positive changes in the domain of self-perception observed among Rwandan women. The ideology of the genocide sought to exterminate all Tutsi. For many women, avoiding victim status, defying the perpetrators or simply being alive proves that this ideology has failed and provides them with a sense of agency and strength.

As observed in Chapter 1, to avoid being perceived as a victim of the genocidal ideology, both RSM and MCK work exceptionally hard at their education. As RSM states, she wishes to present 'une bonne image extérieure' so that the killers see that she is 'une personne forte'. In order to achieve this, RSM believes it her duty to take on the characteristics and stand in the place of those who died, to prove to the killers that their mission failed. This motivation appears to provide RSM with the strength to accomplish her goals: 'C'est la

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[18] Tedeschi, Park and Calhoun, pp. 10–11; Tedeschi, p. 322.

[19] Howard Tennen and Glenn Affleck, 'Personality and Transformation in the Face of Adversity', in *Posttraumatic Growth: Positive Changes in the Aftermath of Crisis*, ed. by Richard G. Tedeschi, Crystal L. Park and Lawrence G. Calhoun (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. 1998), pp. 65–98 (p. 80). In Rwanda, even the term 'survivor' may, however, be associated with stigma. See Chapter 1.

[20] Mirjana Krizmanić and Vladimir Kolesaric, 'A Salutogenic Model of Psychosocial Help', *Review of Psychology*, 3. 1-2 (1996), 69–75

responsabilité de tout le monde d'être à la place de ceux qui ne sont plus. C'est à dire faire de son mieux pour accomplir ce qu'ils devraient faire'. In the following extract from MCK's testimony, it appears that she is driven by a similar goal, namely, to counteract the ideology of the genocide:

> I never lost strength, I continued fighting. I continued fighting to make my family recognised without being forgotten. Through all these problems, I sacrificed my needs. I have an objective and I must achieve it.

Like RSM, it appears that MCK is driven to continue the legacy of her family and counter the killers' objective. Her use of extreme case formulations,[21] ('I *never* lost strength') as well as her use of the imperative ('I *must* achieve it'), demonstrate MCK's conviction. Moreover, her use of the past tense suggests that she has already achieved many of her goals, demonstrating her sense of agency and empowerment.

Witnessing how those who resorted to killing were left with nothing, LK was able to see beyond the importance of material wealth in the aftermath of the genocide.[22] Much like RSM and MCK, the failure of the genocide ideology also appears to provide LK with a source of personal strength. For example, she notes that, compared to the killers, survivors are in fact fortunate: 'At least you [survivors] have something left. But for them, they were stripped of everything, even their humanity'. As can be seen in the following extract, just being alive appears to fill LK with strength as it proves that the genocide ideology failed:

> I think that after losing everything, and I mean losing everything possible, there is one thing that we are left with. Everyone at his own level should tell people 'I'm alive', 'I'm alive!' And being alive should be marked by actions. If I'm alive then I must work properly in whatever I'm assigned in the period that I'm alive.

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[21] Pomerantz, p. 219.
[22] See Introduction.

Clearly the failure of the genocide ideology, which for LK is evidenced by the continuation of her own life, provides her with an increased sense of agency, demonstrated by her abundant use of singular first person pronouns and her emphasis on 'actions' and 'work'.[23] The importance of this agency is further demonstrated by her use of the imperative ('I *must* work properly') and extreme case formulations ('after losing *everything*', '*everything* possible', '*whatever* I'm assigned'). In the Kinyarwanda version of this extract, LK uses the diminutive of the word 'period' ('aka kanya'), meaning literally, for the 'small period [that I'm alive]', suggesting that, through her survival, she may also have gained an increased appreciation for life.

Similarly, GM explicitly draws strength from the failure of the genocide ideology:

> But life goes on. Being stripped of your life is not easy to live with. But although life is hard, we must continue to live to prove to those who tried to take it away that […] things did not go as they planned. Some people died but there are also survivors. They must live to prove that those who died were part of a family.

It seems that GM, like many of these women, gains a sense of personal strength and hope for the future through her rejection of victimhood and desire to fight back against the ideology of the genocide (by emphasising that 'there are also survivors').

Survivorhood as a Source of Strength

Rather than passively accepting the negative stereotypes surrounding their survivorhood, survivors also see their identity as a source of empowerment as they seek to create positive outcomes, gaining a sense of mastery and self-

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[23] LK uses the verb 'gukora' which means 'to work' but also 'to do' or 'to fix'; a verb which implies human agency.

efficacy. The reason that survivorhood has an impact on growth processes in the domain of self-perception is twofold. Firstly, a significant source of this growth is no doubt the desire to dispel these negative stereotypes and gain a sense of freedom from the system legitimation myth which casts survivors as subordinate.[24] A second reason why survivors appear to counter this perception, has less to do with the stigma than with the social function underlying the stigma. In order to maintain the illusion of invulnerability, people frequently engage in blaming the victim.[25] However, while the fear of mortality causes others to engage in stigmatising survivors, the confrontation with their own mortality may in fact be a source of growth for many survivors of trauma. The recognition of their vulnerability may lead survivors to feel as if they have been tested and found to have survived the absolute worst, demonstrating their personal strength.[26] Thus whether it is to counteract the stigma and gain a sense of freedom or whether it is out of the struggle with their traumatic experience, many survivors appear to become empowered by this identity.

For example, rather than seeing herself and other survivors as a burden to Rwandan society, LK sees her position as crucially important; 'I realised that the duty of survivors is very wide […] I feel responsible for the well-being of my country'. She goes on to explain how her experience and her position as a survivor led her to develop new interests and make a difference to her country:

> If you manage to think beyond what hurt you, your personality can become highly valued, your personality is your wealth. So you start blessing others by applying your personality to be the source of solutions to the issues around you and if peace is needed around you, you can be the first to say that peace is possible.

LK is referring to the role that survivors are playing in the reconstruction of Rwanda. Clearly LK's perception of survivors is quite the opposite of the

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[24] This notion is explored in more detail in Chapters 1 and 5.
[25] Janoff-Bulman, p. 150–153; Ryan, p. 28.
[26] Calhoun and Tedeschi, 'The Foundations of Posttraumatic Growth', p. 5.

stereotype of survivors as burdens or parasites. Indeed, as demonstrated in Chapter 1, LK's use of the word 'blessing' is echoed later in her testimony when she explicitly confronts the portrayal of survivors as 'burdens'.[27] Like LK, MCK also appears to demonstrate her own efficacy and disprove the stereotypes of survivors as burdens:

> Before reorienting students back to school by announcing through the radio I had already started studying sewing in Mugandamure. I had decided to join and become skilled. My objective was to raise my siblings without begging. Depending on others [by begging] would give us a bad image; it would make the children look bad. It was something that was very difficult for me but even when life was very hard, it was important for me to go.

In this extract MCK's sense of agency and purpose is clear, marked by her decision to be independent rather than to rely on others. This display of agency contradicts the stereotype of survivors as parasitic or burdens, which, as noted in Chapter 1, is a deliberate decision; MCK states that she works hard to 'avoid being a burden'. It appears that the combination of stigma and the desire to disprove the genocide ideology provides MCK with a source of strength, pushing her to become independent. Her agency also appears to come from her new position as the head of the family, a position that many women had to assume in the aftermath of the genocide. The impact of the genocide on women and gender relations is another socio-cultural factor affecting these women's sense of personal strength.

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The Differential Impact of the Genocide on

Women as a Source of Strength

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Other than its scale, one of the main differences between the 1994 genocide and previous incidents of mass violence was the targeting of women. As

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[27] In the extract above, LK uses the expression 'kubihesha abandi *umugisha*' meaning 'to grant blessing to others' then later, when discussing the identity of survivors, she uses the same word: 'turi *umugisha*' ('we are a blessing').

Christopher Taylor argues, the genocide was more than a battle for political supremacy between groups of men, 'it was about reconfiguring gender'.[28] In pre-colonial Rwanda, public life was dominated by men but women could hold powerful positions within the religious realm.[29] In the Kubandwa cults, for example, women could become spirit mediums, priestesses or traditional healers. The Queen Mother also held a powerful position in pre-colonial times, often owning her own land and herds of cattle.[30] Moreover, queen mothers had an influential role in determining royal succession.[31] By centralising the political system and eliminating the overlapping chieftaincies, colonial rule diminished women's roles in marriage and kin groups, thereby reducing the small amount of power that women held.[32] In addition, the monetisation of the economy under colonial rule excluded women who remained economically subordinate to their male relatives who controlled economic resources.[33] The introduction of Christianity drove indigenous religions underground and thus diminished women's religious authority.[34] After Rwanda gained independence in 1962, the Hutu government, which was closely tied to the Catholic Church, took little interest in women's issues and women were underrepresented in government.[35] The position of women changed little after Juvénal Habyarimana's 1973 coup d'état. In fact, throughout the post-independence period, women were responsible for the maintenance of the household through their agricultural labour but had severely circumscribed rights.[36] Although they could earn money, women were only able to control small amounts of the income they generated. In the 1980s and early 1990s, overpopulation, the collapse of coffee prices and incompetent governance resulted in an economic

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[28] Taylor, 'A Gendered Genocide', p. 43.

[29] Timothy Longman, 'Rwanda: Achieving Equality or Serving an Authoritarian State?', in *Women in African Parliaments*, ed. by Hannah Evelyn Britton and Gretchen Bauer (Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, Colorado, 2006), pp.133–150 (p. 134).

[30] Taylor, 'A Gendered Genocide', p. 51.

[31] Longman, 'Rwanda: Achieving Equality', p. 134.

[32] Burnet, *Genocide Lives in Us*, p. 50; Longman, 'Rwanda: Achieving Equality', p. 134.

[33] Burnet, *Genocide Lives in Us*, p. 76.

[34] Longman, 'Rwanda: Achieving Equality', p. 134.

[35] Ibid., p. 134.

[36] Jefremovas, p. 86.

downturn. Driven by economic necessity, women became a dynamic force behind Rwandan civil society and a number of women's organisations were founded.[37] Under pressure from this nascent women's movement, Habyarimana's government created the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and the Family in order to promote economic development to improve the status of women and children.[38] In the first multiparty government in 1992, Agatha Uwilingiyimana became Minister for Education and was then named Prime Minister the following year, making her the third female Prime Minister in Africa.[39] A year later, when the genocide broke out, Uwilingiyamana became one of its first victims. Taylor argues that the death of Uwilingiyamana owed as much to her gender as it did to the fact that she was a member of the opposition.[40]

According to Taylor, the genocide was an attempt to re-establish the ideal Hutu state as imagined through the idealised image of the 1959 Hutu revolution.[41] In part, it aimed to reclaim patriarchy and male dominance in rejection of the political and social advances made by women in the preceding decade. Moreover, in Taylor's opinion, Hutu extremists held ambivalent attitudes towards Tutsi women. On the one hand, Tutsi women were loathed for 'their potential subversive capacity to undermine the category boundary between Tutsi and Hutu'.[42] On the other hand, Taylor suggests that as a result of old

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[37] A number of civil society women's groups were formed during this period such as *Duterimbere*, a women's banking and micro-lending cooperative; *Haguruka*, an advocacy group for women and children's legal rights; and *Réseau des femmes œuvrant pour le développement rural*, an organisation that provided technical assistance to rural women's organisations. Longman, 'Rwanda: Achieving Equality', p. 135; Jennie E. Burnet, 'Gender Balance and the Meanings of Women in Governance in Post-Genocide Rwanda', *African Affairs*, 107/428 (2008), 361–386 (p. 372).

[38] Burnet, 'Gender Balance', pp. 372–373.

[39] Longman, 'Rwanda: Achieving Equality', p. 136.

[40] Taylor, *Sacrifice as Terror*, p. 32.

[41] Taylor, 'A Gendered Genocide', p. 42.

[42] Taylor observes how Tutsi women were seen as the permeable boundary between the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups. It was much more common in pre-genocide Rwanda for Tutsi women to marry Hutu men than for Hutu women to marry Tutsi men. Official ethnic identity (as marked on the identity cards) was determined by the father and therefore the children of a Hutu man married to a Tutsi woman would be considered Hutu and would thus benefit from having

colonial stereotypes of Tutsi superiority, Tutsi women were irresistible to Hutu men.[43] This cognitive dissonance harboured by Hutu men in combination with the desire to restore patriarchy resulted in a form of 'sexual terrorism' reserved for Tutsi women.[44] Thus Tutsi women were targeted during the genocide not only on the basis of their ethnic identity but also on the basis of their gender.

As noted in the Introduction, the genocide and related wars left a massive demographic imbalance. In the immediate aftermath, the new Government of Rwanda estimated that 70 per cent of its population was female.[45] As refugees returned to Rwanda from the camps in Tanzania and Zaire this figure was revised downwards to 53.7 per cent.[46] Although the estimated proportion of women in the population of 1996 does not seem substantially higher than the 1991 figure of 51.8 per cent, it should be noted that it comprises the proportion of females in the entire population. By dividing the population into different age cohorts, Hamilton shows that in 1996, of the population aged between 20-44, the proportion of women was actually 56 per cent and of those aged between 45-64, the proportion of women was in fact 58 per cent.[47] The elevated number of women relative to men of working age resulted in women having to shoulder the greater burden of reconstruction and other economic activities during the post-war period. Furthermore, many women were left as heads of households, solely responsible for the care of orphans as well as their own children.[48] However, women had previously been financially dependent on their male relatives and now found themselves having to find the time to cultivate enough food for their families and complete their domestic and childcare tasks

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Hutu citizenship despite being considered racially impure by Hutu extremists. Taylor, 'A Gendered Genocide', p. 50.

[43] Ibid., p. 50.

[44] Ibid., p. 50.

[45] Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, p. 6.

[46] République du Rwanda, *Enquête Sociodémographique 1996, Rapport Final* (Abrege) (Kigali, Rwanda: Ministère des Finances et de la Planification Economique, Office de la Population, et Fonds des National Unis pour la Population, 1998), p. 18.

[47] Hamilton, p. 2. See also, Burnet, *Genocide Lives in Us*, p. 65.

[48] In 2000, 34 per cent of households were women-headed, an increase of 50 per cent from 1991, Hamilton, p. 6.

which in turn reduced the possibility of growing surplus food to sell for profit.[49] Lack of education, training and experience made it difficult for women to find paid employment. This combination of factors meant that those living in female-headed households more frequently suffered from poverty and malnutrition.

In the face of these difficulties, women survivors of the genocide were further troubled by the lack of accountability and justice. After the genocide, the new government announced its intention to prosecute all those involved in the genocide but, with an overwhelming lack of resources, it faced major constraints.[50] Many survivors failed to obtain justice and women in particular faced substantial difficulties.[51] Initially rape and gender-based crimes were only considered as Category 3 crimes and were not moved to Category 1 until 1996.[52] Furthermore, police inspectors documenting genocide crimes were predominantly male which, in addition to the stigma associated with sexual violence, resulted in victims of sexual violence being even more reluctant to give evidence.[53] Thus, many perpetrators of sexual violence and gender-based crimes were not prosecuted. Making matters worse, the overwhelmed legal system and overcrowded prisons prompted the government to initiate a liberation process according to the principle of 'faute avouée, faute pardonnée' for certain crimes and thus, large waves of prisoners were released back into

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[49] Ibid., p. 6.
[50] Human Rights Watch, pp. 88–89.
[51] Ibid., p. 89.
[52] According to the Organic Law (08/96), Category 1 refers to a) the planners and organisers of the genocide; b) those who were in a position of authority on the national, prefectural, communal, or sectorial level; c) those who were killers of great renown because of the zeal or cruelty with which they carried out the killing; and eventually d) those who committed acts of sexual torture. Category 2 covers perpetrators or accomplices of intentional homicide or serious assaults that resulted in death; Category 3 covers persons accused of other serious assaults; and Category 4 covers offences against property. In an earlier draft of the legislation, rape was explicitly included in Category 3. Claire Devlin and Robert Elgie, 'The Effect of Increased Women's Representation in Parliament: The Case of Rwanda', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 61. 2 (2008), 237–254 (p. 249); Human Rights Watch, pp. 37–38.
[53] Women interviewed by Human Rights Watch indicated that they would report rape crimes to a female investigator but not to a male. Human Rights Watch, p. 4.

society.[54] The large-scale release of prisoners coupled with widespread impunity resulted in many survivors having to live alongside the perpetrators of genocide, further intensifying their psychological trauma.[55] In sum, although the genocide had unspeakable consequences for all those involved, the suffering inflicted on Rwandan women was particularly devastating.

However, as a result of the overwhelming burdens that were placed on Rwanda's women after the genocide, their position in Rwandan society has changed rapidly and the post-conflict situation has paradoxically resulted in a situation not only of great challenges but also of great opportunity.[56] The social transformation of women's position in post-genocide society has largely taken place in three areas: (i) changing gender roles, (ii) a women's movement in civil society, and (iii) an increase in the number of women in political life.

(i) Changing Gender Roles

Gaining a sense of self-reliance or self-efficacy has frequently been cited as one of the ways in which survivors of trauma may experience a change in self-perception in other contexts. For example, studies on bereaved widows report that, because widows had to take on a wide array of new tasks which were previously considered their husbands' duties, these women gained a repertoire of new skills as well as a stronger self-image and an increased ability to cope.[57] Calhoun and Tedeschi suggest that if individuals are able to successfully tackle the challenges thrown at them in the wake of a crisis, this can greatly enhance

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[54] Sandrine Ricci, 'La Parole Mémorielle de Rescapées du Génocide des Tutsi au Rwanda: vers une (Re)Construction du Sens' (Mémoire, Université Du Québec À Montréal, 2008), p. 14.

[55] Human Rights Watch, p. 69.

[56] Hamilton, p. 14.

[57] Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, p. 13; Tedeschi, Park and Calhoun, p. 11.

the individual's sense of personal strength and competence.[58] This appears to be the case for many Rwandan women.

The devastation caused by the genocide made it impossible, particularly for women, to continue with traditional ways of life.[59] With their husbands either dead, in exile, or in prison, women were forced to think of themselves differently and develop skills that they would not otherwise have acquired. As a result of this disruption in gender relations, women were able to challenge customary notions of gender and women's roles in the family and even pursue careers or commercial activities.[60] These changes are directly reflected in the changes in self-perception observed in women's testimonies. BN, for example, was previously reliant on her husband for economic support but became financially independent after the genocide by working to support her family. In her descriptions of life before the genocide, BN anchors her identity in her role as wife. As can be seen in the following extract, out of the five clauses, BN's husband is the subject on three occasions either alone ('Mon mari') or as part of a plural first person pronoun ('nous'). BN appears alone as the subject on just two occasions which is somewhat surprising given that she is describing her own life:

> Je me suis mariée en 1987. Nous avons fait pas mal de temps sans avoir d'enfant mais en… 1990, c'est lorsque j'ai eu mon premier enfant, c'est le seul que nous avions. Mon mari travaillait à Rwandex.

In addition to anchoring her pre-genocide identity in her relationship with her husband through the use of pronouns, BN also does this through her choice of topic. When describing her life before the genocide, BN talks only about her husband's work and makes no reference to her own professional activities. After the death of her husband, however, BN talks at length about how she

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[58] Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, p. 14.
[59] Burnet, 'Gender Balance', p. 384; Burnet, *Genocide Lives in Us*, p. 66.
[60] Burnet, 'Gender Balance', pp. 384–385.

managed to find work and a place to live in order to support her child. The following extract from BN's testimony describes her life after the genocide and it is clear that her self-presentation differs notably from that above. In particular, BN's personal agency and independence is demonstrated by her abundant use of the first person singular (used in eight out of the ten clauses). This use of the first person singular suggests BN's acknowledgement of her own role in the changes to her life ('j'ai changé de vie'), rather than attributing such changes to external factors. In this extract, BN also uses a verbal format known as contrastive pairs. BN contrasts active verbs in the first person in lines 1, 3, 5, 7 and 10 to more generalised statements in lines 2, 4, 6, 8 and 9 (these include a combination of neutral statements such as 'J'étais toujours avec mon fils', and statements describing setbacks such as 'je n'étais toujours pas bien guérie'):

1. C'est alors que j'ai changé de vie en commençant à louer une maison…
2. mais je n'étais toujours pas bien guérie,

3. j'allais toujours me faire soigner,
4. il y avait toujours des éclats et des balles dans la jambe.

5. J'ai continué à me faire soigner au Roi Fayçal
6. puisqu'on nous soignait gratuitement,

7. c'est après que je suis allée me faire opérée pour la deuxième fois.
8. J'étais toujours avec mon fils là.

9. Après avoir retrouvé des forces, après que je fus guérie,
10. je me suis décidée à me chercher une maison.

The difficulty and setbacks in lines 2 and 4 ('je n'étais toujours pas bien guérie'; 'il y avait toujours des éclats et des balles dans la jambe') are juxtaposed with active verbs in the first person in lines 1, 3 and 5 ('j'ai changé de vie'; 'j'allais toujours me faire soigner'; 'J'ai continué à me faire soigner'), highlighting BNs relentless pursuit for a solution to these challenges.

Furthermore, the repetition of her active search for treatment in lines 3, 5 and 7 ('j'allais toujours me faire soigner'; 'J'ai continué à me faire soigner' and 'je suis allée me faire opérée') culminates in success in line 9 ('je fus guérie'), suggesting that she manages to overcome the challenges posed by her injuries. It is at this point that the pattern of first person verb followed by generalised statement is reversed (in contrastive pair 9, 10). This reversal at the end results in the extract both starting and finishing with assertive first person actions ('j'ai changé de vie' and 'je me suis décidée à me chercher'), emphasising BN's personal agency and her ability to overcome adversity to achieve success. Moreover, BN successfully puts this last statement ('je me suis décidée à me chercher une maison') into action when she goes on to find a job which enables her to rent a property. She is subsequently provided with her own house by AVEGA.

Losing a husband also changed EN's life, forcing her to take on new roles and responsibilities.

> Life was bad. I felt like life was over. I couldn't picture my life without Kalisa [her husband]. I felt like I'd been left, I was worthless… a widow. I didn't know who I was anymore. But today things seem to be better. It gives me hope.

The stigma of being a widow is clearly apparent in this extract. Translated as 'worthless', EN uses the Kinyarwanda word 'gusuzugurika' meaning 'to be discredited', (the same verb used by MCK to describe her position as an orphan in Chapter 1). However, despite feeling discredited or worthless, EN appears to have found a way to survive without her husband. As can be seen in the following extract, EN appears not only to have survived but also to have gained hope and learnt to tackle life's challenges independently:

> To see my kids growing up gives me hope. Raising my kids alone without Kalisa was inconceivable in the past. Raising them without a job... But today, I have managed. And, I have hope for the future.

Similarly to BN, in both of these extracts, EN contrasts setbacks and hardship ('I felt like life was over'; 'I felt like a widow... worthless'; 'Raising my kids alone'; 'Raising them without a job') with personal strength and agency ('I have managed') as well as optimism for the future ('It gives me hope'; 'I have hope'). This use of contrastive language, moving from setbacks, to agency and hope demonstrates EN's ability to overcome the challenges of living without her husband. Moreover, she describes her situation as 'more positive than ever'. 'I think it's better now', she states, 'because I don't consider myself the same way I did before. Life changes for the better'. Thus, out of her loss, EN appears to have gained an enhanced sense of self-reliance leaving her feeling stronger than before.

MU also lost her husband during the genocide and, in the following passage, describes how it is the duty of widows to be strong for the sake of their children:

> Les rescapés doivent continuer parce que la vie continue. Elle doit
> être forte, la veuve, elle doit savoir qu'elle doit élever les enfants
> pour assurer qu'ils étudient et pour assurer que leur vie continue.

Here MU switches from speaking about 'rescapés' to speaking about widows, as if the two terms are interchangeable.[61] This suggests her recognition of the demographic reality that the majority of genocide survivors are women. The sense of being strong as a matter of duty is reinforced by MU's repetitive use of verbs of obligation ('gukwira' and 'kugomba', meaning 'devoir'). It could be said that there is a double meaning to her statement, 'elle doit être forte'. MU uses the Kinyarwanda word 'umugabo' which literally means 'man' but also means 'strong'. Although MU undoubtedly means that widows must be strong,

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[61] This has been translated in the masculine plural in French ('rescapés'); however, MU uses the term 'abantu bacitse ku icumu' to refer to survivors, meaning literally 'people who escaped the spear'. The word for people, 'abantu', is gender neutral in Kinyarwanda.

in many ways, widows also have to be like men by carrying out traditionally male duties.

In addition to losing husbands and taking on traditionally male duties, many younger women and girls lost their parents and had to take on parental duties, becoming responsible for younger siblings. This was the case for MCK who, as noted above, enrolled in school and worked to support her younger siblings. Despite her young age (17 at the time of the genocide), MCK negotiated her way into a higher grade of school and 'never repeated a class'. Though she struggled without the support of her parents, ('I would lament that no one was going to reward me. There was no one to show my report to'), she eventually reached university, despite juggling her studies with work and parental responsibilities:

> I was working in the day time and going to university in the evening. So that I could fulfil my duties of taking care of my siblings even though there were other relatives who could play a role in helping them, I had to act like their parent showing them that I am responsible.

Thus for MCK, it appears that in addition to her motivation of disproving the ideology of the genocide and countering the dominant perception of survivors, MCK's role as the oldest surviving member of her family has also contributed to her enhanced sense of purpose and self-reliance.

Similarly, AU was also the eldest surviving member of her family at just 10 years of age at the time of the genocide. Despite living through extreme poverty, AU's perceptions of her life begin to improve although she continues to suffer hardship in her post-genocide life. She is responsible for her only two remaining family members who are both younger than her but she does not possess the means to provide for them. In spite of this hardship, AU appears to

develop an increased optimism for the future as well as an understanding of the importance of her role as caregiver to her younger cousins:

> Etant la plus âgée, la première des choses a été de leur dire que les choses ne demeureront pas ainsi. Je leur promets que notre avenir sera bien meilleur, je leur dis qu'après cette vie viendra une autre. Puis je leur dis que ce qui fait que nous ayons un avenir meilleur, malgré qu'il n'y ait plus d'opportunités de travail, le fait que nous étudions, nous avons donc une chance de réussir. Et puis si Dieu ne nous abandonne pas et si nous prenons soin de nous, je crois qu'on aura un avenir meilleur.

Here, AU positions herself as a figure of authority by referring to herself as 'la plus âgée' who is able to advise and comfort those younger than she. The repetition of verbs in the first person establishes personal agency ('Je leur promets', 'je leur dis', 'je crois'), suggesting that she has a sense of control over her life. Moreover, her belief in 'un avenir meilleur' suggests that she is becoming increasingly optimistic for the future.

While some girls and young women had to take on the role of caring for younger siblings, in other cases, women took responsibility for orphaned children. FM, for example, took on two orphans and explains how looking after them provides her with a sense of pride and accomplishment: 'When I see them in my home, I feel good. One is about to finish school in ISAI Busogo and the other one just completed secondary school'. IM also took orphans into her care after the genocide. At the time of the genocide, IM was an elderly woman whose husband had died years before due to illness. She did not have her own children, yet during the genocide IM protected many children in her home. She spent the three months looking after babies who would scream out with hunger. IM had nothing to feed them so would squeeze the water out of a banana stem in to their mouths. Occasionally, a neighbour would bring food and IM would give it all to the babies. IM starved herself in order to feed the orphans. In the

following extract, she describes how she eventually became responsible for thirteen children:

> Life moved on, but later on I faced the challenges of having so many children to look after. I had eleven children with me, anybody who was helpless. People brought in babies, even all the way from Kibuye, newly born babies. Now the number has increased from eleven to thirteen, all under one roof. But looking at them today it's amazing.

It is clear that overcoming the challenge of raising so many children has provided IM with a sense of achievement. IM later describes how she reached a crisis point in the aftermath of the genocide: with nothing to feed her children, she marched down to a ministry to demand help. She describes how the security guard tried to chase her off the premises but she held on to his belt, refusing to let go. 'I have eleven orphaned children at home. They are hungry and I am their only parent right now, my brothers are in exile', she tells the man. 'If you don't help me, I will abandon them. Otherwise just give me assistance to throw them into the river'. Eventually, she is provided with a sack of beans and cooking oil as well as a car to return her home. She explains how that day, 'I went and fed my children, my day was wonderful and I was the happiest woman alive'. It is unlikely that an elderly single woman would have been able to walk into a ministry demanding help before the genocide. However, the urgency of her situation forced the Minister to listen to her. As Burnet notes, women broke taboos and took on new roles 'not because they sought liberation from gender oppression but because they had no other choice'.[62] However, as a result of their losses, their new roles and by overcoming significant challenges, it is clear that many women have also gained an enhanced sense of self-reliance.

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[62] Burnet, *Genocide Lives in Us*, p. 6.

(ii) The Women's Movement and Civil Society

In addition to taking on new roles, women also organised themselves into development associations to address specific women's problems and interests.[63] Women's organisations stepped in to fill the void left by the genocide by providing services to meet women's basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, as well as other services such as counselling, social support, vocational training and assistance with economic activities.[64] The work of existing groups (such as Duterimbere, Haguruka and Réseau des Femmes) expanded while several new organisations were founded. One programme that directed its resources towards women's issues was known as Women in Transition (WIT), a partnership set up between the Rwandan government and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in 1996 to provide assistance to women in the form of shelter, agricultural inputs, livestock and microcredit.[65] One of the best-known women's groups is AVEGA which helps provide genocide widows with greater power of advocacy and organises international humanitarian organisations to assist widows and their children.[66] Women's organisations organised themselves into a collective known as Pro-Femmes Twese Hamwe which works for 'the structural transformation of Rwandan society by putting in place the political, material, juridical, economic and moral conditions favourable to the rehabilitation of social justice and equal opportunity, to build a real, durable peace'.[67] Overall, the women's movement in Rwanda has been so successful that it has been described as 'the most vibrant sector of Rwandan civil society'[68] and 'nothing short of remarkable'.[69] The movement has become the

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[63] Ibid., p. 13; Hamilton, p. 9.

[64] Burnet, 'Gender Balance', p. 372; Longman, 'Rwanda: Achieving Equality', p. 138.

[65] Hamilton, p. 9.

[66] Burnet, 'Gender Balance', p. 373.

[67] Pro-Femmes Triennial Action Plan 1998, cited in Hamilton, p. 10.

[68] United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of Democracy and Governance, 'Rwanda Democracy and Governance Assessment', November 2002 <http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNACR569.pdf> [accessed 15 October 2013], p. 37.

[69] Catharine Newbury and Hannah Baldwin, 'Confronting the Aftermath of Conflict: Women's Organisations in Post-genocide Rwanda', in *Women and Civil War: Impact, Organisations, and*

backbone of contemporary Rwandan society, providing a wide range of essential services.

The work of women in civil society is directly implicated in the individual changes in self-perception observed in many of the women's testimonies. For example, AVEGA provided BN with a house, as well as emotional support, both of which are noted in her testimony as essential elements in her path to stability as they enabled her to rebuild her life and gain a sense of control:

> AVEGA venait me rendre visite de temps en temps, les veuves, les dames chargées du counseling venaient aussi, on discutait, elles me réconfortaient. Elles m'ont offert une maison, c'est d'ailleurs dans cette dernière que je vis et la vie continue.

Similarly, SPM explains how she also received a house from AVEGA which enabled her to continue with life:

> Quelques temps plus tard, AVEGA s'est chargé de nous chercher des bienfaiteurs de nationalité américaine qui se sont donnés la tâche de réhabiliter nos maisons qui avaient été détruites. […] Les nôtres avaient été reconstruites par les Américains. AVEGA s'était occupée des sans-abris, ceux qui avaient des problèmes sérieux…nous avons été les premiers à y habiter. La vie a continué, les enfants sont allés à l'école.

While some women benefitted from the services offered by women's groups, others benefitted from active participation in the movement. CK, for example, describes how AVEGA trained her in trauma counselling and law:

> I owe my life to AVEGA, because it trained me in trauma, it has provided me with confidence, I am now the representative of AVEGA in Rwamagana, and I enjoy helping others. […] I always meet people, I am always solving other people's problems, I was

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Action, ed. by Krishna Kumar (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), pp. 97–128 (p. 97).

> trained in Law, I was trained on GBV [gender-based violence] and I often advise people, direct them to the courts.

It is clear from this extract that the training CK received has provided her with a sense of agency and purpose by enabling her to use her expertise to assist others. One of the primary achievements of the women's movement in civil society, is its role in the expansion of women's representation in politics as it gave women the skills necessary for entering politics and promoted the legitimacy and importance of women holding office.[70]

(iii) Women in Politics

While the proliferation of women in Rwandan civil society may have been described as 'remarkable', the increased representation of women in Rwandan parliament has been identified as 'revolutionary'.[71] In 2003, Rwanda made history by becoming the country with the highest number of women elected to parliament in the world, with 48.8 per cent of the seats in the lower house of Parliament won by women.[72] In the 2008 election this record was broken yet again as women won 56 per cent of the seats.[73] In addition to the women's movement in civil society and changing gender roles, Elizabeth Powley cites the commitment of the RPF to women's inclusion as the principle reason behind the increased representation of women in Rwandan politics. The RPF was influenced by its exposure to gender equality issues in Uganda as well as the successes of women in South Africa's African National Congress (ANC).[74]

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[70] Longman, 'Rwanda: Achieving Equality', pp. 138–139.

[71] Sarah Boseley, 'Rwanda: A Revolution in Rights for Women', *Guardian*, 28 May 2010 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/may/28/womens-rights-rwanda> [accessed 15 October 2013], para. 1 of 12.

[72] Powley, 'Case Study Rwanda', p. 154.

[73] United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), 'Rwandan Women Secure 56% of Parliamentary Seats in Historic Election Result' (2008) <http://www.unifem.org/news_events/story_detail.php?StoryID=736> [accessed 15 October 2013], para. 1 of 8.

[74] Powley, 'Case Study Rwanda', p. 159.

As a result, it has made the inclusion of women a fundamental feature of its policy of unity and reconciliation.[75]

Even before the official introduction of quotas in government, the RPF consistently appointed women to nearly 50 per cent of the seats it controlled in parliament and, from 1994 to 2003, the transitional government saw women's representation rise to 25.7 per cent.[76] In 1998, nationwide elections were organised for representative leadership among women at all levels of government administration. These representatives became known as the Women's Councils and were responsible for advising local governance structures on women's issues and teaching women how to participate in politics.[77] In 1999, a significant government reshuffling saw the Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Affairs (MIGEFASO) split into two ministries: the Ministry of Family and Social Affairs, and the Ministry of Gender and the Promotion of Women (MIGEPROFE). The role of the latter was to develop projects to reform all laws discriminating against women as well as projects to educate people about the concept of women's rights and promote gender equality.[78] In 2000, when the transitional period was coming to an end, the drafting of a new constitution was set in motion. Of the 12-member Constitutional Commission, three members were women, one of whom was considered a 'gender expert'. Judith Kanakuze had been a long-term leader in the women's movement and was appointed to liaise with women's groups and ensure the inclusion of gender sensitive clauses.[79] The women's movement coordinated efforts with MIGEPROFE to actively engage in the process of drawing up the constitution to ensure that gender equality would be a

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[75] Powley, Ibid., p. 159. The concept of post-conflict 'reconciliation' is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5.

[76] Powley, 'Case Study Rwanda', p. 154; Elizabeth Powley, *Rwanda: The Impact of Women Legislators on Policy Outcomes Affecting Children and Families* (United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Report, 2006), p. 4.

[77] Burnet, 'Gender Balance', p. 368.

[78] Ibid., pp. 367–368; Hamilton, p. 11.

[79] Burnet, 'Gender Balance', p. 378; Powley, 'Case Study Rwanda', p. 155.

cornerstone of the new constitution.[80] This equality was partly ensured by granting women at least 30 per cent of the seats in both the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies.[81] In the Chamber of Deputies, the 24 seats (30%) reserved for women are fought in women-only elections and voted for by women. However, in both the 2003 and 2008 elections, women were also elected in the openly contested seats and thus gained representation of 48.8 per cent and 56 per cent respectively. The women in Rwanda's parliament have also formed a caucus known as the Forum of Women Parliamentarians whose members work together across party lines to address issues related to women and gender. The Forum reviews laws, introduces amendments, proposes new laws and liaises with the women's movement to sensitise the population about gender issues and advise on legal issues.[82]

While the number of women in power is not explicitly mentioned in the women's testimonies, the change undoubtedly provides individual women with important female role models. As Burnet observes, the process of normalisation of women in power has resulted in a greater acceptance of women as independent agents in public which has transformed women's 'identities, subjectivities and agencies'.[83] Moreover, since the genocide, there have been significant changes in law that have favoured women such as the achievement of Category One status for rape or sexual torture in the post-genocide prosecution guidelines, a law extending the rights of pregnant and breastfeeding mothers in the workplace, a law on the protection of children from violence, the inheritance act guaranteeing that women have the same rights as men to inherit property and a law on the prevention, protection, and punishment of any gender-based violence.[84] It has also become illegal to discriminate against

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[80] Powley, 'Case Study Rwanda', p. 155.
[81] Ibid., p. 156.
[82] Ibid., p. 160.
[83] Burnet, 'Gender Balance', pp. 381, 386.
[84] Devlin and Elgie, p. 249.

women, including discrimination on the basis of sex or HIV status.[85] Unfortunately, the changes in law do not necessarily reflect what happens in practice as many women survivors and their families continue to face stigmatisation and discrimination, making it difficult to assert their rights.[86]

These changes have nonetheless had a direct influence on the individual self-perception of some survivors. The political changes have allowed BN, for example, to become an independent, property-owning head of household who is no longer dependent on her husband. Prior to the genocide, it would not have been possible for BN to own her own house as all her property, including her children, would have belonged to her husband. This change is of great importance to BN, who explains that before, 'ma plus grande préoccupation était le logement, maintenant elle est résolue'. The expansion of women in politics has also affected RB. As mentioned in the Introduction, RB's achievements in the women's civil society movement (as co-founder of ABASA, an association of genocide widows), provided her with the skills and experience necessary for entering politics and she became the Elected Representative of Genocide Survivors in the Mukura Sector.[87] In addition, both BN and RB assert their intention to remain as single women ('je ne pense plus à me remarier', (BN); 'In my life I never wanted a husband', (RB)), a position which would not have been socially or economically tenable prior to the genocide. However, as a result of the legal and social changes, this is now reality for a large number of women.

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[85] Chiseche Mibenge, 'Gender and Ethnicity in Rwanda: On Legal Remedies for Victims of Wartime Sexual Violence', in *Gender, Violent Conflict and Development*, ed. by Dubravka Zarkov (New Delhi: Zubaan Books, 2008), p. 158.

[86] Amnesty International, p. 2.

[87] The transition of women from civil society to politics is a trend in Rwanda that has been noted by Burnet, 'Gender Balance', pp. 378–379; Burnet, *Genocide Lives in Us*, p. 186 and Longman, 'Rwanda: Achieving Equality', pp. 138–139

Conclusion

In conclusion, the 'double burden of marginalisation'[88] on these women as victims and survivors of violence on the one hand and as unmarried girls, widows and heads of households on the other, appears, paradoxically, to be the source of positive change in their self-perception. It is important, however, not to romanticise the impact of the genocide on women as, despite these numerous examples of positive social transformation, women still face many difficulties in post-genocide Rwandan society. For example, many of the organisations that form Pro-Femmes as well as the women's councils lack the resources to maximise their impact which prevents them from providing a consistent level of service across the country.[89] The women's movement also remains reliant on a single political party, the RPF, which is less than democratic, and in recent years has become increasingly despotic. Such reliance places the movement in a precarious situation. While the trend to move from civil society into politics may benefit a small number of individual women, such as RB, Burnet suggests that this transition has created a vacuum of leadership in civil society.[90] She argues that more women in governance risks hindering the cooperation between women in civil society and women in office because, once in office, women no longer engage in activism on behalf of women's interests.[91] It is certainly true that many of the laws of great significance to women were passed before the 2003 elections and so were not a result of the high representation of women in political power.[92] Burnet also suggests that women may be used by political leaders to legitimise their agendas and achieve their own ends.[93] Overall, she describes the increased female representation as a paradox because while women's participation has increased, their ability to influence policy has

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[88] Burnet, *Genocide Lives in Us*, p. 194.
[89] African Rights, *Rwanda: Broken Bodies*, p. 93; Powley, 'Case Study Rwanda', p. 157.
[90] Burnet, 'Gender Balance', pp. 378–379; Burnet, *Genocide Lives in Us*, p. 186
[91] Burnet, 'Gender Balance', p. 381.
[92] Devlin and Elgie, p. 249.
[93] Burnet, 'Gender Balance', pp. 380–381.

decreased on account of the increasingly authoritarian nature of the regime.[94] Longman also criticises the role of women in government, arguing that the Rwandan government's conception of women's rights is highly constrained because it fails to tolerate the broader range of human rights.[95] According to Longman, because the government has become increasingly despotic and intolerant of independent expression, women in power may only challenge the authorities in limited ways and are thus only able to work on issues consistent with the regime's agenda.[96] At the individual level, the post-genocide climate may have facilitated posttraumatic growth in the domain of personal strength among Rwandan women. However, the disproportionate impact of the genocide on women combined with the stigmatisation of female survivors has had a catastrophic impact on their interpersonal lives. These issues are explored further in the following chapter.

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[94] Ibid., p. 363.
[95] Longman, 'Rwanda: Achieving Equality', pp. 146, 149.
[96] Ibid., p. 149.

Chapter 3

The Impact of the Genocide on Family and Interpersonal Relationships: A Shift towards Individualism

The upheaval caused by the genocide had a profound impact on family structures and interpersonal relationships leaving families and communities torn apart. It created a population marked by distrust as it was frequently neighbours, friends and even family members who killed one another. Networks of friendship and community were shattered which resulted in a higher incidence of land disputes and deprived both men and women of the social support networks that they had previously relied upon.[1]

One form of relationship that was destroyed as a result of the genocide was that of marriage. Following the genocide, the number of female-headed households increased from a quarter to a third of all households.[2] Because women who became separated, divorced or widowed have usually remained single, the overall number of female-headed households has not decreased significantly since the initial aftermath of the genocide.[3] A shortage of men of marriageable age combined with the destruction of social networks has also resulted in an increase in the average age of first marriage as well as an increase in the proportion of women reporting never having been married.[4] These high numbers of female-headed households often lead to further family breakdown

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[1] Veale and Donà, p. 257.

[2] Hamilton, p. 6; Veale and Donà, p. 258.

[3] C. Newbury and Baldwin, *Aftermath: Women in Postgenocide Rwanda*, p. 7.

[4] Anuja Jayaraman, Tesfayi Gebreselassie, S. Chandrasekhar, 'Effect of Conflict on Age at Marriage and Age at First Birth in Rwanda', *Population Research and Policy Review*, 28. 5 (2009), 551–567 (pp. 556, 563).

because, as Veale and Donà observe, their relative economic vulnerability pushes children out of the home and on to the streets.[5]

As discussed in Chapter 1, the various forms of stigma associated with genocide survivors resulted in wide-ranging inter-personal difficulties, particularly on account of the stigma associated with sexual violence and unwanted pregnancy. For example, many women abandoned the children born of rape or even committed infanticide because, if a woman decided to keep the baby, it could lead to deep divisions in the family as a result of the associated shame.[6] Frequently referred to as 'enfants non-desirés' or 'enfants mauvais souvenir',[7] the children born of rape are stigmatised for the memories they represent and so face difficulties building relationships themselves.[8]

In addition to the thousands of children born as a result of rape, many more thousands of children lost one or both parents.[9] Rwanda now has one of the world's highest rates of orphanhood.[10] Much like female-headed families, orphans generally live in the poorest of socioeconomic situations and are more likely to become homeless.[11] Children in general have borne the brunt of the upheaval caused by the genocide as, in addition to losing family members and living in poverty, the majority of those who were in Rwanda at the time of the genocide were exposed to extreme violence as either witnesses or victims and in some cases perpetrators.[12] It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the number of street children has rapidly increased since the genocide. The vast majority of

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[5] Veale and Donà, p. 256.
[6] Human Rights Watch, p. 3.
[7] Ibid., p. 3, 79.
[8] Mukamana and Brysiewicz, p. 382; Weitsman, pp. 566–567.
[9] Between 2000 and 5000 children were born as a result of rape while tens of thousands of children were orphaned. Human Rights Watch, p. 79; C. Newbury and Baldwin, *Aftermath: Women in Postgenocide Rwanda*, p. 5.
[10] K. Thomas, p. 821.
[11] Ibid., p. 821; Veale and Donà, p. 253.
[12] Ibid., p. 258.

these have lost one or both parents and about half of them are homeless.[13] This is yet another result of the disrupted social networks in immediate and extended care systems caused by the death, imprisonment or exile of parents and relatives as well as the poverty that followed the genocide.[14]

In the aftermath of the genocide, thousands of children were cast out of their family of origin, as family structures ceased to exist and new family structures were forced into existence. Before the genocide, child-headed households were relatively uncommon because even in the event of a parent's death, members of the extended family would generally assume responsibility for the children.[15] By 1998, however, a very large proportion of children were living alone (forty-two per cent) or with peers (nineteen per cent). Only twenty per cent of Rwandan children were living with their father, eight per cent with their mother and as few as eleven per cent with both parents.[16] The increase in orphaned children also led to a large number of women taking in children other than their own. In some cases these would be the children of family members or friends but often the children were unknown.[17] Thus, in addition to caring for what remained of their own nuclear families, many women had also to provide food, clothing and school fees for orphaned children.[18] In both child-headed households and adoptive family households, children have had to manage complex negotiations around issues of identity and grief as well as comprehend their position within the family.[19] Furthermore, many adoptive parents and communities found the behaviour of orphaned children challenging while the

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[13] Ibid., pp. 253, 259.
[14] Ibid., p. 254.
[15] Berthe Kayitesi, Rollande Deslandes and Christine Lebel, 'Facteurs de résilience chez des orphelins rescapés du génocide qui vivent seuls dans les ménages au Rwanda (Association Tubeho)', *Revue Canadienne de Santé Mentale Communautaire*, 25. 1 (2009), 67–81 (p. 68).
[16] Comrade, *Socio-Economic Analysis and Conditions of Street Children in Kigali* (Unpublished report, Kigali, Rwanda: Comrade, 1998). Reported in Veale and Donà, p. 256.
[17] C. Newbury and Baldwin, *Aftermath: Women in Postgenocide Rwanda*, p. 5.
[18] Ibid., p. 5.
[19] Veale and Donà, p. 264.

children themselves report feelings of being unloved and unwanted.[20] The difficulty of the adopted parent-child relationship is even expressed in the Rwandan proverb, 'Umwana w'undi abishya inkonda', (a child of somebody else is not like one's own).[21] For many children, however, family structures ceased to exist altogether and in response to this situation, the number of centres for unaccompanied children has increased dramatically.[22]

Clearly, the genocide placed enormous pressure on interpersonal and family networks. According to theorists of posttraumatic growth, however, interpersonal relationships (in addition to perceptions of self and life philosophy) are an area of life thought to potentially benefit from positive changes or posttraumatic growth following a traumatic event.[23] Chapter 2 outlined Joseph and Linley's Organismic Valuing Theory which predicts that trauma can affect people in different ways; while some people's belief system may remain intact in the aftermath of a traumatic event, for others, the challenge posed by the trauma to their basic assumptions may lead them to adapt their beliefs.[24] While the process of adaption or accommodation of one's belief system may be negative, it can also be positive and lead to posttraumatic growth.[25] The basic assumptions affected by trauma and the ways in which posttraumatic growth is manifested not only vary across individuals but also from one culture to another.[26]

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[20] Ibid., p. 264.

[21] The proverb literally means that the saliva of another person's child is bitter. Veale and Donà, p. 264.

[22] In Rwanda, the number of centres for unaccompanied children increased significantly in the year following the genocide, from 37 orphanages catering for about 4800 children before the genocide, to a peak of 77 centres receiving 12,704 children in April 1997. See Veale and Donà, p. 258.

[23] Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, p. 11; Joseph and Linley, 'Positive Psychological Perspectives', p. 11.

[24] Joseph and Linley, 'Positive Psychological Perspectives', pp. 12–13.

[25] Ibid., pp. 12–13.

[26] Splevins, Cohen, Bowley and Joseph, p. 262; Weiss and Burger, p. 191.

One broad cultural distinction is that of individualism/collectivism. In general, cultures that are characterised as individualist promote independence while those characterised as collectivist promote interdependence.[27] Given this chapter's emphasis on interpersonal relationships, this cultural distinction is important because it describes the manner in which people relate to one other in a given culture. For example, according to Calhoun, Cann and Tedeschi, people in collectivist cultures are thought to prefer collective action, seek harmony with others and place emphasis on meeting group expectations and being respected by important others.[28] Similarly, Hazel Rose Markus and Shinobu Kitayama argue that in collectivist cultures, 'a premium is placed on emphasising collective welfare and showing a sympathetic concern for others' as well as 'on interrelatedness and kindness' and the 'ability to both respect and share feelings'.[29] Catherine Raeff observes that individuals from collectivist cultures are thought to view themselves in relation to others and strive to maintain strong interpersonal connections.[30] Goals associated with collectivism include affiliation, communion and engagement with others as opposed to the goals of agency, autonomy and disengagement from others associated with individualist cultures.[31] According to McAdams, the values thought most important in collectivist cultures are group harmony, cooperation, solidarity and interdependency.[32] People from individualist cultures, on the other hand, tend to believe that they can exert more control over events and assume more personal responsibility than people from collectivist cultures. Moreover, people from individualist cultures tend to define themselves in terms of how they differ from

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[27] Calhoun, Cann, and Tedeschi, p. 10.

[28] Ibid., p. 9.

[29] Hazel Rose Markus and Shinobu Kitayama, 'Culture and the Self: Implications for Cognition, Emotion, and Motivation', *Psychological Review*, 98 (1991), 224–253 (p. 228.) Cited in Catherine Raeff, *Always Separate, Always Connected: Independence and Interdependence in Cultural Contexts of Development* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. 2006), p. 12.

[30] Raeff, p. 12.

[31] Shinobu Kitayama, Hazel Rose Markus and David Matsumoto, 'Culture, Self and Emotion: A Cultural Perspective on "Self-Consciouss" Emotions', in *Self-Conscious Emotion: The Psychology of Shame, Guilt, Embarrassment and Pride*, ed. by June Price Tangney and Kurt W. Fischer (New York: Guilford Press, 1995), pp. 439–464 (p. 442). Cited in Raeff, pp. 12–13.

[32] McAdams, *The Redemptive Self*, p. 14.

others, their uniqueness and their personal accomplishments.[33] Individualist cultures also tend to prioritise freedom of the self.[34] People are seen as self-sufficient agents endowed with fundamental rights such as the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.[35] Parents in individualist cultures are thought to emphasise self-reliance and independence, giving their children autonomy and freedom of exploration.[36] Weiss and Berger, who have pioneered cross-cultural research into posttraumatic growth, discuss the interaction between culture and the ways in which posttraumatic growth is manifested. With respect to the individualist/collectivist distinction, the authors discuss how, in highly communal societies such as Spain and Israel, a prominent feature of posttraumatic growth was found to be a greater degree of social cohesion. In contrast, in the Netherlands, a more individualist society, pride was an important aspect of posttraumatic growth.[37]

This chapter presents an analysis of representations of interpersonal relationships in the corpus testimonies. While Chapter 2 demonstrated that most of the women have experienced some positive changes in the domain of self-perception, this chapter will show that very few of the women present signs of positive change in the domain of interpersonal relationships. The majority of changes observed in this domain are negative, emphasising the destruction of relationships. It will be argued that the same socio-cultural factors (including victimisation, stigmatisation and the impact of the genocide on women) which have had a positive impact on self-perception, appear to have had a detrimental impact on these women's relationships with others. This co-occurrence of positive changes in the domain of self-perception and negative changes in the

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[33] Calhoun, Cann and Tedeschi, p. 9.

[34] McAdams, *The Redemptive Self*, p. 278.

[35] Ibid., p. 278.

[36] Marc H. Bornstein, Joseph Tal, and Catherine Tamis-LeMonda, 'Parenting in Cross-Cultural Perspective: The United States, France, and Japan', in *Cultural Approaches to Parenting*, ed. by Marc H. Bornstein, (Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associated, 1991), pp. 69–90 (pp. 73–74). Cited in Raeff, p. 13.

[37] Weiss and Berger, p. 191.

domain of interpersonal relationships, it will be argued, reflects what might be expected from an individualist society (i.e. placing emphasis on agency, accomplishment and individual action) rather than from a collectivist society (i.e. placing emphasis on relationships with others, social harmony and collective action). This is somewhat surprising given that African cultures are usually typified as collectivist.[38] In the final discussion, this chapter quantitatively analyses these women's use of personal pronouns before and after the genocide. Here, the analysis will reveal a marked shift from the use of the collective 'we' before the genocide, to the use of the individual 'I' after the genocide, suggesting that the genocide may have caused a shift towards individualism among these Rwandan women.

Posttraumatic Growth and Interpersonal Relationships
(i) Self-Disclosure and Emotional Expressiveness

According to research into posttraumatic growth, a significant number of those who have experienced a traumatic life event report increased intimacy and closeness with others, which ultimately lead to stronger relationships.[39] For example, some people have reported feeling closer to their spouse as a result of various different forms of traumatic life event.[40] Because traumatic events can cause individuals to become more aware of their own vulnerability, this may lead them to recognise their need for social support.[41] Thus individuals may become more open with others as a result of the need to relieve themselves of the emotional pain induced by the traumatic life event. In his work on emotional disclosure and health, James Pennebaker discovers that talking about

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[38] McAdams, *The Redemptive Self*, p. 278.

[39] Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, p. 11.

[40] Tedeschi, Park and Calhoun note that a number of studies have reported improved marital relationships following traumatic events such as heart attacks, bereavement and hostage taking. Tedeschi, Park and Calhoun, p.12.

[41] Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, pp. 11–13; Tedeschi, Park and Calhoun, pp. 12–13.

emotional events can induce significant biological changes.[42] These changes include reductions in blood pressure and muscle tension during or immediately after the disclosure, which are apparent particularly among people who express emotion.[43] In the long term, emotional disclosure can promote long-term physical and psychological health.[44] Thus, an increased ability to self-disclose as a result of a traumatic event is frequently regarded as positive since it enables individuals both to feel closer with others as well as to purge negative emotions.

Although the genocide put enormous strain on families and interpersonal relationships, there are some remarkable examples of posttraumatic growth with respect to the importance and value of maintaining strong interpersonal relationships. For example, the importance of sharing emotions and self-disclosing is recognised in the testimony of FM as it appears to enable her to heal through the recognition of her own strength via a downward social comparison with those still struggling with trauma; 'I started to feel open and be able to share with others. Sharing makes you realise some experiences are worse than yours. […] I get my strength being around people'. In a similar vein, the value of sharing with others is apparent in SPM's response when asked how she copes with the difficulties of caring for her family in the absence of her husband:

> Voilà ce qu'il y a de mieux quand nous habitons ensemble dans un habitat regroupé, quand tu fais partie du village.[45] Vivre avec quelqu'un qui partage les mêmes problèmes que toi est en quelque sorte édifiant parce qu'on sent qu'on n'est pas le seul à avoir ce problème. Comme ça tu te dis qu'il te faut endurer et persévérer puisque les autres en font autant. Mais s'isoler ne fait qu'aggraver les problèmes. Il est donc mieux de se souder aux autres quand on a

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[42] Pennebaker, pp. 5–6.
[43] Ibid., pp. 5–6.
[44] Ibid., p. 8.
[45] SPM uses the term, 'umudugudu' which has several meanings including small collection of homes or village. It is also the smallest administrative grouping.

> des problèmes, on en parle, on rit, il arrive même que vous partagiez les mêmes problèmes mais vous riez, vous priez…vous vous confiez en Dieu. Voilà ce qui nous aide beaucoup.

SPM's use of the first person plural both at the start ('nous habitons') and end of the paragraph ('ce qui nous aide') is suggestive of her solidarity with the community as it demonstrates that she views herself as part of a collective rather than as a lone individual. In addition to these expressions of solidarity, the extract includes many factors which convey feelings of intimacy and strong relationships with others. For example, SPM expresses the importance of living closely with others ('nous habitons ensemble dans un habitat regroupé') as well as sharing problems with others ('quelqu'un qui partage les mêmes problèmes'). Furthermore, this proximity and mutual strife enable SMP to share jokes ('on rit'; 'vous riez') as well as prayers with others ('vous priez…vous vous confiez en Dieu'). Repeated expressions such as 'Voilà ce qui nous aide' and 'en quelque sorte édifiant'[46] demonstrate the positive implications of her relationships with others. Similarly, her intimacy with others encourages SPM to make positive social comparisons which enable her to see that if others can cope, then she must also be able to (e.g. 'tu te dis qu'il te faut endurer et persévérer puisque les autres en font autant').

(ii) Compassion and Empathy

As well as enhancing relationships by enabling people to share their emotions, another positive impact that trauma can have on individuals with respect to interpersonal relationships is an increased sense of compassion, empathy and altruism towards others. Tedeschi, Park and Calhoun suggest that this heightened sense of compassion may be the product of people's recognition of their own vulnerability.[47] An increased sensitivity to other people can result in

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[46] The expressions 'ibikubaka' and 'Birakubaka' used by SPM (translated as 'édifiant') mean literally 'it builds you up' or 'it provides you with strength'.
[47] Tedeschi, Park and Calhoun, pp. 12–13.

efforts towards improving relationships.[48] For example, as traumatic events can produce an understanding of events that only a survivor can experience, this in turn may motivate the survivor to share this knowledge with others who have lived through similar circumstances.[49] Similarly to what was observed above in the testimony of FM, increased sensitivity to others' experiences may also lead to downward social comparisons which provide further healing through the recognition of one's own strength. This phenomenon is exemplified in the testimony of SPM:

> Regarde, quand tu veux te sortir cela de sa tête, voilà ce qu'on se dit: 'il y a des 4 ou 5 orphelins qui vivent seuls dans cette maison'. Ceci veut dire que c'est le plus grand qui assume le rôle du chef de la maison. Tu te sers de ça comme référence puis tu te demandes: 'et ces enfants, ne vivent-ils pas?' Tu regardes encore ta voisine…après, tu trouves que tu n'as pas à te plaindre.

In addition to social comparisons, individuals may experience growth through acts of kindness towards others. Calhoun and Tedeschi, for example, report that parents who have lost children may feel a greater sense of compassion towards other parents which may lead them to engage in acts of kindness and to experience an increased connection with others who have experienced loss.[50] Examples of enhanced compassion are also found in the women's testimonies. For example, the difficult experiences endured by both GM and her mother encourage the two women to work together in the shared project of reconstructing their family house. The extract below has been divided into stanzas to demonstrate how the compassionate actions of a mother toward her daughter eventually become the shared compassionate action of mother and daughter for others:

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[48] Tedeschi and Calhoun, pp. 456–457.
[49] Tedeschi, Park and Calhoun, p. 13.
[50] Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, p. 12.

Stanza 1.
My mother helped me a lot because I had lost all hope. My mother went home to see what it looked like. The house had been partially destroyed. She said to me, 'The Interahamwe were wrong about one thing.' 'What?' I asked. 'They did not destroy everything. I'm going to fix the house then face them.'

Stanza 2.
We lived in Muhima. We fixed the house and tried the best we could. […] We continued repairing the house, slowly adding the missing parts.

Stanza 3.
and we tried to learn how to live with the sorrow we had.

Stanza 4.
When I looked around, I actually saw people in worse conditions than I was. I was a grown up, losing parents and siblings but compared to an infant with no one left to care for them, it made you realise you were better off. We tried to help others whenever it was possible.

GM and her mother believed they had lost everything and GM admits she had 'lost all hope'; however, it is clear that with the help of her mother, she is able to regain strength. It can be seen in the extract that, what begins with a mother taking positive steps to rebuild her and her daughter's life (in Stanza 1), becomes the collective endeavour of both mother and daughter (in Stanza 2). This is demonstrated by the transition from the mother's voice: ('I'm going to fix the house'; 'I'm going … to face them') to their collective voice: ('We fixed the house'; 'We continued repairing the house'). GM then progresses from describing the process of repairing the physical remains of their house to describing the process of repairing their emotional lives (in Stanza 3), ('we tried to learn how to live with the sorrow we had') and this remains a collective action. Finally, in Stanza 4, via a downward social comparison, ('I actually saw people in worse conditions than I was'), GM achieves an appreciation for her relatively advantageous situation ('it made you realise you were better off'). The section concludes with a statement demonstrating how the combined action of mother and daughter to rebuild their physical and emotional lives culminates

in their ability to support others, ('We tried to help others whenever it was possible'). GM goes on to discuss how she and her mother eventually help re-house orphaned children and others in need. However, despite the examples of positive interpersonal relationships following the genocide in the testimonies of FM, SPM and GM, the following section will show how the genocide appears to have had a catastrophic impact on the interpersonal relationships of many women.

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The Negative Impact of the Genocide on

Interpersonal Relationships

(i) Social Isolation

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As a result of negative emotions such as distrust and fear with respect to others, social isolation is one observed outcome of the genocide.[51] For example, for fear of being a burden to others, MCK avoids sharing her problems with other family members, ('And I had a feeling that I was being a burden to him, because I don't like involving others in my problems'). Thus despite the positive changes observed in the testimony of MCK in the domain of person strength and agency, her interpersonal life appears to have been negatively affected by the genocide. This co-occurrence of negative change with respect to interpersonal relationships and positive change with respect to self-perception is a trend that appears across many of the testimonies. Social isolation is also not unique to the MCK's testimony, as this theme is also apparent in the testimony of AU:

> Je n'ai plus un seul membre de ma famille encore en vie, je n'ai donc personne à qui m'adresser pour parler de mes problèmes. Chacun prend soin de sa famille. […] Je me souviens que c'était en 1998, je me suis décidée à ne plus jamais raconter mes problèmes à qui que ce soit.

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[51] C. Newbury and Baldwin, *Aftermath: Women in Postgenocide Rwanda*, p. 3.

This is very much the opposite of the enhanced self-disclosure discussed in the posttraumatic growth literature. Here, AU expresses the depressogenic response of helplessness and hopelessness associated with negative accommodation of trauma,[52] revealed primarily through her use of extreme case formulations, ('*plus* un *seul* membre de ma famille', '*personne* à qui m'adresser').[53] However, these are juxtaposed with assertive first person actions which appear to counteract the sense of hopelessness and helplessness she feels with respect to interpersonal relationships, ('je me suis décidée'). The fact that AU identifies a specific year demonstrates how conscious a decision it was for her to stop sharing her problems. Thus, like MCK, although AU appears to have experienced negative changes with respect to interpersonal relationships, she demonstrates positive change with respect to her self-perception and personal agency, that is, she is a person able to take control in spite of her circumstances.

Another example of social isolation may be found in the testimony of LK:

> It's a life that I cannot describe. It's a life that we lived with hurt and trauma. Another thing is you are closed. You have no one you feel you can approach. I want to approach [others] but you find it menacing. Because of the trauma left behind by those people during the genocide, we could not accept people into our lives.

Here, the genocide's legacy of fear and distrust is demonstrated by LK's apparent loss of faith in humanity. This is highlighted in her shift from speaking about the actions of a specific group ('those people'), to speaking about her inability to accept 'people' in general. Her loss of faith in people is also demonstrated when she describes how she is unable to open up to others because, during the genocide, 'We had seen what a human being really is'. It would appear that LK believes that the actions of those during the genocide

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[52] Joseph and Linley, 'Positive Psychological Perspectives', p. 13.
[53] Pomerantz, p. 219.

reveal the true nature of human beings. Despite her loss of faith in humanity, LK yearns to find someone she can confide in, yet she is unable to find anyone she can trust. Her predicament is repeatedly manifested in the following extract from her testimony through a series of four contrastive pairs:[54]

> 1. But there was a time when I couldn't know who I really was.
> 2. There was no one I could talk to, no.
>
> 3. I felt like I was damaged. I felt that I wasn't myself. […]
> 4. I had no one to tell about this ordeal. I thought that people were of two categories, those who were telling us they [the killers] were going to kill us and those that kill.
>
> 5. I was unable to find someone to tell. I didn't know the other people that were there, they were not the sort of people with whom you could share your problems. The last time we had real communication with them is when we lived at home [in our families].
> 6. We were damaged.
>
> 7. A time came when I felt that I really wanted to be free of the things I had within me
> 8. but was unable to find a person I could talk to.

In each pair, LK expresses the emotional burden of her experiences (lines 1, 3, 6 and 7) and a reason preventing her from alleviating herself from this burden, that is, her inability to find someone whom she can confide in (lines 2, 4, 5 and 8). She offers some explanation as to why she is unable to find someone in lines 4 and 5, where she reveals her loss of trust in people. In line 4, LK expresses her belief that all people are either those who simply observe mass violence without intervening or those who actively participate in it. And in line 5, she describes how she has been unable to communicate with certain people since the time she was living with her family before the genocide, suggesting that it is something related to her traumatic experience that prevents her from talking to them. The repetition of LK's inability to find someone to confide in serves to

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[54] Lee and Beattie, p. 61.

highlight her general sense of hopeless isolation and despair. She eventually finds someone who was absent from the country at the time of the genocide and decides to confide in him. Unable to communicate verbally, LK writes her feelings using SMS text messages. She explains how, 'It was like evacuating my mind, […] I had little information about him I just used him to ease my mind'. Later, however, LK discovers that the man's father was one of the most notorious killers during the genocide:

> I became very much tortured. I went back to him calling him an Interahamwe and asking him why he had listened to me. He told me that his father had changed from Tutsi to Hutu: those were the worst ones, you have no idea what they did.[55] So telling him didn't help me.

It is at this time that LK decides to write her story as a book rather than confide in others. This decision begins to improve LK's psychological state as she explains, 'writing is a cure to a broken heart'.[56] Thus, similarly to MCK and AU, LK provides another example of positive changes in self-perception and independence (the decision to take control by writing a book) in conjunction with negative interpersonal changes and a shift away from depending on others.

(ii) Lack of Cooperation

Another form of relationship breakdown observable in the testimonies is an apparent lack of cooperation or motivation to help others. The widespread poverty that followed the genocide made it extremely difficult for people to help each other as their priority was to help themselves. BN, for example, describes the aftermath stating, 'J'observais comment chacun se débattait pour survivre, personne n'avait le temps de se battre pour l'autre'. In a similar vein,

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[55] Because of the ethnic persecution that took place against Tutsi in the post-independence period, some Tutsi were able to change their ethnic group so as to avoid this persecution. See Longman, 'Identity Cards', pp. 345–347.

[56] LK is referring here to her first book, *Kami yanjye*.

AU describes her struggle of living in the ensuing poverty and being unable to seek assistance:

> Sincèrement c'était honteux… personnellement je ne peux pas faire du porte-à-porte pour quémander à manger parce que mes petits frères et moi mourrons de faim, je ne peux jamais venir auprès de toi et te dire que moi, AU, j'ai un problème ou que…je ne peux rien te demander et si tu trouves que tu peux m'aider, tu le fais. En fait, la plupart des gens peuvent t'écouter mais sans pour autant t'assister. Aujourd'hui je suis à la maison et pourtant il y a des gens qui se disent être des bienfaiteurs.

A sense of helplessness is observable in the situation that AU presents in this extract. Clearly, the stigmas associated with orphans, with genocide survivors and with poverty more generally inhibit her from gaining the assistance or cooperation of others. AU is held at an impasse here because, although she may starve to death, she is unable to ask for food because of the shame of begging as well as the reluctance of others to help. Moreover, her alternating use of the first and second person, which gives a dialogic feel to the extract, is ironic because it coincides with the statement that she is unable to initiate dialogue with others, ('je ne peux jamais venir auprès de toi et te dire que moi, AU, j'ai un problème'). This irony is further accentuated by the phrase, 'et pourtant il y a des gens qui se disent être des bienfaiteurs'.

(iii) No Compassion among Survivors

Not only is there an apparent lack of cooperation among community members but the same is true among fellow survivors. LK, for example, describes how she is unable to trust other people whether Hutu or Tutsi.[57] In the aftermath of the genocide, LK concludes, 'we couldn't trust anyone else, just our family members. We expected that every survivor around had betrayed us'. LK also

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[57] According to LK, many of the most powerful and merciless perpetrators of the genocide were in fact Tutsi masquerading as Hutu.

cites trauma as a cause of relationship breakdown, explaining how 'survivors could hurt each other because they were hurt themselves they would hurt those close to them. Many families separated as a result of mutual hurt'.

Another reason why survivors appear to have lost compassion for one another is related to the various stigmatised identities they face as a result of their victimisation. It seems that even survivors who fought together to survive are now ashamed to associate with one another. For example, in Hatzfeld's *La Stratégie des antilopes*, Innocent Rwililiza was among those who survived in the forest. He describes how he formed a group with five others who helped one another survive. Despite the fact that the members of the group always remained together at the time of the genocide, Innocent explains that the group is no longer united:

> Aujourd'hui, le groupe des six s'est dispersé, l'amitié avec. On ne se rencontre pas, on n'est jamais remontés ensemble à Kayumba, pas une fois ou marcher côte à côte entre les arbres, redécouvrir les passages de nos courses et nous raconter des moments, ou regarder en silence. On n'a jamais partagé des brochettes au cabaret pour évoquer les bons et les mauvais souvenirs. On préfère se lier avec des gens qui n'étaient pas dans le groupe, des rescapés des marais ou de n'importe où. Pourquoi? Je ne sais pas. Entre les gens du groupe, on s'évite de justesse. Si je croise le Pasteur dans sa voiture, il appuie sur son klaxon, on se lance des salutations amicales et il continue sa route. On a pris chacun notre vie à notre compte. Ça nous fait un peu honte, je n'ai aucune explication. On fait un peu de camouflage, je crois qu'on veut se démontrer les uns aux autres qu'on est guéris.[58]

A similar phenomenon can be observed in the testimony of BN. BN describes at great length how she fought with others to survive, yet she describes how, in the aftermath of the genocide, she and other survivors avoid one other:

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[58] Jean Hatzfeld, *La Stratégie des antilopes. Rwanda après le génocide* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2007), pp. 52–53

> Franchement je ne parlais à personne, je ne voulais parler à personne, j'aimais la solitude. Quant aux rescapés menant une vie meilleure, je ne les approchais jamais, je ne voulais même pas m'approcher d'eux.

BN's avoidance of other survivors could be interpreted as a form of dissociation from her identity as a survivor so as to avoid the associated stigma. There is an element of social comparison in the above extract, as it is particularly those survivors who are prospering ('menant une vie meilleure') whom she tries to avoid. This social comparison runs in the opposite direction to that observed earlier in the discussion of positive changes. Rather than looking to those who are still struggling to draw strength, here BN is avoiding those who are succeeding as they make her feel worse about herself. It would seem that the relative prosperity of other survivors highlights BN's continual struggle with trauma and so, associating with these people might aggravate the stigma surrounding BN by making her appear to conform to the stereotype of survivors as psychologically unstable. This is strikingly similar to the comments made by Rwililiza, 'On fait un peu de camouflage, je crois qu'on veut se démontrer les uns aux autres qu'on est guéris'. Given that the stereotypes surrounding survivors identify them as burdens or parasites, it is presumably desirable to avoid appearing as such by presenting a façade of strength.

(iv) The Difficulties of Living without Family

Dealing with the difficulties of having lost family members is another area in which survivors experience feelings of hopelessness and helplessness. This is particularly the case for children who lost their parents as well as their extended family. MCU, for example, lost her entire family apart from a sister. The difficulty she faces can be observed in the following sample from her testimony:

> La vie est surtout misérable dans ce temps parce que quand tu n'as pas de source de revenue, personne pour t'assister, personne pour te soutenir, personne pour te demander ce qui ne va pas…tu as toujours le sentiment que la vie est loin d'être belle.

Her feelings of isolation are particularly apparent in the Kinyarwanda version where MCU repeats the amplifier 'cyane cyane', meaning 'surtout' ('*Cyane cyane* ariko, ubuzima budukomerera *cyane cyane*'/'La vie est surtout misérable') emphasising how difficult her life has become as a result of losing her family. This is further highlighted by the repetition of the fact that she has no one to help her or ask how she is, ('*personne* pour t'assister, *personne* pour te soutenir, *personne* pour te demander ce qui ne va pas'). MCU's struggle to survive without her family is intensified by poverty and the two factors converge to make her life particularly difficult:

> Comparer la vie d'avant à celle d'aujourd'hui, il y a une très grande différence parce qu'aujourd'hui je peux avoir un problème et le garder pour moi-même. Par exemple, je peux faire deux jours sans manger mais avant je mangeais quand je voulais, à chaque fois que j'en avais envie. Aujourd'hui, je peux même passer trois jours sans manger parce que je n'ai personne à qui le dire. La vie de l'après-guerre est compliquée, elle n'atteint même pas le quart du niveau de celle d'avant la guerre.[59]

The poverty which prevents her from finding food is exacerbated by the apparent indifference and disregard of others. Here, the negative changes are particularly palpable in her comparisons of life before and after the genocide: 'elle n'atteint même pas le quart du niveau de celle de l'avant la guerre'.

Unfortunately, MCU is not alone in struggling with the difficulties of living without a family. AU also struggles with day to day activities as a result of having no family to support or assist her: 'il n'y avait personne à qui nous pouvions même dire un petit bonjour ou nous manquions même de moyen pour

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[59] Rather than 'genocide', MCU uses the word 'intambara' here, meaning 'battle', 'war', or 'fighting'. This word is commonly used in Rwanda to refer to the events of 1994.

nous rendre à l'école'. Similarly, as cited earlier, MCK describes her difficulty of maintaining motivation at school without the encouragement of her parents: 'I would lament how no one was going to reward me. There was no one to show my report to so I was about to stop going to school'. MCK also describes the difficulties of having to care for younger siblings on her own:

> My brother, when he was in primary, he was traumatised but we didn't know. I was raising them with little skills of doing so. I would punish him for failing in class without asking him what caused him to fail. I was deeply disappointed in him but he was the only boy that survived in our family. He lived with my grandmother so I would find him very dirty and I beat him. We weren't friends anymore because of my beating him. […] He confessed the hatred he had for me because of following him up. Unknowingly I was traumatising him. I wanted him to be perfect. But we were too young to know.

As Burnet suggests, the improvements seen in many women's lives were bittersweet as even for the most successful women, the burden of responsibility was heavy.[60] Thus, despite MCK's successes in education and her increased personal strength, the heavy responsibility has caused problems in her relationship with her brother.

LK experienced similar success at university, but also faces similar difficulties in attempting to raise a younger brother without her parents. She tries to encourage her brother to complete his education but, as a result of his trauma, he rebels against her instructions and makes hurtful remarks about LK's future:

> I remember, he used to hurt me by saying that, you will soon produce more orphans. Can you imagine? Hearing that repeatedly, I couldn't plan for marriage. There are others among us who couldn't welcome a stranger. They would limit the number of people who could live at their home while married. Beyond that fixed number, you had to get divorced. That is one of the consequences of the

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[60] Burnet, *Genocide Lives in Us*, p. 67.

> genocide. Meaning that you forgot the structure of a family without
> a nuclear family you can't think about an extended one.

It appears that, for LK, losing a family means losing an understanding of love and relationships. The destruction of relationships caused by the genocide appears to have resulted in a reluctance to build further relationships for fear of producing 'more orphans' or extending one's family. LK's fear or reluctance to extend her family through marriage is shared by BN ('je ne pense plus à me remarier') and RB ('In my life I never wanted a husband, even now I hate men. […] Whenever I see a man I remember what happened to me in the genocide'). The broader consequences of losing family members are further explained when LK states: 'But it is personal values not materials that we lost. We don't know how to love. There are lots of things we don't know because we don't have a complete family'.

The pain of living without a family may also be observed in CN's testimony. CN was the sole survivor in her family and explains the difficulties of surviving alone:

> But it is hard for someone who is alone. Because, no one can love
> you as members of your family can. They have a place in your heart
> that nobody else can occupy. It's impossible.

Here CN uses extreme case formulations to communicate the extent of her loneliness ('*no one* can love you'; '*nobody* else can occupy'; 'it's *impossible*'). CN moved to Kigali after the genocide and became financially successful but describes how she is still unable to feel happy:

> I built my life, you build yourself, you study, you find a job, you do
> whatever you want, you live, you can eat, you sleep, you can buy
> whatever you want, you can talk… you say 'I can travel to
> wherever' but you feel that you are not going anywhere. You feel
> you are a person, that's what I say to other people. Maybe others
> find it easier, you have a brother or sister who can at least remind

you of things, you feel that you can talk to each other, you have a connection to one another, you can share things with each other at home. But when you survived alone, I cannot lie. I cannot lie and say that I am happy.

It is clear that despite building a seemingly successful life in the post-genocide period, CN remains unable to find happiness because she was the sole survivor of her family. What is interesting in this extract is that CN talks in the second person when talking about 'others' with surviving family members (e.g. 'you have a brother or sister', 'you have a connection to one another' and so on) as well as when talking about her own various successes (e.g. 'you find a job, you do whatever you want' and so on). When talking about how she really feels, however, CN switches to the first person ('I cannot lie and say that I am happy').[61] It is as if her achievements are somehow superficial or external to herself and not representative of her true identity. Like others, CN appears to have gained independence and been affected by the changes in women's roles. For example, she remains single and becomes financially independent ('you can buy what you want'). She even describes wearing trousers and having her ears pierced; 'things I couldn't [have done] if my father was there'. However, while these changes have enabled her to become autonomous, she remains isolated and experiences negative change in her interpersonal life.

(v) The Difficulty of Living with an Adopted Family

While some face the difficulties of living without a family, others face the challenges of living with adoptive families. As discussed above, another challenging set of relationships resulting from the genocide is found among a family and its adopted children as, in addition to coping with the loss of their own family, adopted children must attempt to comprehend their position within

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[61] This switch is observed in the Kinyarwanda version from using the prefix 'u-' ('w-' before a vowel) to mark the second person (e.g. *w*arize, *u*bona akazi, *u*gira gute' ('you study, you find a job, you do whatever you want')) to using the prefix 'n-' which marks the first person (e.g. ntabwo *n*shobora kukubeshya' (I cannot lie')).

the new family. This is certainly the case for some of the survivors whose testimonies are analysed in this thesis. For example, the following extract comes from AU's testimony:

> Au fait, il faisait coudre des habits pour ses deux filles et quant à nous, il nous achetait des vêtements vraiment sans valeur. Il est arrivé, les a mis dans la garde-robe puis m'a appelée en disant: 'AU, vas voir dans la garde-robe s'il y a des habits qui peuvent te convenir et convenir à tes petites sœurs aussi!' J'ai regardé les vêtements, les ai comparés à ceux de ses filles, ils étaient très différents.

The Kinyarwanda vocabulary used to describe the two sets of clothing highlights the inequality that AU feels relative to her adopted siblings. For example, 'arabadodeshereje' ('il faisait coudre des habits') implies that her adopted siblings were taken to have tailored clothing made while 'ibyamvagara' ('vêtements vraiment sans valeur') refers to clothing or objects that are dirty and without value. This is particularly insulting to AU as clothing is very important in Rwandan culture, as is reflected in the proverb, 'Ntawe ugira ijambo yambaye injamba' (No one can speak publicly wearing torn clothes).[62] The comparison between the types of clothing also implies a comparison AU makes between herself and her adoptive siblings. As noted above, adopted parents frequently find the behaviour of orphaned children troublesome while the children themselves report feelings of being unloved and unwanted. This is the case for AU and her adoptive family, as she states, 'Il disait que nous étions des enfants difficiles'. She eventually runs away from the adoptive family because of the second-class treatment she receives.

In sum, although the analysis of representations of interpersonal relationships demonstrates some evidence of posttraumatic growth, there are many more examples of negative change in this domain.

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[62] C. Newbury and Baldwin, *Aftermath: Women in Postgenocide Rwanda*, pp. 3, 8.

The Impact of the Genocide on Interpersonal Relationships

What is crucial to the development of improved interpersonal relationships is the ability to disclose one's vulnerability to trusted individuals; however, it appears that survivors prefer not to disclose and instead remain silent.[63] This silence is different to the state enforced or political silence discussed by some scholars.[64] Chapter 2 showed that survivors are willing to speak out against the dominant ideologies, both of the past, and of the present, to dispel the stigma surrounding their identity. It appears that expressions of vulnerability are where survivors fall silent. For example, as Burnet observes, women who gossip, are loud or emotional are viewed negatively in Rwandan society.[65] Indeed survivors in general are silenced because those who overtly express their pain are portrayed as psychologically unstable.[66] It is therefore unsurprising that survivors are reluctant to share their vulnerability with others but this appears to have exacerbated the impact of the genocide on their interpersonal relationships.

The main factor which destroyed interpersonal relationships, however, is not survivors' silence but the overall effectiveness of the genocide and its ideology. Although just being alive appears to inspire personal strength among women as it proves that the genocidal ideology failed, this ideology did almost succeed as the destruction it caused was extensive. It is, therefore, no surprise that these women do not experience improved relationships because, in many cases, their loved ones were killed. Moreover, obliterating interpersonal relationships was an intended outcome of the genocide as *génocidaires* frequently forced friends and family members to kill one another. Female isolation and loneliness were

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[63] Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, pp. 11–12.
[64] E.g. Buckley-Zistel, p. 131; Reyntjens, 'Constructing the Truth', p. 2.
[65] Burnet, *Genocide Lives in Us*, p. 44.
[66] Ibid., p. 78.

also intended outcomes. As Burnet observes, many women report being told by the *génocidaires* who spared them that they would 'die from solitude'.[67]

Taken together with evidence from the previous chapter, it appears that the same socio-cultural factors (victimisation, stigmatisation and gender) have had the opposite effect on interpersonal relationships compared with self-perception. While these factors have encouraged positive changes with respect to self-perception among these women, they have resulted in negative changes with respect to interpersonal relationships. As discussed above, research has found that posttraumatic growth processes vary across cultures. Positive changes may take place in certain domains of life in one culture, while other domains may change in another.[68] Therefore, the ways in which growth manifests itself can be seen as a reflection of the cultural setting in which it takes place. Given that it relates to the ways in which individuals relate to one another, it seems reasonable to consider the analytical results of this chapter within the broad cultural distinction of individualism/collectivism. For example, it could be said that the cases of positive change (increased intimacy and compassion) observed in the testimonies reflect some of the attributes associated with collectivist cultures. These cases emphasise the importance of collective action, seeking harmony and engagement with others as well as viewing the self in relation to others, all of which are attributes associated with collectivism. However, the examples of negative accommodation such as feelings of social isolation, the absence of cooperation or compassion between individuals, as well as the challenges of living without a family or in an adoptive family reflect many of the attributes commonly associated with individualism. Rather than demonstrating collective action, group harmony or interpersonal connections, these cases reflect the individualist tendencies of disengagement from others and an enhanced sense of personal autonomy. Moreover, the exceptional levels of posttraumatic growth in the domain of self-

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[67] Burnet, *Genocide Lives in Us*, p. 67.
[68] Weiss and Berger, p. 192.

perception observed in Chapter 2 reflect individualist attributes such as individual agency and responsibility as well as an increased personal control over events. The changes in women's roles discussed in Chapter 2, including the increased representation of women in parliament and the changes in laws relating to gender reflect an increase in priorities relating to freedom of the self and individual rights, which are also associated with individualist cultures. Overall, the prevalence of growth with respect to self-perception and the scarcity of growth with respect to interpersonal relationships raise important questions about the impact of the genocide on the culture of Rwandan women survivors.

Towards Individualism

Clearly, the qualitative analysis of posttraumatic growth in the domains of self-perception and interpersonal relationships demonstrates a trend towards individualism among these women. Another way of assessing the effect of the genocide on these women's cultural tendencies is to take a more quantitative approach. Geert Hofstede argues that children from collectivist cultures learn to think of themselves in terms of 'we' while children from individualist cultures tend to think of themselves as 'I'.[69] Harry Triandis and Eunkook Suh also claim that during communication, people from collectivist cultures more frequently use 'we' while people from individualist cultures more frequently use 'I'.[70] In order to gain a quantitative insight into how the genocide has affected the way in which these Rwandan women relate to others, each testimony was divided into sections according to content matter. These sections included descriptions of pre-genocide life, descriptions of the genocide and of post-genocide life. Subsequently for the pre- and post-genocide life descriptions, the use of

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[69] Geert H. Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations across Nations*, 2nd Edn (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications Inc, 2001), p. 236. Cited in Raeff, p. 13.
[70] Harry C. Triandis and Eunkook M. Suh, 'Cultural Influences on Personality', *Annual Review of Psychology*, 53 (2002), 133–160 (pp. 143–144).

language was examined by tallying the total number of singular and plural first person pronouns used then relativising the figures into ratios of plural to singular first person pronouns ('We-I ratios'). The ratios are presented in *Table 1*.

	Pre-genocide We-I ratio	Post-genocide We-I ratio
SPM	66:34	39:61
OM	30:70	6:94
BN	60:40	12:88
RSM	69:31	19:81
MCU	59:41	36:64
MU	50:50	20:80
AU	27:73	24:76
JN	40:60	20:80
EN	40:60	22:78
GM	24:76	52:48
FM	33:67	18:82
MCK	27:73	16:84
LK	47:53	32:68
CK	46:54	12:88
CN	62:38	32:68
IM	55:45	21:79
SB	24:76	18:82
RB	35:65	23:77

Table 1. presents We-I ratios for pre- and post-genocide life descriptions taken from the testimony of each survivor.

To determine whether the genocide has affected the women's use of plural to singular first person pronouns, a repeated measures t-test was carried out on the relativised 'we' scores. The null hypothesis was that no significant difference existed in the number of plural relative to singular first person pronouns between the pre- and post-genocide life descriptions. The t-test, however, revealed that there was a significant difference in the relativised we-scores between the pre- (M=44.11, SD=15.13) and post-genocide life descriptions (M=23.44, SD=11.10); (t(17) = 4.95, p = 0.0001). It can be concluded, therefore, that these women survivors use significantly fewer first person plural pronouns relative to singular first person pronouns when describing their post-

genocide lives than when describing their pre-genocide lives (these results are presented graphically in *Figure 1.*). It is noteworthy that the one individual whose use of pronouns demonstrates a shift in the opposite direction, that is an increase in the plural first person use, GM, is among the women who manifested posttraumatic growth in this domain. GM notes herself, however, that she did not experience the genocide in the same way as other women because most of her family members survived: 'I had more than others. I still had children, a husband. I was lucky, my mother was alive, my younger sister was alive. I found the rest [of my family] later'.

For the vast majority of these women, however, not only do they discuss the negative impact of the genocide on their relationships, but also their use of pronouns suggests that the genocide has changed the way in which they think of themselves: they no longer speak of themselves in terms of 'we' but in terms of 'I'. This shift in pronoun use undoubtedly reflects the isolation caused by losing family members. However, as the data suggest, the trend appears in all the testimonies (except for GM); yet, most of these women survived with at least some family members, suggesting that the shift reflects a change in values and not simply the result of being left alone. The combination of the qualitative and quantitative analyses suggests that the genocide has shifted the culture of these women towards individualism.
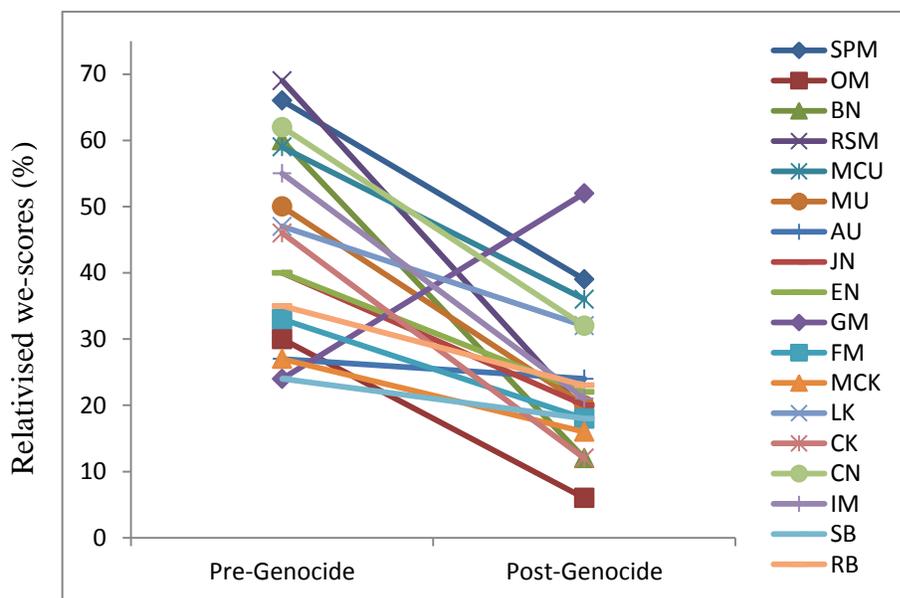
Figure 1. presents the relative we-score of survivors plotted for pre-genocide and post-genocide life descriptions.

However, the shift towards individualism in Rwanda is not something that began only after the genocide. This transition is a trend that can be traced back long before the genocide. Triandis and Gelfand define four major attributes which differentiate individualism from collectivism.[71] Firstly, in individualist cultures, personal goals are deemed more important than the goals of the in-group while in collectivist cultures, the in-group goals are more important. Secondly, in individualist cultures, relationships are based on rational exchange such as the trading of resources rather than on communal obligations and bonds of loyalty which characterise relationships in collectivist cultures. Thirdly, social behaviour differs between individualist and collectivist cultures, with individualist cultures emphasising ideas such as 'standing up for what is right' or 'being true to oneself' as opposed to acting in accordance with the standards of the in-group as in collectivist cultures. Finally, the self is defined as an autonomous and independent agent in individualist cultures as opposed to interdependent in collective cultures. An examination of certain historical

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[71] Harry C. Triandis, and Michele, J. Gelfand, 'Converging Measurement of Horizontal and Vertical Individualism and Collectivism', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74. 1 (1998), 118–128 (p. 118).

trends in Rwanda demonstrates a palpable cultural shift towards individualism across these four attributes.

In pre-colonial times, there were two principle forms of kinship; the clan provided its members with a social identity while the lineage was a corporate group and the most important political unit.[72] The lineage heads held substantial political power and provided protection and economic security to the members of the lineage.[73] Relationships were based on group loyalty, kinship and friendship and therefore held many of the attributes usually characterised as collectivist. A person with no clan or lineage group identity, *ikinege*, was considered undesirable.[74] From the sixteenth century onwards, however, the role of lineages began to erode. War chiefs from the central court began taking over some of the functions of the lineage heads such as settling land disputes and appropriating the right to distribute vacant lands.[75] As the central court expanded, various forms of clientage were introduced. *Umuheto*, for example, started in the sixteenth century and involved the provision of a cow to less powerful lineages from more powerful cattle-owning lineages in return for protection of the herds.[76] Thus, even during this early period, the foundations of individualism were being laid as relationships became based on the exchange of resources rather than on bonds of loyalty.

As the powers of lineage heads decreased, new forms of clientship were introduced. For instance, *Ubuhake* involved the usufruct of a cow from a patron to a client in exchange for payments in kind while *isambu* involved a form of heritable land tenure also in exchange for payments.[77] *Uburetwa*, a form of land clientage which involved the exchange of labour in return for the use of land also became more common. An important difference between these latter three

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[72] C. Newbury, p. 96.
[73] Ibid., pp. 26, 39, 74, 81–82.
[74] Ibid., p. 96.
[75] Jefremovas, p. 63.
[76] Ibid., p. 63; C. Newbury, p. 75.
[77] Jefremovas, p. 64; C. Newbury, p. 75.

forms of clientage and *umuheto* was that while *umuheto* involved an exchange between one lineage and another, *ubuhake*, *isambu* and *uburetwa* involved an exchange between an individual client and an individual patron.[78] Not only did these new forms of clientage serve to individuate responsibility, they also divided lineages as, in many cases, members of the same lineage were constrained to pay prestations to different chiefs thus diminishing the effective size of the lineage.[79] The system of clientage was thoroughly consolidated under Mwami Kigeri Rwabugiri (1860-1895) and with it came ideologies of individual responsibility.[80]

During the early years of the Belgian occupation (1916-1962), the administration introduced obligatory crop cultivation, reforestation programmes and anti-erosion measures as well as added systematic *corvée* labour (*akazi*) for road building, drainage projects and building public buildings.[81] As demands on labour intensified to meet wartime needs and the pressure on land increased as a result of a growing population, more young men were forced into clientage relations in order to gain adequate access to lands.[82] Moreover, clientage relationships based on lineage ties (*umuheto*) were abolished altogether during the Belgian reforms of the 1920s, further accentuating individual ties.[83] In order to rationalise taxes and public interest work, colonial powers also restructured the system of *corvée*. This involved generalising the unpopular *uburetwa* forced labour system as well as individuating responsibility. Whereas previously a family was able to delegate one member to carry out the work, it became every adult man's individual obligation (and in some cases that of women and children too).[84] Thus over the course of the 1920s and 30s many people moved away from their homes either to escape the *corvées* or in search of wage

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[78] C. Newbury, p 112.
[79] Ibid., p. 111.
[80] D. Newbury, p. 87.
[81] *Corvée* refers to the system of forced labour introduced by colonial rule. Jefremovas, p. 70.
[82] C. Newbury, p. 77.
[83] Jefremovas, p. 72.
[84] Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis*, p. 27.

labour.[85] Overall, the removal of responsibility from families and lineages, the introduction of capitalism and forced individualism were a trend that began in pre-colonial times but were expanded by colonial rule. By the turn of the century, lineages had virtually no function and, as Prunier observes, 'individuals were forced to become independent economic agents, which forced them into independent action – and independent thinking'.[86]

This trend continued into the twentieth century. The penetration of capitalism and the expansion of the wage sector after independence intensified individualism and broke down family bonds. Men found that they had very little control over the labour of their grown sons as these left the family in search of wage-earning opportunities from patron-client relationships.[87] This is contrary to what one might expect of a collectivist culture in which sons and daughters are generally expected to serve their parents and demonstrate filial piety.[88] In Rwanda, however, instead of investing in their sons, men frequently invested in additional wives, whose labour they could control. Although illegal, polygamous marriages were socially acceptable and, as women were involved in subsistence farming, the investment in more wives increased the capacity of households to become self-sufficient.[89] By marrying, men could inherit land and capitalise on their wives' labour. This allowed them to establish and expand an enterprise by hiring labour and by the 1980s almost no men worked with other family members.[90]

In addition to poor father-son relationships, sibling relationships were also strained as a result of the insecurity of inheritance. Although ideally all sons should inherit some land, the father decided how the land was to be divided amongst his sons and inherited landholdings often varied greatly in quality and

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[85] Jefremovas, p. 70; C. Newbury, pp. 112–113.
[86] Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis*, p. 42.
[87] Jefremovas, p. 82.
[88] McAdams, *The Redemptive Self*, p. 278.
[89] Jefremovas, p. 86.
[90] Ibid., p. 82.

quantity between families from the same lineage. As the Rwandan proverb illustrates, sibling adversary was considered intrinsic, 'Urwagano rwa none rwbanje mu nda imwe', (the hatred of today began in the womb).[91] Nuptial relationships were also problematic. Divorce was quite common, however a woman would not necessarily be welcomed back home if she did divorce because her family would be responsible for repaying the bride-price.[92] Thus a man could control his wife's labour through the bride price, as well as through their children and the use of physical violence. In the case of divorce, men could claim the children if the bride-price had been paid, which was a potentially powerful sanction for women.[93] Moreover, wife-beating was considered a sign of power and added to a man's prestige and his ability to control his wife.[94] In sum, although the genocide shattered social relationships, it appears that colonial and post-colonial power relations, the introduction of clientship and the spread of capitalism had already spurred a trend towards individualism. Thus, the genocide did not create the individualism observed in this chapter; it simply accelerated a pre-existing trend.

Conclusion

While there may have been a pre-existing trend towards individualism, both the qualitative and quantitative analyses presented in this chapter suggest an abrupt change among women survivors. It appears that women may have experienced increased personal strength and a sense of agency over their lives, but this coincides with a cessation of these women's thinking in terms of the collective demonstrated by numerous examples of negative changes to their interpersonal relations and a shift in their way of speaking. As Raeff argues, however,

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[91] Pierre Crépeau and Simon Bizimanda, *Proverbes du Rwanda* (Tervuren: Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, 1979), p. 553. Cited in Jefremovas, p. 80.
[92] In order to marry in Rwanda, the groom must pay the bride price. This is an amount of money, property or wealth paid to the parents of the bride. Jefremovas, pp. 88–89.
[93] Ibid., pp. 88.
[94] Ibid., p. 89.

although the individualist/collectivist distinction is seen as dichotomous, as is the case with most dichotomies, this conceptualisation is limited, problematic and the result of simplistic and dualistic thinking.[95] Rather than conceptualising interpersonal relationships in terms of a 'single, bipolar, dimension', it is important to consider cultures, like people, as multidimensional and heterogeneous.[96] Thus, although the genocide appears to have increased a certain form of individualism among female genocide survivors, this does not imply that other forms of collectivism do not exist in Rwanda. Moreover, this is a small sample of female genocide survivors and clearly further research is needed if findings discussed in this chapter are to be generalised. Nonetheless, the shift towards individualist tendencies in this sample is palpable and significant and says a lot about the impact of genocide on human relationships.

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[95] Raeff, pp. 14–16.
[96] Ibid., p. 16.

Chapter 4

Posttraumatic Growth and Religion in Rwanda: Individual Wellbeing vs. Collective False Consciousness

When individuals experience posttraumatic growth in the wake of a traumatic event, it is usually observed in domains such as self-perception (e.g. increased self-competence, efficacy and new skills); interpersonal relationships (e.g. enhanced intimacy and feelings of relatedness); and life philosophy (e.g. a new sense of meaning or an increased spiritual awareness). The fact that growth is observed in these domains gives credence to McAdams' conceptualisation of identity.[1] McAdams draws on David Bakan's theory of basic human motivations, which highlights the two fundamental drives of agency and communion.[2] According to Bakan, agency allows for the existence of an organism as an individual, manifesting itself in self-protection, self-assertion and self-expansion. In contrast, communion involves the participation of the individual in some larger organism of which the individual is part, manifesting itself in contact, openness and union.[3] McAdams suggests that Bakan's position is particularly valuable for 'comprehending the basic motivational themes expressed in both personal myths and human lives'.[4] To this motivational duality, McAdams adds a third component for understanding human identity, namely the ideological setting.[5] This aspect of identity develops during adolescence and concerns questions of goodness and truth; it defines a person's understanding of the universe, the world, society and God. It is

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[1] McAdams, *The Stories we Live By*, pp. 70–90.

[2] Ibid., p. 71; David Bakan, *Duality of Human Existence: An Essay on Psychology and Religion* (Chigago, Illinois: Rand McNally, 1966), pp. 14–15. For a similar characterisation of human motivations, see Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Deci, 'Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-Being', *American Psychologist*, 55 (2000), 68–78.

[3] Bakan, pp. 14–15.

[4] McAdams, *The Stories we Live By*, p. 71.

[5] Ibid., pp. 80–90.

therefore comparable to Janoff-Bulman's definition of 'basic assumptions'.[6] For McAdams, the ideological setting functions as a context for identity, locating it 'within a particular ethical, religious, and epistemological "time and place"'.[7] He argues that the two superordinate themes in a person's identity, agency and communion, 'characterise fundamental beliefs and values' in an ideological setting.[8]

Traumatic experiences can leave survivors feeling powerless, isolated and without a sense of meaning, suggesting that trauma destabilises these fundamental drives of agency and communion, undermining their ideological belief system (i.e. their basic assumptions). Given that posttraumatic growth tends to manifest itself in the aforementioned domains (self-perception, interpersonal relationships and life philosophy), it would seem that individuals who experience growth are striving to restore these motivations, which in turn helps rebuild a philosophical framework that provides meaning and purpose. For many individuals, this philosophical framework may include religious beliefs and, in the rebuilding of their assumptions following a traumatic event, some individuals may experience a renewed commitment to their religious beliefs or an enhanced understanding of spiritual matters which they interpret as a positive change. For Calhoun and Tedeschi, such positive changes in the domain of religion and spirituality form part of the definition of posttraumatic growth.[9]

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[6] Janoff-Bulman, p. 6.

[7] McAdams, *The Stories we Live By*, p. 81.

[8] Ibid., p. 87. The individual 'ideological setting' referred to by McAdams, alludes to the idiosyncratic set of basic beliefs that an individual holds about the nature of the world. This will henceforth be referred to using Janoff-Bulman's term 'basic assumptions' or as the individual's philosophical framework. Throughout this thesis, I use the term ideology in accordance with Teun van Dijk's definition, which refers to the socially acquired beliefs, knowledge and other social representations that are shared by members of a given group. See van Dijk, p. 8.

[9] Stronger religious faith is a factor of posttraumatic growth appearing on Tedeschi and Calhoun's posttraumatic growth inventory. Tedeschi and Calhoun, p. 460. See also Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, pp. 15–16; Calhoun and Tedeschi, 'The Foundations of Posttraumatic Growth' p. 6; Tedeschi, Park and Calhoun, p. 14.

Joseph, however, questions whether religion and spirituality should be included within the definition of posttraumatic growth.[10] According to Joseph, there needs to be a distinction made 'between experiences that survivors themselves perceive to be growthful and changes that are growthful in a way [that is] consistent with theory and empirical evidence on what constitutes positive functioning'.[11] This is because, while some people consider a deepening of faith to be growthful, for others a decrease in faith has the same effect.[12] Moreover, although religious people may argue that a deepening of faith is positive, some non-religious people may see an increase in religious faith as 'illusory or even as delusory'.[13] The lack of consensus as to whether increased religious beliefs are positive or negative is problematic and thus, Joseph concludes, 'religiosity and spirituality should not be part of the definition of posttraumatic growth'.[14] The variances in opinion highlighted by Joseph are also discussed by Calhoun, Cann and Tedeschi who suggest that more growth in the domain of spirituality would be expected in religious countries such as the US than in countries where agnosticism and atheism are the norm.[15] Similarly, Pals and McAdams highlight the cultural bias of Tedeschi and Calhoun's Posttraumatic Growth Inventory and argue that Tedeschi and Calhoun's model reflects the 'importance of religion and personal spirituality in contemporary American life'.[16] In contrast, 'religious and spiritual development is not likely to be a strong growth theme in the life stories of young adults living in France, a secular nation where one in ten citizens attends church more often that once a year'.[17]

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[10] Stephen Joseph, 'Religiosity and Posttraumatic Growth: A Note Concerning the Problems of Confounding in their Measurement and the Inclusion of Religiosity within the Definition of Posttraumatic Growth', *Mental Health, Religion and Culture*, 14. 8 (2011), 843–845 (p. 844).
[11] Ibid., p. 844.
[12] Ibid., p. 844–845.
[13] Ibid., p. 845.
[14] Ibid., p. 845.
[15] Calhoun, Cann, and Tedeschi, p. 4. See also Introduction.
[16] Pals and McAdams, p. 68.
[17] Ibid., p. 68.

While, in the aftermath of trauma, certain individuals may experience an increased commitment to their religious beliefs which they interpret as positive, this domain is nonetheless fundamentally different to other domains thought to be affected by processes of posttraumatic growth (such as self-perception and relations with others). This is because religions are ideologies whereas the ways in which people view themselves and their relationships with others are not.[18] Teun van Dijk defines ideologies as 'the basis of the social representations shared by members of a group'.[19] According to van Dijk, 'this means that ideologies allow people, as group members, to organise the multitude of social beliefs about what is the case, good or bad, right or wrong, for them, and to act accordingly'.[20] Van Dijk compares the definition of an ideology to that of a language. While a language represents an abstract, relatively fixed system of rules shared by a given group of individuals, the idiosyncratic knowledge and use of the grammar is infinitely variable by individual group members. Similarly, ideologies represent a more or less stable system of knowledge and attitudes that are shared by a group, but the understanding and use of the ideology and its social representations are highly varied by individual group members.[21] Thus, just because many individual group members may subscribe to the same ideology, not all members 'have identical "copies" of the representations. Rather, we must assume that because of obvious individual differences of "ideological socialisation" in the group, each member has her or his own personal "version" of the ideology'.[22]

Because of this differential between the abstract, socially shared ideology and an individual's understanding of it, ideologies may affect different levels of identity in different ways. Taking the case of religion as an example, an individual's interpretation of a religious ideology may provide a source of existential comfort which results in a sense of meaning, agency

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[18] People's self-perceptions and relationships with others are undoubtedly influenced by ideological beliefs but are not, in themselves, ideologies.
[19] Van Dijk, p. 8.
[20] Ibid., p. 8.
[21] Ibid., p. 58
[22] Ibid., p. 79.

or a greater feeling of relatedness with others. However, if a religious ideology is controlled and modelled by people and institutions who do not favour the interests of the group to which a certain individual belongs, then it may be shaped in such a way that it begins to counter the interests of the individual's group identity. Although in their abstract form ideologies are relatively stable, they are context-sensitive and may be formed and changed by elements of social structure such as groups, institutions, social relations of power and historical development.[23] When an individual continues to accept an ideology even though it runs counter to the interests of their group, this phenomenon is referred to as 'false consciousness'.[24] Examples of false consciousness might include poor workers accepting the hegemony of the liberal market, black people accepting racism or women accepting sexism. This does not imply that the individual does not gain psychological benefits from accepting the ideology. Indeed, religion and other forms of cultural ideology provide a source of meaning, enabling individuals to cope with the existential fear associated with questions about death, freedom, isolation and meaninglessness.[25]

For example, proponents of Terror Management Theory, such as Sheldon Solomon, Jeff Greenberg and Tom Pyszczynski, argue that cultural worldviews (including religious beliefs) have evolved because they provide their constituents with a sense of meaning by providing explanations of 'the origin of the universe, prescriptions of appropriate conduct, and guarantees of safety and security to those who adhere to such instructions'.[26] Besides giving people a sense of self-esteem by providing them with a perceived worth within a world of meaning, cultural worldviews also offer people a

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[23] Ibid., pp. 55–56.

[24] Ibid., p. 96; See also Jost and Banaji, p. 1; Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1936); Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology* (London: Arthur, 1974).

[25] For Irving Yalom, death, freedom, isolation and meaninglessness, are the four basic concerns involved in the human confrontation with the fundamentals of existence. Irving Yalom, *Existential Psychotherapy* (New York: Basic Books, 1980), p. 9.

[26] Sheldon Solomon, Jeff Greenberg and Tom Pyszczynski, 'The Cultural Animal: Twenty Years of Terror Management Theory and Research', in *Handbook of Experimental Existential Psychology*, ed. by Jeff Greenberg, Sander L. Koole and Tom Pyszcznski (New York: Guildford Press, 2004), pp. 13–34 (p. 16).

form of symbolic and literal immortality.[27] Symbolic immortality may be obtained by perceiving oneself as part of a culture that endures beyond one's lifetime while literal immortality is produced via the various afterlives promised by the majority of world religions.[28] In sum, Terror Management Theory proposes that to effectively manage existential terror, it is necessary to have faith in a meaningful conception of reality (the cultural worldview) and to perceive oneself as meeting the standards of value prescribed by the worldview in order to gain self-esteem. The psychological protection provided by culture motivates people to maintain faith in their worldview and satisfy the standards of value associated with it.[29]

In a similar vein, Janoff-Bulman suggests that most people perceive meaning through adhering to a belief in a 'just world', a world in which bad behaviour is punished and good behaviour is rewarded.[30] Religion plays a role in our perceived just world, as Janoff-Bulman and McPherson Frantz argue: 'most religious perspectives enable believers to perceive meaning through the expectations of rewards and punishments'.[31] Although beliefs in a just and benevolent world may be illusory, Janoff-Bulman argues that positive illusions are in fact adaptive as they are generally associated with better mental functioning, physical health and social interactions.[32] Thus, as part of both our cultural worldview and our just world beliefs, religion plays a role in reducing existential anxiety by providing us with a sense of perceived meaning and control.

The predominant religion in Rwanda is Christianity. This chapter analyses representations of religion and religious beliefs in the aftermath of the genocide in the testimonies of women survivors. It will be suggested that, through the history of church-state alliance, the Rwandan brand of

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[27] Ibid., p. 16.
[28] Ibid., pp. 16–17.
[29] Ibid., p. 20.
[30] Janoff-Bulman, p. 9; Janoff-Bulman and McPherson Frantz, p. 93; see also Melvin Lerner, *The Belief in a Just World: A Fundamental Delusion* (New York: Plenum Press, 1980).
[31] Janoff-Bulman and McPherson Frantz, p. 93.
[32] Janoff-Bulman, p. 22. See also Taylor and Brown, p. 22.

Christianity has become entwined with political ideologies, creating a theocratic system that gives divine legitimation to people in positions of political power and their ideologies. Thus, while Christian beliefs may provide relief from existential concerns at the individual level, the Christian churches' endorsement of other dominant ideologies, including the genocide ideology and the ideology of the RPF, makes these appear divine, despite gravely countering the interests of both Tutsi and survivors.

A History of Theocratic Rule in Rwanda

Gordon Allport highlights three areas in most systems of theology which are apt to invite bigotry.[33] The first of these areas is the doctrine of revelation which may cause a religion 'to claim exclusive possession of final truth concerning the destiny of man'.[34] Allport's second theological goad to bigotry is the doctrine of election which refers to concepts such as 'God's chosen people'.[35] As Allport describes it, 'the doctrine of election divides the ins from the outs with surgical precision'.[36] The third theological peril described by Allport is that of theocracy, the view that 'a monarch rules by divine right; that the church is a legitimate guide for civil government; or that a legal code, being divinely ordained, is inviolable on the pain of fierce punishment or death'.[37] For Allport, no theological idea has caused so much persecution and suffering as the various forms of theocracy. While the doctrines of revelation and election have played a role in the Christian mission in Rwanda, particularly during the colonial period, the notion of theocracy has been an especially salient aspect of Christian ideology in Rwanda and continues to be so.

The concept of the divine right to rule predates the introduction of Christianity in Rwanda as, according to the Rwandan religion of the

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[33] Gordon W. Allport, 'Religious Context of Prejudice', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 5 (1966), 447–457 (p. 449).
[34] Ibid., p. 449.
[35] Ibid., pp. 449–50.
[36] Ibid., p. 450.
[37] Ibid., p. 450.

ancestors, the Mwami was imbued with absolute divine power over his subjects.[38] The monarchy in general was thought to originate from a heavenly king, *nkuba*.[39] The first Christians in Rwanda were Catholics from the Society of Missionaries of Africa, otherwise known as the White Fathers, established by Cardinal Charles Lavigerie in 1868. Persuaded that Africans had no notion of God, Lavigerie dreamed of establishing a 'royaume chrétien' in the heart of Africa.[40] He believed that the conversion of non-Christian peoples would be most successful if evangelistic efforts focused on political leaders and so set about converting the ruling (Tutsi) class in the expectation that the (predominantly Hutu) masses would follow suit. In the colonial period, the Hamitic hypothesis dominated the evangelisation strategies of both Catholic and Protestant missionaries which promoted the notion that the Tutsi had the divine right to rule.

Not only were the Tutsi considered (racially) superior, but they were also considered to have a greater predisposition to Christianity. According to Father Pagès, the Tutsi were a lost tribe from Christendom that had lost its Ethiopian Coptic Christian roots during migration.[41] Similarly, in a letter addressed to protestant bishop Johanssen from the Bethel mission, the German governor, Richard Kant, wrote 'J'ai l'impression que les Watutsi [sic.] ont apporté ce terme (Imana = Dieu) dans sa pureté, de leur patrie hamitique, jusqu'à ce que, au cours des siècles, ce terme se soit corrompu sous l'influence des Bantous se trouvant à un niveau plus bas'.[42] Originally Christians, the religion of the Tutsi Hamites was thought to have been sullied by their contact with the inferior Hutu, who, in contrast, were deemed incapable of understanding the Christian doctrine or becoming Christian.[43] Père Del Perugia even wrote about the esoteric code of the

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[38] Tharcisse Gatwa, *Rwanda: Eglises: victimes ou coupables? Les églises et l'idéologie ethnique au Rwanda 1900-1994* (Yaoundé: Editions Clé, 2001), p. 28.

[39] Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. 79.

[40] Gatwa, p. 65.

[41] Cris E. Toffolo, *Emancipating Cultural Pluralism* (Albany, New York: State University of New York, 2003), p. 71.

[42] Cited in Gatwa, p. 70–71.

[43] Gatwa, p. 69.

Hamitic monarchy suggesting that the five aspects of the code ('la voie du trône; la voie de la vache et du taureau dynastique; la voie de l'agriculture; la voie de l'étranger; la voie indépendante du deuil, des obsèques et de l'économie des Batwa'[44]) actually transmitted the word of God following the example of Moses' Ten commandments. Del Perugia even suggested that the Tutsi monarchic system had a biblical explanation and that the Hamite was God's messenger to the Bantu people.[45] Thus the missionaries supported the Tutsi not only because they believed that the Tutsi were the natural leaders but also because they were originally people of God.

By the 1920s a number of nobles had converted to Christianity, resulting in the increased power of the Catholic Church.[46] As Longman notes, 'the policy of deference to Tutsi hegemony began to achieve results, as in December 1917 the first Tutsi nobles were converted to Christianity'.[47] Throughout the colonial period, the missions maintained a close relationship with the state and held a particularly close alliance with King Rudahigwa, under whose reign (1931-1959) the church flourished. In 1943, King Rudahigwa and the Queen Mother were baptised and, three years later, the King dedicated Rwanda to Christ the King.[48] Just as Lavigerie had predicted, once the chiefs had converted, the masses followed in large numbers and as early as 1932, the church had already become the principal social institution presiding over hundreds of thousands of converts.[49] Towards the end of the colonial period; however, although many Catholic missionaries continued to court the Tutsi minority, a new wave of priests began cultivating a Hutu counter-elite and provided opportunities in education and employment to a select group of Hutu.[50] As the political tides

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[44] Ibid., p. 105

[45] Ibid., p. 105.

[46] Timothy Longman, *Christianity and Genocide in Rwanda* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 55.

[47] Ibid., p. 50.

[48] Ibid., p. 68.

[49] Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis*, p. 32.

[50] Timothy Longman, 'Christian Churches and Genocide' (Revision of paper originally prepared for Conference on Genocide, Religion, and Modernity, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum May, 1997)

began to change in favour of the Hutu during the late 1950s, there was a sense that God was also behind this mood of transition. The political support that Grégoire Kayibanda received from the church provided him with an apparent divine right to rule. As Colonel Logiest wrote in a letter to Mgr Perraudin, by favouring the Hutu 'il restaura la dignité du peuple Bahutu comme enfants de Dieu'.[51] The Catholic Church's ardent support of Kayibanda made it appear as if their newfound power was consistent with Christian teachings. In the 1961 elections the Hutu parties won a majority and in 1962 Kayibanda, the new protégé of the Catholic Church, was elected president.

Just as the churches had supported the Tutsi during the colonial period, after independence they supported the Hutu. This continued even after General Juvénal Habyarimana's 1973 coup d'état. Although Habyarimana did not owe his position to the church in the same way that Kayibanda did, he acknowledged that it was necessary to court their support which he benefitted from enormously.[52] The ecclesiastic hierarchy supported Habyarimana's party, the Mouvement Révolutionnaire National de Développement (MRND), and both Catholic and Protestant clergy cooperated with officials by passing on state announcements in church and serving on councils.[53] Habyarimana used the churches' influence to appear as a divinely chosen leader. Over the course of his presidency, Habyarimana transformed himself into 'le Père de la Nation' (umubyieyi w'igihugu). As Tharcisse Gatwa notes, many leaders in the post-independence period in Africa could not rely on the same (religious) legitimating myths of their pre-colonial predecessors. Like other African presidents, Habyarimana, engaged in a process of 'monarchisation […] de sacralisation et de divinisation jointe à la propagande du régime visait à modeler l'image d'un dirigeant unique et invincible'.[54] As part of this process, both within Rwanda and in the

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<http://faculty.vassar.edu/tilongma/Church&Genocide.html> [accessed 15 October 2013], (para. 11 of 45).
[51] Cited in Gatwa, p. 92.
[52] Des Forges, p. 39; Longman, 'Christian Churches and Genocide', para. 22 of 45.
[53] Des Forges, p. 39.
[54] Gatwa, pp. 101–102.

international community, Habyarimana gained support from Christian churches and presented himself as a devout Catholic.[55] In Rwanda, all members of the Church became enrolled in the MRND system. The Archbishop of the Catholic Church, for example, held a seat on the central committee while leaders from other churches also held prominent MRND positions.[56] Moreover, propaganda used religion to validate Habyarimana's regime. *Umurava* Magazine, for example, declared that 'It is God who has given Habyarimana the power to direct the country, it is He who will show him the path to follow'.[57] Moreover, as Alison Des Forges notes, 'cartoons sometimes portrayed Habyarimana as a saint or a priest and one depicted God cursing the leaders of the political opposition'.[58] Overall, from the precolonial period until the time of the genocide, there has been a close relationship between religion and the state with those in power using their ties with religion to legitimise their leadership and present themselves as divinely chosen to lead. Such theocracy made it difficult, indeed impossible, for their leadership to be disputed as doing so would mean going against God's will.

This theocratic style of leadership continued until the genocide. For example, because of the church's silence and, in some cases, active participation in the genocide, many parishioners believed that by killing Tutsi, they were carrying out the will of the church and did not consider their participation in the massacres contradictory to their religious beliefs. Indeed as Longman found in his field research, people would come and demand mass in order to pray before going out to kill.[59] Des Forges suggests that 'by not issuing a prompt, firm condemnation of the killing campaign, church authorities left the way clear for officials, politicians, and propagandists to assert that the slaughter actually met with God's favour'.[60]

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[55] Longman, *Christianity and Genocide*, p. 82; M. A. (Abbé Rwandaise), 'Les divisions de l'église Rwandaise', *Les Temps Modernes* (Rwanda, Burundi, 1994-1995), 583, (1995), 91–101 (p. 92).
[56] Longman, 'Christian Churches and Genocide', para. 26 of 45.
[57] Cited in Des Forges, p. 61.
[58] Ibid., p. 61.
[59] Longman, 'Christian Churches and Genocide', para. 44 of 45.
[60] Des Forges, p. 189.

Thus the church not only failed to prevent the genocide but because of its history of alignment with the state, it gave divine legitimation to the genocide ideology, providing the moral climate in which genocide could be possible. Although many Christians converted to Islam in the aftermath of the genocide, Christianity remains the dominant religion in Rwanda and many genocide survivors use the ideology of Christianity to interpret their traumatic experiences.[61]

Posttraumatic Growth and Religion in Rwanda

A number of empirical studies have found significant ties between spirituality and measures of posttraumatic growth.[62] Pargament, Desai and McConnell suggest that there are three critical ingredients of spirituality which are potentially 'growth-related'.[63] These are a source of support and empowerment from religion, a sense of meaning gained from religion and a change in goals and priorities fostered by religious beliefs. Pargament and colleagues also note, however, that religion and spirituality can give rise to increased psychological distress following trauma.[64] This may be interpersonal including negative interactions with other churchgoers or

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[61] According to Emily Wax of *The Washington Post*, in 2002, Muslims made up 14 per cent of the 8.2 million people in Rwanda, twice as many as before the genocide. Emily Wax, 'Islam Attracting Many Survivors of Rwanda Genocide: Jihad Is Taught as "Struggle to Heal", *The Washington Post*, 23 September 2002 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A53018-2002Sep22.html> [accessed 15 October 2013]

[62] Susan Cadell, Cheryl Regehr and David Hemsworth, 'Factors Contributing to Posttraumatic Growth: A Proposed Structural Equation Model', *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 73 (2003), 279–287; Lawrence G. Calhoun, Arnie Cann, Richard G. Tedeschi, and Jamie McMillan, 'A Correlational Test of the Relationship between Posttraumatic Growth, Religion, and Cognitive Processing', *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 13. 3 (2000), 521–527; Harold G. Koenig, Kenneth I. Pargament, and Julie Nielsen, 'Religious Coping and Health Status in Medically Ill Hospitalised Older Adults', *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, 186 (1998), 513–521; Mona M. Moussa and Glen W. Bates, 'A Preliminary Investigation of Lebanese Students' Strategies for Coping with Stressful Events' *Mental Health, Religion, and Culture*, 14, (2011), 489–510; Gabriele Prati, and Luca Pietrantoni, 'Optimism, Social Support, and Coping Strategies as Factors Contributing to Posttraumatic Growth: A Meta-Analysis', *Journal of Loss and Trauma*, 14, (2009), 364–388.

[63] Kenneth I. Pargament, Kavita M. Desai and Kelly M. McConnell, 'Spirituality: A Pathway to Posttraumatic Growth or Decline?', in *Handbook of Posttraumatic Growth: Research and Practice*, ed. by Lawrence G. Calhoun and Richard G. Tedeschi, (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, 2006), pp. 121–137 (p. 123).

[64] Ibid., pp. 125–126.

clergy; it may be intrapersonal including religious doubts, fears or guilt; or it may be a struggle with the divine such as questioning God's power, feeling abandoned by God, or feeling punished by God.[65] Such religious struggle may ultimately generate growth; however, if the individual is able to apply effective coping methods. These can include secular coping strategies such as positive reinterpretation, acceptance, instrumental action and problem focused coping; or religious coping strategies such as benevolent spiritual reappraisals, support from God, and spiritual connection.[66] Pargament and colleagues conclude that spirituality is part of the human response to trauma and may facilitate or impede posttraumatic growth, depending on the types of coping mechanisms deployed.

In a study measuring the impact of religious coping on adjustment following a crisis, Pargamount, Koenig and Perez found that strengthened religious beliefs improved people's physical and psychological outcomes because they frequently led to an increased sense of control, meaning, comfort, intimacy and positive life transformation.[67] Based on these functions of religion, Pargament and colleagues proposed a religious coping scale (RCOPE). The scale includes measures such as benevolent religious reappraisals of a stressful event (when an individual redefines the situation through religious intervention as benevolent and potentially beneficial, a method that helps achieve meaning), collaborative religious coping (seeking control through partnership with God), seeking spiritual support (searching for comfort and reassurance from God's love and care), seeking religious support (from clergy or church members, a method that helps achieve intimacy) and seeking religious direction (looking to religion for a new direction in life, a method that helps achieve life transformation).[68] Pargament and colleagues found significantly better adjustment among

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[65] Ibid., p. 126.

[66] Ibid., p.128.

[67] Kenneth I. Pargamount, Harold G. Koenig and Lisa M. Perez, 'The Many Methods of Religious Coping: Development and Initial Valiation of the RCOPE', *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 56. 4. (2000), 519–543 (p. 521).

[68] Ibid., pp. 522–524.

individuals who applied effective coping methods.[69] Adjustment was measured by stress-related growth, religious outcome, physical health, mental health and emotional distress.[70] Many of these coping methods can be observed in the testimonies of Rwandan women, suggesting that these women are applying religious methods to achieve positive adjustment in the aftermath of the genocide. For example, some of the items thought to increase intimacy (seeking support from clergy as well as other church members) are discussed in the testimony of FM:

> Anyone who is capable goes to church.[71] When you go to church, you hear the testimony of someone who is suffering and that helps you to recover. But confining oneself in the house alone won't help. It will bring you unknown diseases instead like cancer and other unknown diseases.

For FM, it is clear that attending church allows her to share stories with others who are also suffering and this enables her recovery. There is a degree of control gained here as, by going to church and sharing stories with others, FM implies that it is possible to avoid illnesses, indicating her belief in a person-outcome contingency.[72] However, FM's use of an extreme case formulation ('anyone'), implies her belief that everyone capable will attend church. Although FM's religious beliefs appear to have certain positive outcomes (being cured from trauma and avoiding illness), it could be argued that this extract also reflects a compulsory element to religion in Rwanda. First, in the Kinyarwanda version, FM refers to those who have the 'strength' to go to church, which could suggest that those who do not attend church are somehow weak. Second, FM implies that those who do not attend church will be confined indoors, suggesting that if an individual wishes to engage with the community, this must be done via the church. Third, she implies that individuals who do not attend church (and are

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[69] Ibid., p. 538.

[70] Ibid., p. 528.

[71] FM uses the Kinyarwanda word 'imbaraga' which literally means 'strength' or 'force', implying 'anyone with the strength'.

[72] Person-outcome contingency implies that outcome is based on the person's actions and behaviours. Janoff-Bulman and McPherson Frantz, p. 93.

therefore confined to the house) will contract illnesses. Such pressure to engage with the community through religion may have negative psychological consequences. As Pargament, Desai and McConnell note, 'some religious communities may view spiritual struggles as signs of a weak faith and, as a result, condemn those who voice spiritual questions or doubts'.[73] According to the authors, 'whether spiritual struggles lead to religious support or religious condemnation may be critical in their ultimate resolution'.[74] The pressure to attend church suggested by FM could mean that individuals who experience spiritual struggle may not receive support from other churchgoers. It is worth noting that none of the women expresses religious doubts, which perhaps reflects a compulsory element of religion in Rwanda.

FM's words in the above extract also echo the fears associated with the pre-colonial cosmology, where people worshipped God via the spirits of dead ancestors ('abazimu') who could either protect or bring misfortune. A somewhat hostile force, the abazimu required regular supplication to prevent them from bringing about punishments such as disease or other hardships. Thus, although FM is talking about attending a Christian church, traces of the traditional religion of the ancestors appear to linger in her belief system. This is again the case in a later extract from her testimony in which she demonstrates further religious coping mechanisms:

> The message that I would give to widows is that when you believe in God, there is no greater feeling than that, you never lose your strength. It is very difficult, that's what I usually say to widows of the genocide. I meet with them and I say 'Your experience is hard and different from mine. They killed your children before your eyes. Maybe I nursed my husband in his illness even though there were times I could see he was tired. Sometimes I even wished him to pass away and stop the pain, but the experiences of genocide widows are special'. Their hearts have been wounded. But I tell them that there is a reason why God kept them alive. […] They must accept God's plan for

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[73] Pargament, Desai and McConnell, p. 130.
[74] Ibid., p. 130.

> their lives as he had a reason for saving them. Losing hope is not the answer. Many lose hope and acquire diseases. Losing faith only brings you illnesses like cancer or other unknown diseases.

Here FM uses her religious beliefs as a source of comfort and empowerment, ('you never lose your strength') as well as gains a sense of meaning through religious reappraisals of the experiences of genocide widows: 'God kept them alive', 'accept God's plan'.[75] However, the mandatory nature of religion ('They must accept God's plan') as well as the remnants of traditional beliefs ('losing faith only brings you illnesses') are again apparent. FM appears to conflate her Christian beliefs with the non-Christian, pre-colonial belief system. Her reference to strength ('you never lose your strength') also implies that those who have lost faith are weak. However, despite her use of coping mechanisms which could give rise to distress (such as the perceived enforcement of religion), the religious coping mechanisms adopted by FM have been found to be associated with positive outcomes and better psychological adjustment in other contexts.

Similarly, in CK's testimony, examples of the coping mechanisms thought to facilitate meaning, comfort and control are present:

> He hit me here in the breast with a mallet but there were nails in it. Maybe he was on my side or it was God who told him not to puncture my chest where he hit me. Even now I feel pain because of that. […] My breasts are always painful, but I pray to God to protect me against breast cancer and He will do it because I always have faith.

Like FM, CK uses benevolent reappraisals to interpret her experience: 'it was God who told him not to puncture my chest'. This demonstrates that CK believes that divine intervention may have saved her from being killed by the club. Moreover, when she states, 'I pray to God to protect me against breast cancer', she is both seeking spiritual support and pleading with God for intercession, measures that Pargament and colleagues suggest generate

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[75] Pargament, Koenig and Perez, p. 521.

spiritual comfort and control.[76] It appears that, like FM, CK's belief system is also influenced by traditional Rwandan religion demonstrated by the fact that she believes that if she consistently maintains faith in God, she will avoid cancer.

A number of religious coping mechanisms are present in these women's testimonies but the most common religious responses observed are those which enable the individual to find meaning (that is, the various forms of religious reappraisal). This is perhaps because, for most people, the genocide is incomprehensible and caused unimaginable suffering to those who survived it, leaving them feeling compelled to find a source of meaning and understanding in its aftermath. Although there are a few examples of demonic reappraisals (for example, IM concludes that, 'it was the devil inside them [the killers]'), the most common meaning-seeking coping mechanism observed in the testimonies are benevolent religious reappraisals (such as, 'Dieu m'a protégé' (BN); 'Dieu nous a gardé' (RSM); 'God saved us' (LK); 'God was healing me' (MCK); 'The grace of God was on my side' (LK)). In some cases, their benevolent religious reappraisals lead these women towards self-transformation and, indeed, self-transcendence in the aftermath of the genocide.

The engagement with religion that results from the existential struggle following a crisis enables some individuals to change their life and even promote self-transcendence. Self-transcendence is a psychological function of religion discussed by C. Daniel Batson and Eric Stocks, which describes the drive within certain individuals to place their priorities outside their own individual needs in order to pursue a higher purpose or cause.[77] Batson and Stocks describe this function of religion as 'qualitatively different' to its other functions which meet our individual needs, as in the case of self-transcendence religion may call us 'us to lift our eyes from our own needs to

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[76] Pargament, Koenig and Perez, pp. 522–523.
[77] C. Daniel Batson and Eric L. Stocks, 'Religion: Its Core Psychological Functions', in *Handbook of Experimental Existential Psychology*, ed. by Jeff Greenberg, Sander L. Koole and Tom Pyszcznski (New York: Guildford Press, 2004), 141–155 (p. 151–152).

set our sights on higher matters, beyond ourselves'.[78] As Tedeschi, Park and Calhoun have observed, changes in spirituality in the aftermath of a crisis may induce a feeling of being somehow 'connected to something transcendent, in ways that were not possible before the struggle with trauma'.[79] Similarly, Janoff-Bulman and McPherson Frantz observe how many survivors engage in behaviours to promote social causes and help others in a way that goes beyond the boundaries of themselves by connecting with something greater.[80] Examples of self-transcendence as a result of religious beliefs are present in a number of the testimonies of Rwandan female survivors. In the following extract, for example, RSM demonstrates her belief that God saved her for a reason which has led her to a new purpose in life:

> Etre rescapée…ça me fait plaisir, Dieu nous a gardé, le fait que nombreux soient morts et que nous ayons survécu me réjouit parce que je me dis qu'Il nous a laissés en vie pour une cause. Personnellement, être rescapée me fait croire que je dois être à la place de ceux qui sont morts.

As observed in Chapter 2, RSM believes it her duty to take on the characteristics and stand in the place of those who died to prove to the killers that their mission failed. This conclusion is drawn from her benevolent religious reappraisals of her situation, ('dieu nous a gardé'/ 'Il nous a laissés en vie pour une cause') which appear to provide her with a source of meaning and have also led RSM to transform her life. For Pargament and colleagues, life transformation is about finding new sources of significance which is clearly the case for RSM who believes her new task in life is to continue the legacy of those who died and this is clearly inspired by her religious faith. Her benevolent reappraisals also lead RSM to seek partnership with God in problem solving: 'Je me dis que le reste dépendra du plan de Dieu mais je dois bien me comporter dans tout ça'. Such

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[78] Batson and Stocks, p. 153.
[79] Tedeschi, Park and Calhoun, p. 14.
[80] Janoff-Bulman and McPherson Frantz, p. 99.

collaborative religious coping is identified by Pargament, Koenig and Perez as creating a sense of control.[81]

Like RSM, IM's testimony also demonstrates life transformation as a result of religious beliefs:

> As a Christian, I will forgive them with no regrets. For instance, I pardoned Papa Dido.[82] […] In that way, we became good friends, we get on well as Christians and we go to church together. I am also willing to forgive Paul as there is no way the dead can come back to life.[83] If I knew that killing would bring back the person I lost, I wouldn't hesitate to do it. But I prefer to give out my forgiveness in order to save my soul.

It would appear that IM is motivated by her Christian beliefs to forgive, a religious coping method that Pargament and colleagues suggest helps to shift the anger, hurt and fear associated with a traumatic event to peace, and facilitate life transformation.[84] It is clear that the religious component of IM's ability to forgive is central as it is not as a human being, a Tutsi, or as a woman, but 'as a Christian' that she may forgive. However, IM's emphasis on forgiving as a Christian could also be problematic. As Phil Clark observes, 'some survivors argue that they must forgive perpetrators, regardless of the latter's motivations for requesting forgiveness, because their Christian faith requires them to forgive out of gratitude for God's mercy'.[85] Clark suggests that 'the view that forgiveness from God is contingent upon granting forgiveness to others is a likely motivation for many Rwandans' view that survivors should forgive perpetrators out of a sense of Christian duty. [… This] interpretation of a biblical commandment to forgive unconditionally amounts to a damaging level of coercion'.[86] IM's

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[81] Pargament, Koenig and Perez, p. 522.
[82] Papa Dido killed the family of one of the orphans in IM's care.
[83] Paul was another local member of the Interhamwe.
[84] Pargament, Koenig and Perez, p. 524.
[85] Phil Clark, *The Gacaca Courts, Post-Genocide Justice and Reconciliation in Rwanda: Justice without Lawyers* (Cambridge Studies in Law and Society), (Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 302.
[86] Ibid., pp. 302–303

emphasis on saving her soul suggests that she is forgiving in order to be forgiven, which reflects this coercive sense of duty. Nevertheless, the friendship IM establishes with one of the *génocidaires* is founded on the basis of their shared Christian beliefs. Thus, although IM's forgiveness might be the result of her sense of Christian duty, it could also be argued that IM experiences a form of self-transcendence motivated by her religious beliefs as she goes beyond her own interests, describing how she takes food to Papa Dido who was imprisoned for killing the family of one of the orphans under IM's care. Moreover, her willingness to forgive and speak openly about her forgiveness no doubt contributes to processes of national unity and reconciliation.

Religiously motivated life transformation is also present in the testimony of LK, whose beliefs enable her to see the importance of more transcendental issues:

> Whatever it was, we were saved by God because we have a special mission. Not just eating and drinking because it adds nothing to society. We survived the way we did because our task is to bless the rest of the country. Our task is to tell he who thinks he can kill that there is no profit gained in killing. We are left to witness that those who killed gained nothing and we must help them to rebuild their conscience and repent. I realised that the duty of survivors is very great.

LK's new life's mission to prevent future killings and help the guilty rebuild their consciences provides an example of how religious coping can inspire life transformation and even self-transcendence in the aftermath of the genocide. For example, as noted in the Introduction and in Chapter 2 of this thesis, the hardship that LK endured enabled her to understand that there are more important things in life than material wealth and gave her a heightened appreciation for life itself. This extract suggests that LK's religious appraisal of her experience is central to these changes.

The evidence from the women's testimonies appears to demonstrate the use of various religious coping strategies (seeking support, collaborative coping,

benevolent religious reappraisals and religious forgiving), enabling these women to gain a sense of meaning, control, intimacy and life transformation. None of the women explicitly mentions gaining a better understanding of spiritual matters or stronger religious faith, both of which are measures of posttraumatic growth on the Posttraumatic Growth Inventory.[87] Nonetheless, some of the religious coping mechanisms employed by these women have been found to be associated with positive psychological readjustment in other contexts.[88] On the other hand, a more coercive side of religion may be observed in IM's testimony which suggests that she forgave perpetrators in order to save her soul. Moreover, some of the religious interpretations discussed in this chapter suggest that religion is a necessary component of Rwandan life, demonstrated by the understanding of some women that losing faith may result in punishment through illness. The fact that none of the women expresses doubting their faith provides further reason to believe that religion may be a necessary aspect of Rwandan life. A number of Rwandan survivors who have published their testimonies in Europe explicitly discuss their religious doubts in the aftermath of the genocide. In *SurVivantes*, for example, Mujawayo writes, 'J'ai douté pendant le génocide. J'ai douté après le génocide. Mais surtout, j'ai douté après avoir perdu mon père. […] C'était tout. Il y avait tous… Tous, ils étaient morts. Tous, ils étaient tués, alors où est-ce qu'il était, Dieu?'[89] This may be because those living in Europe have been influenced by an alternative cultural worldview but, equally, it may be that questioning faith in Rwanda is not possible because of the powerful influence that religious institutions hold over Rwandan society. In addition, despite offering psychological benefits at the individual level (such as reducing existential fear), religions may also have a detrimental impact at the group level because they are ideologies.

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[87] Tedeschi and Calhoun, p. 460.
[88] Pargament, Koenig and Perez, p. 538.
[89] Esther Mujawayo and Souâd Belhaddad, *SurVivantes. Rwanda dix ans après le génocide* (Paris: Éditions de l'Aube, 2004), pp. 60, 59.

Every individual has a slightly different understanding of a given ideology which provides an explanatory framework for interpreting events. However, ideologies are subject to control by people and institutions in positions of power who may favour some groups over others. Christianity in Rwanda has a history of collusion with state power, which created a mutually reciprocating system in which politicians were presented as sacred in exchange for making members of the church politically powerful. Thus, while individual interpretations of Christian ideology in Rwanda may provide a source of existential comfort and psychological well-being, the church-state relationship resulted in the genocide ideology becoming entangled with religious ideology. By continuing to subscribe to the Rwandan brand of Christianity, it could be argued that Tutsi genocide survivors are operating under false consciousness.

The Role of Religion at the Collective Level

The theocratic system created by the church's involvement with the state made it difficult, if not impossible, for those in power to be disputed as doing so would go against God's will. Indeed, because of the church's involvement in the genocide, for many it appeared that the genocide and its ideology were consistent with their religious beliefs. This aspect of Christianity seems to have had an enduring effect on the ways in which survivors discuss religious leaders who took part in the genocide as survivors appear reluctant to openly condemn perpetrators who are associated with the church. As will be demonstrated in Chapter 5, truth and justice are important growth themes at the collective/group level as they are ultimately involved in the collective process of reconciliation. When it comes to discussing the crimes of the well-known Roman Catholic Priest, Father Wenceslas Munyeshyaka, however, many survivors appear reluctant to pursue these goals.

Father Munyeshyaka was implicated in crimes of genocide perpetrated at his Church of Sainte Famille in Kigali.[90] While thousands of Tutsi fled to places like Sainte Famille during the genocide in search of refuge, those hiding in Father Munyeshyaka's church found themselves in the hands of a man described as the 'chaplain of the militia'.[91] Munyeshyaka charged entrance to those seeking refuge yet allowed the Interahamwe to circulate freely. He made no effort to intervene or help those in trouble and even actively collaborated with the militia in sending Tutsi to be slaughtered.[92] He also obstructed the evacuation operations of the United Nations Assistance Mission to Rwanda (UNAMIR).[93] Despite his crimes, many survivors seem unwilling to make explicit accusations against the priest. As Nicki Hitchcott observes, of the witness testimonies recorded by African Rights, only one openly accuses the priest of rape while another explicitly states that Father Munyeshyaka was not directly responsible for any killings.[94] Moreover, although the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) accuses Munyeshyaka of shooting the children of one witness, the witness herself 'does not accuse him of actually killing them'.[95] Similar reluctance to openly condemn or accuse the priest is found in some of the women's testimonies. For example, the following extract comes from the testimony of LK whose family was hiding at the Sainte Famille Church and whose mother and sister were killed at Father Munyeshyaka's behest:

> The nuns said, 'Please forgive us for moving LK's family here, they were going to kill them there'. When the priest came, he asked which family they wanted to kill. My mother sent me. She was consumed with fear and unable to stand. She sent me. When the priest came; I was the one who had to face him. In truth, I felt like I didn't know what I was doing. I didn't know how to take responsibility, talking to an important person, I thought I didn't know what to do. But I pleaded with him to help our

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[90] African Rights, *Father Wenceslas Munyeshyaka: in the Eyes of the Survivors of Sainte Famille* (African Rights Report, 1999), p. 1.

[91] Ibid., p. 4.

[92] Ibid., p. 1.

[93] Ibid., pp. 1, 6.

[94] Nicki Hitchcott, 'Benjamin Sehene vs Father Wenceslas Munyeshyaka: The Fictional Trial of a Genocide Priest', *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 24. 1 (2012), 21–34 (p. 25).

[95] Hitchcott, 'Benjamin Sehene', p. 25.

mothers as they were going to kill them. Then he said, 'I see the problem you have is very difficult. There is nowhere to hide you; they are looking for you everywhere.' Then he said, 'I'll see what I can do' and he left. But he and Odette Nyirabagenzi were working together. Wenceslas was wearing a gun and it was clear that he was influential. After he left, the Interahamwe came in.

Although LK implies the wrongdoing of Munyeshyaka on a number of occasions in this extract, she never makes explicit connections between the crimes and the man. For example, it is clear that the idea of speaking with the priest induces significant fear in her mother ('She was consumed with fear and unable to stand') yet LK does not say explicitly that it was the priest who induced this fear. Furthermore, although she does not explain why, it is clear that facing the priest also causes LK considerable discomfort as demonstrated by her repeated statements of not knowing what to do ('I felt like I didn't know what I was doing. I didn't know how to take responsibility'; 'I didn't know what to do'). LK also implies that it was Munyeshyaka who sent the Interahamwe to attack her family but again this connection is not made explicitly. Although LK states that 'he [Munyeshyaka] and Odette Nyirabagenzi [a leading member of the Interahamwe] were working together', that 'he had a gun' and that 'he was influential', she never states directly that these factors *caused* the subsequent arrival of the Interhamwe. A causal link is implied by the temporal order of events but no concrete conclusions may be drawn.[96] Similarly implicit accusations are made at a later point in her testimony when Munyeshyaka asks LK to make a list of her family members hiding in his church so that he can provide the list to UNAMIR. On the day of the evacuation, however, LK discovers that her family is not included on the list of evacuees and is left surrounded by the Interahamwe. Again there is no overt accusation that Munyeshyaka led her into this situation, although this is implied, ('He sent me to make a list of my siblings, starting with the sick one. "I will help you", he said. We were not on the list, and on the moving

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[96] In Kinyarwanda, relationships of causation would normally be marked by a conjunctive such as 'kuko' ('because'), 'kubera' ('because', 'on account of'), or 'kuki' ('on account of which', 'why', 'the reason for which'), none of which are present in this statement.

day, we walked out to join others and found the Interahamwe').

Similarly to LK, GM also implies that certain crimes were committed by Munyeshyaka without making overt accusations. In the following extract, she discusses how Munyeshyaka discarded some of the dead bodies from his church:

> The third day, UNAMIR came and tried to take those who had stayed at Sainte Famille to evacuate them. That is when Father Munyeshyaka ordered the bodies to be taken away and hidden at the 'Economat' garage. We never found those bodies. That's what we were told. Later, we couldn't find the bodies. I still think to date those who lost people there never found their corpses.

Although Munyeshyaka makes the order to hide the dead bodies, GM offers no explanation as to why he needs to hide them so the reader/listener assumes that he does not want UNAMIR to see them, perhaps because of his own role in their death. However, GM never explicitly states that he is hiding them from UNAMIR, simply that he wants to hide them. She is clearly preoccupied by the problem of not being able to find the bodies yet GM never states explicitly that Munyeshyaka hiding those bodies was the reason why they were never found. She states both that, 'Father Munyeshyaka ordered the bodies to be taken away' and 'We never found those bodies' yet there is no relationships of causation between the two statements. Again, the listener is left to assume this without it being overtly stated. While it is clearly distressing to GM that the bodies were never found, demonstrated by her repetition of this fact, ('we never found those bodies'; 'we couldn't find the bodies'; 'those who lost people there never found their corpses') she makes no attempt to condemn the actions of Munyeshyaka.

Another survivor who discusses the actions of Munyeshyaka is SB. In the following extract, SB describes some of Munyeshyaka's actions but, like LK and GM, she also does not explicitly attribute these actions to him:

A man who was a mechanic in Ndjamena came into the church, but we had a priest called Munyeshyaka. He used to do a close follow-up of anybody who had a wound. He would ask, 'What happened? Who chopped you?' Later, the man became mentally disturbed we didn't know when he left or when he got to the Saint Paul priesthood. Then years later he told me that they treated him harshly when they were inquiring about his wound. He escaped and joined others in Saint Paul. The news came that in Saint Paul there was a very kind priest. We wanted to go there but it was hard for us to get in there. Father Celestin gave people water to drink, some food, I mean not so much to offer. The man was standing with his people he served as a symbol of love and hope to many. On our side the story was different, there was no such thing as love among the leaders. We just sat in the church the whole day, walked out and came in until we get tired of it.

Here, SB describes how Munyeshyaka checks the wounds of the mechanic followed by the latter becoming 'mentally disturbed'. However, although one suspects that something that Munyeshyaka did while checking the wounds led to this man's psychological disturbance, SB offers no relationship of causation, the two events are simply connected by the temporal marker, 'later' ('Noneho rero'). When she comes to learn that the act of checking the wounds was involved in this man's psychological problems, she refers to those doing the checking with an indefinite 'they' rather than attributing responsibility to the priest ('*they* treated him harshly', when '*they* were inquiring about his wound').[97] Thus, it appears possible for SB to personally attribute the checking of the wounds to the priest in a benign context (that is, when no connection is made to the man's problems) yet when it becomes known that this act was the cause of the man's problems, she is reluctant to do so.

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[97] As in the English translation, in the Kinyarwanda version SB uses the singular third person prefix 'a-' following the first mention of Munyeshyaka checking the wounds: '*a*kajya mbega *a*kurikira' ('He used to do a close follow-up'), then switches to the third person plural prefix 'ba-': '*ba*mutotezaga. *Ba*mubaza impamvu *ba*mutemye' ('they treated him harshly when they were inquiring about his wound').

In the second section of this extract, SB describes the priest from the Church of Saint Paul. What is interesting about this description is that by stating all of the good things that Father Célestin did for those hiding in his church, SB highlights all the things that Munyeshyaka failed to do. For example, while Father Célestin provided food and water, Munyeshyaka was known for hiding these supplies.[98] While Father Célestin stood 'with his people', Munyeshyaka turned those hiding at Sainte Famille over to the militia. By stating, 'on our side the story was different', SB implies that it was different to the church in which the priest did all he could to save refugees, but she never overtly accuses Father Munyeshyaka of any wrongdoing. A similar scenario occurs later in SB's testimony when she describes a woman asking Munyeshyaka for some blankets with which to cover the dead bodies. The blankets are provided yet subsequently disappear, as if to humiliate both the dead and those who asked for them, ('They laid the blankets on them but an hour later all the blankets were gone'). It is obvious that Munyeshyaka was behind the removal of the blankets because he initially refused to provide them, then laughed and insulted those requesting them. SB, however, never assigns blame to Munyeshyaka for removing the blankets. Even when the interviewer prompts her to say more about the priest, she only ever says, 'The terrible things he did and said. They were very bad indeed', but at no point does she provide specific examples of the things that Munyeshyaka did or said.

It seems that these Rwandan women are reluctant to openly accuse the priest. Given Rwanda's history of theocracy and religious system justification, it is understandable that Rwandan Christians might be unwilling to condemn the actions of a man in power of the country's most important religious institution. As the authors of the African Rights report observe, even in France, 'a Roman Catholic priest holds a sacred position'.[99] It appears that, in spite of his crimes, Munyeshyaka's sacred position makes

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[98] Father Munyeshyaka withheld food and water supplies from all refugees but a small group of women and young girls. In exchange for such privileges, he committed acts of sexual violence and rape against them. (African Rights, *Father Wenceslas Munyeshyaka*, p. 7.)

[99] African Rights, *Father Wenceslas Munyeshyaka*, p. 2.

survivors reluctant to condemn him or his actions. Although speaking the truth and seeking justice would benefit survivors as a group as these are part of broader, collective processes of reconciliation (see Chapter 5); the religious ideology which presents people in positions of power in religious terms appears to inhibit these processes, preventing survivors from experiencing posttraumatic growth at the collective level. However, not only does the Christian ideology appear to affect survivors' condemnation of religious figures, but also it leads survivors to appraise those who are currently in positions of political power in sacred terms.

The RPF-led Government: A Theocracy?

In the post-genocide period, although the present government has not allied itself with the church in the same way that leaders did in the past, there is ample evidence from survivors' testimonies to suggest that a sense of theocracy underlies their powerbase. We have seen that the women are interpreting their survival via benevolent religious reappraisals, which according to the RCOPE, would enable them to achieve a sense of meaning.[100] However, in the following cases, such reappraisals associate the actions of the RPF with acts of God, placing them among the sacred. EN, for example, states that, 'God came to watch over us. The genocide ended, the RPF put an end to it and we survived'. Thus, for EN, God watching over her resulted in the arrival of the RPF who subsequently ended the genocide. There is clearly a link, in EN's mind, between God and the actions of the RPF; as if God is acting through the RPF. Similarly, MCK concludes that her rescue by the RPF was part of God's plan: 'but God had a plan for us. At 9:00, the Inkotanyi rescued us'.[101] SB also attributes the ending of the genocide and her being saved to both an act of God and an act of the RPF:

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[100] Pargament, Koenig and Perez, p. 522.

[101] The word 'Inkotanyi' literally means 'activist', 'zealot' or 'warrior'. It was originally the name of the militia of the pre-colonial Tutsi king. During the genocide, it was used as a derogatory name for Tutsi to link the RPF with past Tutsi supremacy. It is now an alternative name for the RPF and, for many, conjures images of the 'brave warriors' who saved Rwanda from the genocide. Bill Berkeley, 'Terror Surrounds Rwanda's Orphans', The Alicia Patterson Foundation <http://aliciapatterson.org/stories/terror-surrounds-rwandas-orphans> [accessed 15 October 2013], para. 22 of 44.

'In the morning, God helped us and the Inkotanyi liberated the city and we lived to see another day'. SB goes on to explain how 'seeing [the Inkotanyi] was like the coming of Jesus, I swear. It was like meeting God, I know he also sent them to us'. In general, what these reappraisals suggest is that the women believe that it was God's plan to end the genocide via the actions of the RPF who subsequently took control, thus linking the RPF's victory with the work of God. Indeed, many survivors I have talked to believe that the RPF were sent by God because they managed to end the horror and have since transformed the country and people's lives. IM, for example, attributes the good fortune she has encountered since the genocide to the actions of both God and the government. After describing how she has been able to support her children and provide them with an education, IM thanks both God and the government: 'But mostly I thank God and our government'. In the Kinyarwanda version of this statement, the '-ka-' within the verb 'to thank' ('nkashima') means 'and' but only when linking two verbs together. Thus, IM links her thanks to God with the thanks she gives to the government suggesting that the work of God and the government are somehow connected. In a similar vein, SB also thanks the RPF-led government, and links their actions once more with those of Jesus: 'To me I will always thank the RPF government. May God continue to protect them and may they rein forever or even be succeeded by Jesus'. With such a statement, not only does SB link their actions to the work of God but places the RPF government on a par with Jesus, interpreting their leadership as divinely chosen.

One of the collective growth themes identified among survivors in Chapter 5 is that of freedom from the perceived dominant ideology which subordinates and stigmatises survivors as a group and provides legitimation of those in positions of power. However, just as the ideology of the genocide was justified by religious beliefs, it appears that the current dominant ideology may also be reinforced by religious justifications as those in positions of power, the RPF, are seen as agents of God. Thus, by interpreting the position of the RPF in religious terms, it could be argued

that survivors are disenfranchising their group identity because they provide spiritual authority to an ideology which maintains them in a position of subordination.

Conclusion

The impact of religion and spirituality on individuals following a trauma may be both beneficial and harmful. This is consistent with discussions on religion and trauma in other contexts.[102] Religion may provide answers to existential concerns as well as provide some effective coping strategies in the aftermath of a crisis. However, in Rwanda, the apparent compulsory nature of religion may precipitate condemnation of those who experience religious doubts which, according to Pargament, Desai and McConnell, can have a negative impact on individual wellbeing. The fact that none of the survivors voices religious doubts suggests that this may be the case, as does the apparent threat of illness to those who lose faith. There is no direct evidence that this is the case, however, and most references to God are positive and appear to provide meaning and existential reassurance. The relationship between religion and group identity does not appear so positive, however. The history of the church's alliance with the state resulted in proponents of the genocide ideology appearing divine and made the genocide ideology appear consistent with Christian teaching.[103] Perceptions of religious leaders as sacred are a likely reason for survivors' apparent reluctance to condemn the crimes of priests such as Father Munyeshyaka. This prevents survivors from achieving truth and justice which are necessary for broader processes of reconciliation. Their Christian faith also appears to lead survivors to interpret the leadership of the RPF in spiritual terms, continuing the history of theocracy observed in Rwanda. Appraising the RPF's power in religious terms gives spiritual credence to an ideology which appears to prevail under RPF leadership, one which labels survivors as burdens and parasites. Thus, despite providing survivors with meaning,

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[102] Pargament, Desai and McConnell, p. 132.
[103] Des Forges, pp. 61, 189.

control, intimacy and life transformation at the individual level, it would seem that their religious beliefs enable ideologies which very much counter their collective/group interests.

Having set out to consider whether religion can itself be considered a domain of posttraumatic growth, this chapter has suggested that this has less to do with simply the presence or absence of religious beliefs, and more to do with the ways in which religion as an ideology is controlled by those in positions of power. If the leaders of a religious ideology favour the group to which an individual belongs, then an increased commitment to this ideology may not only provide existential reassurance but may also enable the group to prosper. If those in relative positions of spiritual power do not favour the group to which a given individual belongs, then even if the religious ideology provides existential comfort, it will result in false consciousness. In Rwanda, the endorsement of a form of Christianity which allied itself to Habyarimana's regime provided the moral and spiritual climate in which genocide could take place. A religious interpretation of the RPF's leadership is equally dangerous given that the Rwandan government has become increasingly intolerant and authoritarian since coming to power. A divine interpretation of the RPF's position would make it extremely difficult to dispute its actions, even if these include human rights abuses, as doing so would mean challenging the will of God.

Chapter 5

Towards a Theory of Collective Posttraumatic Growth in Rwanda:

The Pursuit of Agency and Communion

In a discussion of human motivation, McAdams considers the various contributions from philosophers, poets, scientists and psychologists to this debate.[1] Some, he observes, have argued for a single grand motive such as Aristotle's notion of 'inherent destiny', or the notion of 'self-actualisation' championed by psychologists such as Carl Rogers and Carl Jung some two thousand years later. Others, by contrast, have proposed numerous motives. These include Plato who considered human motives to be made up of those relating to basic bodily wants, those consisting of courage and fortitudes and those relating to reason and the drive to do 'good'. Similar models of multiple drives can be found in the work of Roger Maslow or William James who put forth a long list of human instincts including motives of fear, sympathy, sociability, play, modesty and love to mention but a few. According to McAdams, a third position is occupied by theorists 'who conceive of human motivation in terms of two fundamental motives, one in conflict with the other'.[2] For example, the Greek philosopher, Empedocles, suggested that humans are motivated by love on the one hand, and strife on the other. In a similar dialectical understanding of human motivation, Sigmund Freud proposed that human behaviour is governed by a life instinct which seeks sex, pleasure and love; and a death instinct which seeks mastery, destruction, aggression and power. A number of other theorists have proposed similar dualistic understandings of human motivations; perhaps the most notable of which is Bakan's model which distinguishes drives of agency from those of communion. McAdams draws on Bakan's

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[1] McAdams, *The Stories we Live By*, p. 69.
[2] Ibid., p. 70.

conceptualisation of human motivations, adding the notion of an ideological setting (or philosophical framework).[3]

Chapter 4's analysis of the impact of the genocide on religious beliefs suggested that the impact of trauma on individuals is distinct from its impact on groups. The aim of this chapter is to draw on individualist understandings of posttraumatic growth to configure a model of collective posttraumatic growth that accounts for the impact of trauma on intergroup relations in Rwandan society. To date, little research exists on the impact of trauma at the group level and what literature does exist does not provide a model for understanding social responses to trauma. Using evidence from the testimonies discussed in this thesis, this chapter presents a discursive analysis of the various ways in which female survivors represent society in the aftermath of the genocide. It will propose that, while individual posttraumatic growth takes place purely at the cognitive level, collective posttraumatic growth takes place at the ideological level and is thus both cognitive and social. It will argue that if a group has comparable motivations to its constituent individuals, then to achieve positive social change, its drives of agency and communion must be satisfied, enabling the group to rebuild a new ideology that provides a sense of meaning. Ultimately, by proposing a model for understanding growth processes at the collective level, this chapter aims to provide insights into how positive change may be facilitated in post-conflict societies such as Rwanda.

Existing Theories of Collective Posttraumatic Growth

Scholars who have addressed the phenomenon of collective posttraumatic growth tend to describe the actions that may result in positive social change but say little about what is actually achieved by these actions.[4] When the

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[3] Ibid., p. 87.

[4] For example, authors have highlighted factors thought to promote positive social transformation such as effective leadership, mutual self-help and sharing emotions, rescuing and altruism, political action, as well as forms of self-expression such as art, humour and storytelling. See Sandra L. Bloom, 'By the Crowd They Have Been Broken,

outcomes of such actions have been discussed, those that are most commonly cited are enhanced social cohesion and group identity.[5] Darío Páez and colleagues, for example, argue that social sharing and collective coping after the 11 March Madrid bombings reinforced social cohesion which was important for creating a positive emotional climate and contributed to an increase in posttraumatic growth.[6] Rather than proposing a model of posttraumatic growth which could account for social changes, their study associates the changes observed at the collective level with individualist measures of posttraumatic growth.[7] Similar conclusions are drawn by Vázquez, Pérez-Sales and Hervás who analyse the impact of terrorism at the community level. These authors consider changes in the US following the 9/11 bombings, and highlight 'an upsurge of patriotism, a greater feeling of social cohesion, and stronger faith in any decision that the government might take' as positive social reactions to the attacks.[8] Vázquez and colleagues also discuss findings of increased national pride, including pride in specific domains such as the army and the history of the country as well as a decline in public cynicism about the government and greater cohesion between different political parties.[9] After examining the effects of terrorism in a number of different contexts, the authors suggest that exogroup terrorism (that is, terrorist attacks from an external group) can

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By the Crowd They Shall Be Healed: The Social Transformation of Trauma', in *PostTraumatic Growth: Positive Changes in the Aftermath of Crisis*, ed. by Richard G. Tedeschi, Crystal L. Park and Lawrence G. Calhoun (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. 1998), pp. 179–214 (pp. 182–207); Tedeschi, p. 331–332; Carmelo Vázquez, Pau Pérez-Sales and Gonzalo Hervás, 'Positive Effects of Terrorism and Posttraumatic Growth: An Individual and Community Perspective', in *Trauma, Recovery and Growth*, ed. by Stephen Joseph and Alex Linley (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2008), pp. 63–91 (p. 64).

[5] Bloom, p. 179; Darío Páez, Nekane Basabe, Silvia Ubillos, and José Luis González-Castro, 'Social Sharing, Participation in Demonstrations, Emotional Climate, and Coping with Collective Violence After the March 11th Madrid Bombings', *Journal of Social Issues*, 63. 2 (2007), 232–337 (pp. 326, 335); Vázquez, Pérez-Sales and Hervás, pp. 63–91.

[6] Páez, Basabe, Ubillos and González-Castro, p. 232.

[7] Páez and colleagues measure growth using Tedeschi and Calhoun's Posttraumatic Growth Inventory and Park, Cohen and Murche's Stress Related Growth Scale; both of which are based on models of individual posttraumatic growth. Ibid., p. 329.

[8] Vázquez, Pérez-Sales and Hervás, p. 65.

[9] These were findings of studies by Tom W. Smith and Seokho Kim, 'National Pride in Comparative Perspective: 1995/96 and 2003/04', *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 18 (2006), 127–136 (p. 130); and Virginia Chanley, 'Trust in Government in the Aftermath of 9/11: Determinants and Consequences', *Political Psychology*, 23 (2002), 469–483 (p. 469).

have an unexpected positive effect on national self-esteem, intra-group cohesion, national pride and identity.[10] The authors conclude that 'positive emotions such as solidarity or feelings of union can be an important catalyst of growth'.[11] Besides these observations of the short-term positive effects of terrorism; however, Vázquez and colleagues do not offer any explanations as to how posttraumatic growth at the collective level might actually manifest itself. Moreover, although the authors suggest that such positive outcomes may have 'collateral negative effects',[12] this idea is not pursued in their chapter.

While it may be true that the effects of 9/11 resulted in positive emotions associated with an enhanced sense of collective identity, as an example of positive change or collective posttraumatic growth, it is misleading. Rather than a positive reaction, similar observations of increased group cohesion and solidarity following the 9/11 bombings have been interpreted by some scholars as consistent with typical responses to threat, or fear.[13] Indeed a number of theories predict that situations of conflict, competition, or threat may result in an increase in group cohesion but via processes of intergroup differentiation rather than posttraumatic growth.[14] Broadly speaking, intergroup differentiation encompasses processes of ingroup enhancement and outgroup derogation.

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[10] Vázquez, Pérez-Sales and Hervás, p. 77.
[11] Ibid., p. 82.
[12] Ibid., p. 84.
[13] Cheryl R. Kaiser, S. Brooke Vick, Brenda Major, 'A Prospective Investigation of the Relationship between Just-World Beliefs and the Desire for Revenge after September 11, 2001', *Psychological Science*, 15. 7 (2004), 503–506 (p. 505).
[14] Theories such as: Realistic Group Conflict Theory, e.g. Muzafer Sherif, *In Common Predicament: Social Psychology of Intergroup Conflict and Cooperation* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1966), p. 64; Social Identity Theory, e.g. Henri Tajfel and John C. Turner, 'An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict', in *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, ed. by William G. Austin and Stephen Worchel, (Monterey, California: Brooks/Cole, 1979), pp. 33–47 (p. 41); Terror Management Theory, e.g. Jeff Greenberg, Tom Pyszczynski and Sheldon Solomon, 'The Causes and Consequences af a Need for Self-Esteem: A Terror Management Theory', in *Public Self and Private Self*, ed. by Roy F. Baumeister (New York: Springer, 1986), pp. 189–212 (p. 190); or Social Dominance Theory, e.g. Jim Sedanius and Felicia Pratto, *Social Dominance: An Intergroup Theory of Social Hierarchy and Oppression* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 17.

Ingroup enhancement corresponds to the types of behaviours similar to those observed following the 9/11 bombings such as ingroup cohesion, enhanced collective identity and increased perceptions of the ingroup in more favourable terms through processes of self-glorification. It can also result in a narrowing of the boundaries of ingroup inclusion as well as an increased ethnocentrism and patriotism.[15] Thus many of the supposedly positive effects of terrorism observed by Vázquez and colleagues could equally be understood as examples of ingroup enhancement. In parallel to processes of ingroup enhancement, however, perceived threats to an ingroup may also cause individuals to become more likely to engage in outgroup derogation.[16] This includes expressing negative attitudes towards outgroup members; perceiving the outgroup as more homogenous and relying on (often negative) stereotypes to judge outgroup members; increased prejudice and discrimination; as well as escalating distrust, competition and antagonism.[17] Outgroup derogation, and processes of intergroup differentiation in general, often result in increased political intolerance, authoritarianism and punitiveness.[18] Examples of this are also abundant in the US in the post-9/11 period. For instance, the attacks were followed by the detention of several hundred individuals without clear charges, the introduction of the USA-Patriot Act which compromised a whole host of freedoms, two highly controversial wars and the opening of the detention centre in Guantanamo Bay. Researchers also found that two thirds of Americans reported that they were willing to sacrifice some civil liberties in order to fight terrorism, and a quarter thought that the Bush Administration had not done enough to restrict civil liberties in the aftermath of the attacks.[19] Attitudes towards immigration became increasingly negative and

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[15] Gordon W. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1954); Tajfel and Turner, p. 42; Linda J. Skitka, Christopher W. Bauman and Elizabeth Mullen, 'Political Tolerance and Coming to Psychological Closure Following the September 11, 2001, Terrorist Attacks: An Integrative Approach', *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 30 (2004), 743–756 (p. 744–746).

[16] Skitka, Bauman and Mullen, p. 744.

[17] Victoria M. Esses, John F. Dovidio and Gordon Hodson, 'Public Attitudes toward Immigration in the United States and Canada in Response to the September 11, 2001 "Attack on America"', *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, (2002), 69–85 (p. 74).

[18] Skitka, Bauman and Mullen, p. 745.

[19] Ibid., p. 744.

some Americans actively voiced their desire to take revenge for the attacks.[20]

Taken in this context, the social cohesion and patriotism observed by Vázquez and colleagues appear to be part of a larger process of intergroup differentiation rather than posttraumatic growth. But clearly ingroup enhancement is associated with strengthened social bonds between ingroup members as well as positive emotions. Thus, given that posttraumatic growth is often defined simply as 'positive change', it is possible that posttraumatic growth at the collective level is merely the same process as ingroup enhancement. However, while ingroup enhancement may be perceived as positive by those engaging in such processes, this is clearly not the case for outgroup members who experience the negative impact of outgroup derogation. This is particularly apparent in Rwanda because, unlike the US, the conflict in Rwanda came largely from within the country rather than from an external threat. It is therefore much clearer that processes of intergroup differentiation are far from positive and are, in fact, gravely problematic. On the surface, Rwanda appears to have overcome its group differences. However, as the following discussion will demonstrate, the Tutsi-dominated RPF engages in intense intergroup differentiation.

Intergroup Differentiation in Rwanda

After the 1994 genocide, the Rwandan government launched a campaign to eradicate genocide ideology and foster national unity. The Hutu and Tutsi ethnic labels became an illegitimate means of political expression or identification, and ethnicity was removed from national identity cards.[21] In combination with these policies, to promote a unified national identity the government endorses a particular interpretation of historical events, according to which, Rwandan society was essentially unified before the arrival of European colonists who racialised the Tutsi, Hutu and Twa social

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[20] Kaiser, Vick, and Major, pp. 503–505.
[21] Eltringham, 'The Past is Elsewhere', p. 274; Hintjens, 'Post-Genocide Identity', p. 16.

categories. The official version of history holds that before colonisation, these groups had limited social significance and referred merely to occupational categories rather than social status and all citizens were unified by religion, language and loyalty to the king.[22] Colonial policies of divide and rule were, according to the official narrative, principally responsible for creating division among Rwandan people, and thus the genocide constitutes a mere aberration in Rwanda's peaceful and united history and the violence was caused by external forces.[23] From this version of events, it follows that processes of reconciliation in the post-genocide period should focus on rediscovering the social harmony of the past and restoring a lost sense of social cohesion.[24]

Although not entirely inaccurate, this historical narrative constitutes an ingenious manipulation of the past. Whilst appearing to eradicate group divisions and create unity, in reality it is a form of system legitimation and ingroup enhancement. Before the arrival of colonial powers, Rwanda was governed by a Tutsi king who, imbued with the divine right to rule, held absolute power over his subjects and all of the country's natural resources.[25] Thus, this version of events subtly creates a form of ingroup favouritism among the now predominantly Tutsi ruling class as it implies that a Tutsi hegemony is 'natural' or more 'Rwandan' as this was the way things were before the arrival of outsiders.[26] Not surprisingly, the official narrative is enthusiastically accepted by Tutsi returnees, former refugees who returned to Rwanda after the genocide; a group who now dominate most positions of social, political, religious and economic power.[27] As Longman observes, 'The RPF now rules Rwanda, and Tutsi enjoy extensive benefits, holding

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[22] Longman and Rutagengwa, p. 164.

[23] Clark, p. 222.

[24] Ibid., p. 310.

[25] Gatwa, p. 28.

[26] Outsiders or the international community are often portrayed by the Rwandan government as untrustworthy not only as a result of the legacy of colonialism but also because the international community 'refused to intervene' and simply 'turned its back on Rwanda in its hour of greatest need' (see, for example, President Paul Kagame's preface in *After Genocide: Transitional Justice, Post-Conflict Reconstrucion and Reconcilation in Rwanda and Beyond*, ed. by Phil Clark and Zachary D. Kaufman (London: Hurst and Co., 2008), p. xxi).

[27] Longman and Rutagengwa, p. 164.

government offices, school positions, and other opportunities far out of proportion to their percentage of the population. The majority Hutu now must live in fear of being accused of involvement in the genocide and facing imprisonment.'[28] Those who question the official version of events are labelled 'divisionist' and considered to harbour 'genocide ideology' while the Tutsi dominated government attempts to convince the population of its own 'moral rectitude and right to rule'.[29] Thus, to cite Prunier, '"national reconciliation" [has come] to take on a very peculiar coded meaning. It mean[s] in fact the passive acceptance of undivided Tutsi power over an obedient Hutu mass'.[30]

While performing this surreptitious ingroup enhancement via policies of unity and reconciliation, the government in Rwanda also implements outgroup derogation. For example, the Rwandan Patriotic Army or RPA (the military wing of the RPF) has been responsible for carrying out revenge killings of Hutu civilians and soldiers loyal to the former regime both within Rwanda, and during incursions into refugee camps in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).[31] Furthermore, many scholars have argued that the RPF has imposed a form of collective guilt on the Hutu ethnic group. The precise number of Hutu who participated in the genocide is unknown yet even the highest of estimates implicates only a fraction of the Hutu population.[32] Despite this, however, as Nigel Eltringham observes, 'certain members of the current political class in Rwanda appear to globalise guilt according to ethnic identity'.[33] At the same time, the government inflates the number of Tutsi deaths and underestimates the number of Hutu deaths, a strategy which provides quantitative credibility to the commonly accepted

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[28] Longman, 'Identity Cards' p. 346.

[29] Longman and Rutagengwa, p. 162.

[30] Prunier, *From Genocide to Continental War*, p. 23.

[31] Des Forges and Longman, p. 60; René Lemarchand, 'The Politics of Memory in Post-Genocide Rwanda', in *After Genocide: Transitional Justice, Post-Conflict Reconstrucion and Reconciliation in Rwanda and Beyond,* ed. by Phil Clark and Zachary D. Kaufman (London: Hurst and Co., 2008), pp. 65–76 (pp. 67, 71); Prunier, *From Genocide to Continental War,* p. 20.

[32] Nigel Eltringham, *Accounting for Horror: Post-Genocide Debates in Rwanda* (London: Pluto Press, 2004), p. 69; Hintjens, 'Reconstructing Political Identities in Rwanda', p. 82.

[33] Eltringham, *Accounting for Horror*, p. 69.

understanding of history which equates Tutsi with victim and Hutu with perpetrator.[34] For example, drawing on Claudine Vidal's observations of official commemoration ceremonies, René Lemarchand discusses how these ceremonies deny the status of victim to Hutu who lost their lives and act simply as a reminder to the Tutsi population that their people were killed by Hutu. Overall, Lemarchand argues, the ceremonies serve to maintain Hutu in a position of culpability while providing 'ideological legitimacy to the consolidation of Tutsi power'.[35]

As Chapter 4 demonstrated, the RPF are seen by many survivors as saviours for having brought the genocide to an end. This, in combination with the official version of history, which fails to include Hutu among 'survivors' of the genocide and projects a globalising guilt onto the Hutu population, provides the RPF with what Reyntjens refers to as 'genocide credit',[36] allowing President Kagame to deflect attention from RPF crimes. For example, despite numerous reports that implicate the involvement of the RPA in the killings of thousands of civilians both during the civil war and after, the government is highly sensitive to any suggestion of its own involvement in human rights abuses.[37] It has hindered attempts made by the ICTR to investigate crimes committed by the RPF in 1994 and no RPA soldiers have been indicted or brought to trial by the ICTR.[38] RPF crimes have also been excluded from the local Gacaca courts[39] leading this legal institution to be perceived as an exercise in victor's justice, 'raising the

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[34] The RPF give an official death toll of Tutsis as 1 million where most academics put the figure between 500,000 and 800,000. As for Hutu deaths, the government gives an official estimate of 60,000 but as Hintjens suggests, the true figure is likely to fall somewhere between this and half a million, making the RPF figure a drastic underestimate. Hintjens, 'Reconstructing Political Identities in Rwanda', p. 84. See also Lemarchand, p. 72; Thomson, p. 443; Waldorf, p. 49.

[35] Lemarchand, p. 72; see also Claudine Vidal 'Les Commémorations du génocide au Rwanda', *Les Temps Modernes*, 613 (2001), 1–46

[36] Reyntjens, 'Rwanda, Ten Years On', p. 199, cited in Lemarchand, p. 73.

[37] Longman and Rutagengwa, p. 167.

[38] Des Forges and Longman, p. 55; Victor Peskin, 'Victor's Justice Revisited: Rwandan Patriotic Front Crimes and the Prosecutorial Endgame at the ICTR', in *Remaking Rwanda: State Building and Human Rights after Mass Violence (Critical Human Rights)*, ed. by Scott Straus and Lars Waldorf, (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011), pp. 173–183 (p. 173).

[39] Gacaca is the national system of community courts which was designed by the government to carry out transitional justice using popular participation.

concern that [it also] will impose collective guilt on the Hutu majority'.[40] Meanwhile, while the only label available to Hutu is *génocidaire*, the only label available to Tutsi (if not returnee) is 'survivor'. Yet as Hintjens observes, although 'Tutsi have been elevated [from scapegoats] to victims, [this is] not always a flattering image, nor an easy one with which to live'.[41]

One might expect the predominantly Tutsi social elite to be sympathetic with Tutsi genocide survivors, yet, the opposite seems to be the case. Described by returnees as '*bapfuye buhagazi*' meaning 'the walking dead' and often looked on with suspicion, survivors are generally marginalised.[42] As demonstrated in Chapter 1, survivors believe themselves to be considered burdens to the rest of society. Thus, while the Hutu are often portrayed as collectively guilty genocidal killers, survivors appear to be discredited as suspicious and psychologically unstable, meaning that the only people in Rwanda who are not stigmatised are those who were not in Rwanda at the time of the genocide, the returnees, and thus serves to justify this group's relatively advantageous position in society and maintain intergroup inequality.

Dominance of returning refugees over both the Hutu population and Tutsi survivors may also be seen in the government's language policy. In 1996 English was added to Kinyarwanda and French as a third official language, a language spoken by the Tutsi RPF (who had resided in Uganda prior to 1994) as well as the majority of returnees who came back to Rwanda after the genocide.[43] In 2008, English replaced French as the language of secondary educational instruction.[44] The government anticipated that this change would bring about greater prosperity given the status of English in global and regional economic and commercial development. However, as

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[40] Max Rettig, 'Truth, Justice and Reconciliation in Postconflict Rwanda?', *African Studies Review*, 51. 3 (2008), 25–50 (p. 26).
[41] Hintjens, 'Reconstructing Political Identities in Rwanda', p. 87
[42] Prunier, *From Genocide to Continental War,* p. 3.
[43] Most of those returning from Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, and South Africa spoke English. Generally only those returning from Zaire (now DRC) and Burundi spoke French. (Samuelson and Freedman, p. 192.)
[44] Ibid., p. 191.

Beth Samuelson and Sarah Freedman have noted, the government overlooked the link between language and identity, not to mention the practical implications of implementing such a change in educational institutions.[45] Although French was considered the language of the perpetrators, it was not only *génocidaires* who spoke French but also Tutsi genocide survivors, Hutu who did not participate in the genocide as well as Tutsi returnees from francophone countries. The shift to English has favoured anglophone returnees from Uganda and Tanzania, who, already in positions of relative power, had no interest in learning French. Since English became the only language of instruction in schools, many francophone Rwandans have been left at a disadvantage, with a greater risk of falling behind in their studies. In contrast, the anglophone elite 'will be assured of replicating their access to power with such policies' despite representing less than five per cent of the overall population.[46]

In combination with these processes of ingroup enhancement and outgroup derogation practised by the Rwandan government, as predicted by social psychological theories of group threat and conflict, there has been a steady increase in political intolerance and authoritarianism.[47] The RPF's sense of moral righteousness and continued distrust of the population has resulted in a regime that frequently uses its authority to persecute its critics.[48] Human rights watchdogs and academics have reported a number of arbitrary arrests, disappearances and even assassinations of dissident politicians, journalists and community leaders.[49] In addition, although the government voices its commitment to democratic values, both the 2003 and 2010 elections have been plagued with killings, arrests and intimidation of opposition politicians. Longman and Rutagengwa encapsulate the general atmosphere of fear and the lack of freedom of speech in Rwanda when they say, 'Tutsi

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[45] Ibid., p. 192.
[46] Ibid., p, 205.
[47] Esses, Dovidio and Hodson, p. 74.
[48] Longman and Rutagengwa, p. 162.
[49] Clark, p. 21; Des Forges and Longman, p. 61–62; Hintjens, 'Reconstructing Political Identities in Rwanda', p. 88; Longman and Rutagengwa, p. 162; Waldorf, pp. 52, 57–58; Thomson, p. 442.

genocide survivors generally feel freer to speak, but many feel that they lack real influence in a regime that is dominated by former refugees who were not in Rwanda at the time of the genocide'. On the other hand, 'most Hutu feel limited in their ability to speak freely, particularly to express criticisms, because of fears that they will be accused of participating in the genocide or of promoting divisionism'.[50] Overall, despite official emphasis on restoring Rwandan unity, under the surface, processes of intense intergroup differentiation are taking place.

Rwanda thus demonstrates that, despite being associated with positive emotions, notions of enhanced cohesion and group identity may in fact be detrimental to outgroup members. This highlights the limitation of Vázquez and colleagues' discussion on collective posttraumatic growth, namely that it examines the impact of trauma on single groups, rather than considering the ways in which groups relate to one another following trauma. It appears that there is a gap in the theoretical development of posttraumatic growth which fails to account for changes that take place at the collective, intergroup level.

Towards a New Theoretical Framework for Understanding Collective Posttraumatic Growth

In his work on motivation, Bakan spoke in terms of 'organisms' having the drives of agency and communion.[51] Taking the definition of 'organism' as an organised body or system which is analogous to a living individual, it follows that, much like for a single individual, the experience of a traumatic event at the group level may also result in the destabilisation of the group's drives of agency and communion. To achieve positive change, then, just as individuals strive to restore such drives (which, in some cases, enables them to achieve a greater sense of self-efficacy and enhanced interpersonal relationships), the group must also react in ways that allow for such

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[50] Longman and Rutagengwa, p. 177.
[51] Bakan, pp. 14–15.

motivations to be satisfied. This in turn will enable the group to rebuild an ideological framework which provides a sense of meaning. Beginning with the motivation to seek communion, the first step towards achieving a more favourable position for a given social group in the aftermath of trauma is to forge improved relationships with other groups. The literature from the field of transitional justice is greatly instructive in this respect. Clark's work on Rwanda's Gacaca courts, for example, emphasises the importance of Gacaca's legal and non-legal aims, which he describes as its profound objectives.[52] These include truth, peace, justice, healing, forgiveness and reconciliation; where reconciliation is the ultimate objective in which the other five are involved. In its most ambitious form, Clark suggests that reconciliation involves 'the creation of a new dynamic between parties that generates a more meaningful engagement' between individuals, between individuals and groups or between groups.[53] The profound objectives highlighted by Clark are useful when considering how posttraumatic growth may manifest itself between groups. In the context of Rwandan genocide survivors, processes of reconciliation relate to horizontal relations between individuals or between groups (i.e. between individual survivors and perpetrators or the Hutu and Tutsi groups more generally).

To achieve a comprehensive understanding of collective posttraumatic growth, however, the ways in which a group satisfies its drives of agency must also be explored. If survivors are to satisfy their group's motivation of agency they must pursue autonomy and freedom by resisting the dominant ideology which appears to subordinate them as burdens and parasites and negotiate more favourable vertical relations, (i.e. between survivors and the state). Thus as a group, collective posttraumatic growth requires not only that survivors overcome the legacy of genocide by forging new horizontal relations (via reconciliation), but also that they achieve a more favourable position in society by negotiating improved vertical relations (via freedom and autonomy). The principal difference between individual and collective

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[52] Clark, p. 32.
[53] Ibid., p. 308.

conceptualisations of posttraumatic growth is that while individual changes take place purely at the cognitive level, collective posttraumatic growth must take place via the socially shared beliefs of a given group, that is to say, at the ideological level.

The analysis that follows shows that survivors' descriptions demonstrate four different patterns of belief or ideological positions about the nature of their group (i.e. Tutsi survivors) and how it interacts with other groups (i.e. whether or not it seeks to re-establish its drives of agency and communion). These four patterns include: (1) Those who, in the context of their group identity, do not pursue agency or communion; (2) those who pursue communion but not agency; (3) those who do not pursue communion but pursue agency; and (4) those who pursue both communion and agency. Of the sample of 18 women's testimonies, four of the women's responses fall into the first category (response type 1), six fall into the second category (response type 2), two fall into the third (response type 3) and three fall into the last category (response type 4). Three of the women do not discuss their perceptions of post-genocide society to provide sufficient evidence for analysis. It will be argued that, as a collective reaction, the most positive and socially constructive response to the traumatic legacy of the genocide is the fourth category, as only this type of response satisfies both of the group's motivations, which may in turn generate positive change and posttraumatic growth at the collective level.

Response Type 1:
Those who Pursue neither Communion nor Agency

The first response type observed in the testimonies includes women who satisfy neither communal nor agentic motivations in the context of their group identity as genocide survivors.[54] These women demonstrate no

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[54] The term 'agentic', derives from 'agency' and is used by Bakan to refer to someone or something that demonstrates assertiveness, competitiveness, independence, courageousness, and mastery. Bakan, pp. 39, 140, 152, 195.

attempt to reconcile with members from other groups (Hutu) or to pursue freedom from the state. The following extract from FM's testimony fits into this category:

> For me, Hutu are ruthless animals. They still have that wickedness in their hearts. They are still hurting me, and that makes it hard for me to forgive them. Honestly, when three or four people decide to defecate on top of a grave, tear to pieces every photo that I lay on the grave, it means they cannot change. They teach them about unity and reconciliation but their hearts can never change. They are animals. I have no names for that kind. They are animals. Even animals are better; they let us hide in the bushes next to them. We lived with lions, leopards... they would let you run away without eating you. But them... I still fear them. If they had the opportunity... If they were given a chance, they would hack us again with the same machetes.

FM's use of 'they' in this extract refers in most cases to Hutu. As is typical of outgroup derogation, 'they' (Hutu) are presented as a homogenous collective that is fundamentally flawed. Thus, FM still appears to be influenced by the Manichean, dualistic thinking that characterises both the ideology of the genocide (which divided society according to ethnicity, i.e. Hutu vs. Tutsi) as well as that of the RPF (which conceives of the population in terms of role in the genocide i.e. *génocidaire* vs. *rescapé*). Rather than pursuing the objectives which could result in reconciliation (such as justice or forgiveness), FM's use of metaphor to refer to Hutu as 'animals' could be construed as a form of retaliation, given that many of the stereotypes used to stigmatise Tutsi prior to the genocide had faunal references.[55]

However, not only does FM not seek to reconcile, but also she submits to the dominant ideology, demonstrated by the statement, 'They teach them about unity and reconciliation but their hearts can never change'. In this instance, 'they' refers to the state or people in authority. FM's use of the contrastive 'but' in 'but their hearts can never change' implies that she

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[55] Racial propaganda in the pre-genocide period characterised Tutsi as 'cockroaches', 'snakes', or simply 'animals'. See for example, Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, p. 227.

agrees with the government's policy of 'unity and reconciliation' as well as the ways in which it is being implemented but that there is something 'wrong' with Hutu who are unable to change. FM thus reproduces the government's stance of collective Hutu guilt in this extract. However, given that within the framework of the dominant ideology, Tutsi survivors are also stigmatised, it could be argued that FM is operating under false consciousness.

FM's false consciousness is demonstrated not only by her tendency to align herself with the government by collectivising Hutu guilt, but also by her reluctance to associate with other survivors. It can be noted that while Hutu are referred to as 'they' or 'them', FM's decision to refer to herself as 'I' or 'me' rather than 'us' runs counter to ordinary processes of intergroup differentiation of 'us' versus 'them'. The only time she speaks in the collective 'we' is when talking about the time *during* the genocide, before she became a 'survivor' (e.g. '[*during the genocide*] we lived with lions, leopards'). In the present, she refers to herself in the singular (e.g. 'For *me*, Hutu are ruthless animals'; They are still hurting *me*'; 'that makes it hard for *me* to forgive them'; '*I* still fear them'). This echoes the shift towards individualism observed among the survivors' discourse discussed in Chapter 3 and possibly indicates her internalisation of the stigma surrounding Tutsi survivors.

FM's apparent reluctance to associate herself with other survivors could be interpreted as a form of disidentification from this social identity, which is one of the stigma management strategies also observed in Chapter 1.[56] As Shih argues, however, stigma management strategies that involve avoidance of the negative consequences of one's stigma, referred to as coping strategies, are ultimately draining and damaging to the individual who adopts such a strategy.[57] It would appear that FM's internalisation of the government's ideological stance leads her to alienate other survivors. This is

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[56] See Crocker, Major and Steele, pp. 528–530.
[57] Shih, p. 180.

evidenced in other sections of her testimony in which she derides survivors, criticising those who turn to alcohol or prostitution, labelling them 'a target for mockery' and encouraging them to 'deal with the pain and endure it' because 'that's the Rwandese way'. She continues her message to other survivors saying, 'preserve your dignity, as we are being taught' because 'there are survivors who are out of control'. FM's representation of survivors as 'drunkards', 'prostitutes' and people who are 'out of control' perpetuates the stigma and demonstrates her state of false consciousness as she supports an ideology which favours the elites and alienates the group of which she is part.

Another survivor who pursues neither reconciliation nor autonomy is BN. BN states in her testimony that, 'depuis que la guerre est finie, je trouvais qu'aucun Hutu ne devait vivre, ils devaient tous être mis à mort comme ils ont tué aussi […] en fait c'était ça ma suggestion'. Here BN does not specify those Hutu who participated in the killings, but uses the extreme case formulation ('tous'), echoing the government's stance that Hutu is synonymous with *génocidaire*. Similarly to FM, BN refers to herself here in the first person singular ('*je* trouvais'; '*ma* suggestion'), positioning herself as an individual against the Hutu as a collective ('aucun Hutu'; 'ils devaient tous'; 'ils ont tué'). As was observed in Chapter 1, BN explicitly avoids associating with other survivors, (e.g. 'elle [une veuve du génocide] n'avait rien de commun à moi') and her use of the singular first person in the previous quotation could be construed as a continuation of this disidentification strategy. Overall, by grouping all Hutu together as guilty, BN demonstrates her unwillingness to reconcile. Moreover, her reluctance to associate with other survivors suggests her internalisation of the stigma surrounding this identity indicating a disinclination to pursue autonomy or freedom.

Response Type 2:
Those who Pursue Communion but not Agency

Women who seek to satisfy communal but not agentic motivations in the context of their group identity as genocide survivors comprise the second type of response observed. These women attempt to reconcile but do not pursue freedom or autonomy. Thus a willingness to achieve some of the Gacaca objectives identified by Clark may be observed in these testimonies but only in a manner that is consistent with the official understanding of 'unity and reconciliation'. RSM's descriptions of society correspond to this type of response and, in particular, notions of forgiveness are clearly paramount in the following extract from her testimony: 'Pardonner c'est possible. Par exemple, moi, j'ai déjà pardonné, bien que personne ne soit venue me demander pardon, j'ai pardonné à toute personne ayant tué'.

The former Executive Secretary of the National Summit on Unity and Reconciliation (NURC), Aloysea Inyumba, outlined a list of steps which Rwandans should go through in order to achieve unity and reconciliation. According to Inyumba, this process requires that those who committed crimes ask for forgiveness but also that survivors 'be courageous enough to forgive their offenders'.[58] This is echoed by Rwandan President, Paul Kagame who declared that Gacaca should 'encourage' forgiveness, highlighting that those who grant forgiveness will need to be 'courageous'.[59] Clark argues that 'the state does not appear to view forgiveness as survivors' duty';[60] however, the government's emphasis on 'courage' undoubtedly has significant coercive powers, as strength and courage are greatly valued principles in Rwandan culture.[61] This is particularly the case for survivors who wish to avoid the stigma associated with their survivorhood as well as demonstrate to the killers that they are still living well.[62] In the above extract, RSM clearly reveals a willingness to forgive, yet other sections of her testimony suggest that she could easily be

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[58] National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC), *Report on the National Summit of Unity and Reconciliation*, 2000, p. 47. Cited in Clark, p. 279.
[59] Clark, p. 281.
[60] Ibid., p. 281.
[61] Evidence to support this claim may be found in the abundance of growth in the domain of personal strength relative to other forms of posttraumatic growth. See Chapter 2.
[62] See Chapter 2

influenced by the government's emphasis on showing courage. For example, she states that it is important that the killers see her as someone who is strong. Moreover, as seen in Chapter 1, RSM also attempts to avoid the stigma of survivors as burdens when she states, 'Je ne constitue pas un fardeau pour la société rwandaise ni pour ceux avec qui je vis'. It seems possible, therefore, that RSM could be submitting to the government's call to be 'courageous', as she is a survivor who both wishes to convey this message to the killers and avoid the stigma of survivorhood.

Despite her apparent pursuit of reconciliation, RSM's blanket approach to forgiveness suggests that she is not attempting to gain autonomy. The only form of forgiveness represented in Rwandan law is official forgiveness which requires perpetrators to request forgiveness from a duly constituted bench, a judicial police officer or a public prosecutor, rather than from survivors themselves.[63] This has led some critics to 'view forgiveness as a process driven more by the judges and leaders in charge of Gacaca, rather than by remorse from perpetrators or by survivors' willingness to forgive'.[64] In addition, forgiveness is an important step towards reconciliation which the government interprets as 'primarily group-to-group' rather than interpersonal.[65] RSM's blanket expression of forgiveness fails to acknowledge the two-way nature of this process and her emphasis on forgiving 'toute personne ayant tué' echoes the impersonal, collective nature of reconciliation, consistent with the government's ideology.

In a similar vein, the testimony of MCK demonstrates her intention to reconcile, but in a manner that is consistent with the dominant ideology:

> Reconciliation is important because no man is an island. It is impossible that one ethnic group can occupy the country, a Tutsi

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[63] Clark, p. 279.

[64] Ibid., p. 294. Gacaca offers reduced penalties to perpetrators who offer a full confession and request forgiveness. Critics include Klaas de Jonge (see Clark, p. 294) and Peter S. Uvin, *The Introduction of a Modernized Gacaca for Judging Suspects of Participation in the Genocide and the Massacres of 1994 in Rwanda* (Governance and Social Development Centre, 2000), p. 9.

[65] Clark, p. 313.

> needs a Hutu and vice versa. I can take an example of this from school. Without children from different ethnic groups I could lose my job because the vacancy I occupy wouldn't exist. In remote areas, they need agriculturalists, so without all categories of people no one can live better. People need each other in life. I support the unity and reconciliation policy but anxiety of genocide ideology is still there and those who committed the crimes are angrier than us. For us, we are ready to play our role in reconciliation.

By highlighting the practical benefits of having a variety of different groups in society, MCK demonstrates a form of 'pragmatic' reconciliation, described by Clark as 'the peaceful cohabitation of previously antagonistic parties'.[66] However, it appears that MCK is conflating the term Hutu with perpetrator, as she makes a transition between Tutsi and Hutu needing one another to 'those who committed the crimes' as opposed to 'us', presumably referring to survivors. Implicit intergroup differentiation is carried out, with 'us' being portrayed as 'survivors' who are 'ready to play our role' while 'Hutu' are mere 'agriculturalists' who 'committed the crimes' and who still subscribe to the genocide ideology. Thus despite her attempts to improve horizontal social relations via pragmatic reconciliation, MCK submits to the ideology of Tutsi being synonymous with victim and Hutu being synonymous with perpetrator, echoing the government's stance of collective Hutu guilt.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the government conceives of reconciliation in retrospective terms, 'emphasising the need to restore a lost sense of social cohesion' by reverting to old relationships rather than as a creative process aiming to build new relationships.[67] This retrospective understanding of reconciliation is another facet of the current government's ideology which favours the supremacy of the ruling Tutsi class, who held absolute power in precolonial times, and is echoed in the following extract of MCK's testimony, leading her to stigmatise the very group to which she belongs:

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[66] Ibid., p. 308.
[67] Ibid., pp. 310, 335.

> I would say to survivors, especially children who were left orphaned to look after their younger brothers and sisters, widows and old survivors with no one to care for them, be patient and fight to be heroic, avoid the shame of begging and be noble. Because in Kinyarwanda they say that a noble person does not steal in hunger, a noble person tries to walk even if he is in pain, this is what I would say to survivors. This bravery was what drove our ancestors to excel. Self-respect is the key, because no one can laugh at the problems of a person who respects himself.

Here, rather than showing solidarity with those who suffered similarly during the genocide, MCK adopts the dominant ideological attitude by insinuating that survivors who show signs of weakness will be ridiculed by others.

A similar example of a survivor who attempts to build horizontal relations in accordance with government policies of unity and reconciliation is CK. CK describes herself as one of the 'Gacaca faithful' and expresses her gratitude to the Gacaca system as it has given her 'a place where [she] can express [her]self'. Not only has CK embraced the system of national justice, but also she appears to have fully accepted to reconcile: 'When they [the killers] were released they came home and now we live in harmony. They invite us to theirs and we give them our daughters' hands: in brief we live in harmony'. Despite this formidable ability demonstrated by CK to gain justice and reconciliation with the killers, there are also hints of false consciousness in her testimony, demonstrated by her willingness to collude in the stigmatisation of her fellow survivors:

> As our president says, 'Let's give ourselves some dignity'. Dignity is very important. Everyone has to fight for their dignity by respecting themselves. […] What I can tell survivors is 'Fight for your dignity, take your hands out of your pockets [to work] because the time for saying "give me" is over'.

Despite the attempts of RSM, MCK and CK to forge improved horizontal social relations, their reluctance to also pursue autonomy and freedom from the government's ideology means that survivors are likely to remain stigmatised and subordinated.

Response Type 3:
Those who do not Pursue Communion but do Pursue Agency

The third type of response observed in the testimonies includes women who do not seek to satisfy communal motivations but who do attempt to fulfil agentic motivations in the context of their group identity as genocide survivors. Women who respond in this way candidly refuse to forge improved horizontal relationships by rejecting the notion of reconciliation and related objectives thereby defying the government's ideology and thus gaining a sense of liberty. EN's testimony provides an example of this type of description:

> -What do you think of Hutus?
> -As my enemy, as an enemy of peace. They ask us to reconcile and we reconcile. But you can only reconcile with someone when their cows eat from your field [i.e. over trivial matters]. In the past, people used to move from this hill to go and kill on another over there and there would be a war. Now, just because the Government says, 'Reconcile,' then we reconcile because there's no choice. What would you do? Nothing. If they say, 'Let's unite', we unite. But it's not real. You reconcile with someone in circumstances where their animal damaged your land; You reconcile with someone after fighting because you were drunk. You do not reconcile with someone after they killed your family. That's how it was in the past but for me... I don't want to reconcile with them at all. But maybe with a Hutu who did not kill, a Hutu with whom I have no problem related to Gacaca and the killing of my family. Those others with whom we don't have problems, it's fine. But that doesn't mean that I live freely and openly with them. But we have to live together because it is our country all together, there's no other way of

moving forward. But I won't feel any sympathy towards them...
none. I saw how they changed overnight.

Although in this extract EN clearly states her reluctance to improve horizontal relations via reconciliation, she does negotiate more favourable vertical relations. She refuses to accept the stigma surrounding survivors by unashamedly defying the government's call for survivors to show 'courage' by forgiving perpetrators. Her ironic tone in the statements 'They ask us to reconcile and we reconcile', 'just because the Government says, "Reconcile," then we reconcile', 'If they say, "Let's unite", we unite', mocks the government's authoritarian style, as she clearly implies the superficiality of this compliance ('it's not real'). There is even a rejection of the government's emphasis on restoring past ways of doing things, 'That's how it was in the past but for me... I don't want to'.

The real irony of this passage, however, can be seen in the fact that although EN states her outright refusal to reconcile, she does not globalise guilt onto the entire Hutu population. Although she is wary ('I saw how they changed overnight'), EN, in fact, demonstrates a willingness to reconcile with Hutu who were not involved in the killing of her family. Moreover, in her defiance of government authority, EN's use of the plural first person actually unites her with other Hutu in their collective resistance against the government, (e.g. 'They ask *us* to reconcile and *we* reconcile'; 'then *we* reconcile'; '*we* unite'; '*we* have to live together because it is *our* country'). Thus EN's use of 'us' and 'them' actually refers to 'us' (Tutsi and Hutu) versus 'them' (the government), in contrast to survivors discussed earlier who voice their willingness to reconcile, but speak in terms of 'us' (Tutsi) versus 'them' (Hutu). It could be argued, therefore, that despite her apparent reluctance to forge improved horizontal relations, through EN's pursuit of more favourable vertical relations, she inadvertently engages in more positive horizontal relations by collectivising the shared strife of the population against a common oppressor: the government.

Response Type 4:

Those who Pursue Communion and Agency

The final type of response observed includes women who seek to satisfy both communal and agentic motivations in the context of their group identity as genocide survivors. The following examples come from the testimonies of women who pursue both improved horizontal relations via the objectives identified by Clark but who do so independently of the government's ideological framework, and thus also pursue freedom and autonomy. Before the genocide, RB's father had studied with a man named Pascal Habyarimana, who became a local political leader ('Conseiller') and raped her repeatedly during the genocide. Important themes in RB's testimony are truth and justice; two objectives that Clark suggests are steps towards reconciliation.[68] Her testimony is important because she confronts truths that are impossible for most Rwandans to articulate. In particular, RB speaks out about her experiences of rape and sexual violence:

> When they had killed my brothers, that is when he started to use me for sex. He told me, he would go and sit there… I'd like to demonstrate because he would... He would do very bad things. He would say... He would go and sit somewhere like there, He would sit and take off his clothes. He would take off his pistol and place it on the floor with his sword. And he would tell me to take off my clothes and come crawling to him. I remember I showed it in the Gacaca courts, when he was seated in front of me. The judges were shocked. Even he himself was shocked as he didn't think that I would repeat those acts.

RB's Gacaca testimony against a perpetrator of rape led to this man's imprisonment, thus RB was able to gain truth and justice. She also confronts the stigma surrounding survivors of sexual violence. As noted in Chapter 1, a Rwandan woman's standing traditionally derives from her relationships with men and her value derives from her sexual 'purity'.[69] What is particularly shocking about RB's testimony, is not only that she volunteers

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[68] Ibid., pp. 308–309.
[69] Weitsman, p. 564.

an account of what happened to her but that she performed a re-enactment of what her rapist forced her to do. More shocking still, is the fact that she did this in front of the Gacaca judges, the local community and the man who raped her. Gacaca judges are among the most prestigious people in a community so having the audacity to confront the very man who raped her, given that he himself was a powerful man in Rwandan politics, clearly surprises everyone present ('the judges were shocked. Even he himself was shocked').[70]

In contrast to the coping and avoidance strategies employed by survivors such as FM, BN and RSM, RB adopts what Shih refers to as an empowerment model.[71] Rather than avoiding the negative consequences of a stigma, those who adopt the empowerment model do not act as passive targets of prejudice but become active participants who seek to create positive outcomes. Empowered individuals develop 'a sense of mastery and self-efficacy at their accomplishments'.[72] Shih argues that 'stigmatised individuals who perceive that the stigma has been unjustly forced on them may react to stigmatisation with righteous anger and be spurred into action to remove the stigma'.[73] Empowered individuals are also more likely to identify with other members of the same group, more likely to strive to maintain social status and more likely to reject the negative public images of the stigmatised identity. RB clearly adopts such a model, as she actively encourages the women in ABASA to follow her lead by speaking out. Thus, as a result of her pursuit of improved horizontal relations via truth and justice, RB defies the stigma imposed on survivors. She also uses truth and justice to speak out against people in positions of power:

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[70] Gacaca judges, known as 'inyangamugayo', meaning trustworthy, reliable person, are usually respected elders on a hill. (Since the pre-colonial period, hills play an important role both in the formation of communities and as basic administrative units. See Longman, *Christianity and Genocide*, p. 102).
[71] Shih, pp. 180–181.
[72] Ibid., p. 181. See Patrick W. Corrigan, Dale Faber, Fadwa Rashid and Mathew Leary, 'The Construct Validity of Empowerment among Consumers of Mental Health Services', *Schizophrenia Research*, 38. 1 (1999), 77–84 (p. 77).
[73] Shih, p. 181.

> I said everything from the start, those who were raped and the ones who carried it out. That is when I started to talk about Major Habyarabatuma and General Gatsinzi as well as other leaders. That is when they started to look for me because I committed the crime of saying leaders who were still soldiers in the Rwandan army but I continued to say their names. They kept hunting me and I became insecure. […But] I'll keep on saying what I know about him [General Gatsinzi]. There is no day I will hide it, because he is a General.

As a result of RB's denouncement of people in positions of power, she has placed her own life in danger.[74] Her commitment to truth contributes significantly to a more open and honest social narrative of the events of 1994, rather than relying on the monolithic official narrative, and her emphasis on individual, named perpetrators defies the government's tendency to collectivise Hutu guilt. Moreover, as Clark argues, the pursuit of justice will help 'to achieve wider, restorative outcomes,'[75] thus RB's testimony demonstrates attempts at improving both vertical and horizontal relations.

Despite witnessing unspeakable suffering at the hands of the former government militia, the testimony of GM also demonstrates remarkable progress in several of the profound Gacaca objectives identified by Clark:

> If a person acknowledges his fault, he admits his sin genuinely and from the heart, then he is already being punished. It will always affect him and there is no greater punishment than the guilt in someone's heart. If it comes from the heart when a person says to me, 'Forgive me, I was involved in the killing of your sibling, your parent...' I would understand. I would forgive him because the burden he carries in his heart is enough of a punishment. But forgiving in general without a request to be forgiven… that is very hard for me. I find it so hard. That's like forcing them to receive forgiveness. That's like forcing them to be forgiven when the person doesn't care enough about

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[74] The General to whom she refers is former Minister of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs in the Rwandan government.
[75] Clark, p. 256.

> forgiveness to ask for it from the heart. Forgiveness is about one person seeking it and another one granting it. The person forgiving shouldn't forgive before the seeker asks for it. People should seek to be forgiven genuinely and then be granted forgiveness.

In his book on Gacaca, Clark identifies three types of justice: retributive justice aims to punish perpetrators in a manner that is commensurate with their crime so as to give them what they 'deserve'; deterrent justice aims to punish perpetrators in a way that will dissuade them and others from committing further crimes so as to avoid further punishment; and finally restorative justice holds that while punishment may be necessary, it should be facilitated in ways that allow perpetrators and victims to rebuild relationships and renew the social fabric.[76] As can be seen in this extract, GM is willing to forgo the first two types of justice by agreeing to accept an apology and acknowledging that genuine guilt is punishment enough.

The objectives of forgiveness and reconciliation are also present in this extract. Unlike the blanket approaches to forgiveness discussed earlier in this chapter, GM clearly opposes the government's pressure on survivors to forgive, ('But forgiving in general without a request to be forgiven… that is very hard for me'). Instead, GM demonstrates an understanding of what forgiveness must entail by emphasising its interpersonal nature. GM continually refers to the perpetrators of genocide in the singular third person ('*he* admits *his* sin'; '*he* is already being punished'; 'It will always affect *him*')[77] and to herself in the singular first person ('when a person says to *me*'; '*I* would understand'; '*I* would forgive'), highlighting the interpersonal nature of this process. Although not voiced, the only 'they' in this extract does not refer to Hutu, but to the government. GM's resistance to governmental pressure is not explicit, but is apparent in her nominalisation of the verb 'to forgive' ('forgiving in general…'), with which she alludes to

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[76] Ibid., p. 38, 238.
[77] GM uses the gender neutral word for 'person' (umuntu); she does not specify a gender. I've translated this in the masculine third person (he) because English does not have a neutral form.

the government's demands for collective forgiveness and reconciliation. By emphasising the interpersonal nature of reconciliation, GM counteracts the government's interpretation of reconciliation as a 'group-to-group' process and its tendency to generalise guilt to the entire Hutu population; simultaneously pursuing improved horizontal and vertical relations. Further steps towards reconciliation may also be seen in the following extract from GM's testimony in which she expresses her understanding that all Rwandans suffered as a result of the genocide:

> Those who did not die in the genocide, died in exile. Whether Hutu, Tutsi or even Twa, none of us was spared. Some were perpetrators, others were victims... But all of us were in trouble, even if it was not to the same extent.

It can be seen here that GM understands that the line between victim and perpetrator is not as clear as the dualistic view of the ideology where Tutsi is equated with victim and Hutu with perpetrator. At the same time, her inclusion of Hutu, Tutsi and Twa in the collective 'we' ('none of *us* was spared'; 'all of *us* were in trouble') demonstrates significant steps towards a more inclusive understanding of society. Not only does GM defy the government's ideological interpretation of events, negotiating improved vertical relations, but also she engages in forging improved horizontal relations. It would seem that women like RB and GM, who seek to satisfy their group's motivations of agency and communion, produce the most socially constructive response to the genocide which is most likely to generate positive change and collective posttraumatic growth.

Post-traumatic Growth at the Collective/Group Level

Following Bakan, who 'adopted the terms "agency" and "communion" to characterise two fundamental modalities in the existence of living forms',[78] I would argue that positive change at the group level involves the pursuit of both of these drives (in this case through freedom and reconciliation). This

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[78] Bakan, p. 14.

is not to suggest that the women whose responses fall into the first three categories have not experienced posttraumatic growth as individuals. Indeed as observed in Chapters 2 and 3, many of these women pursue agency and communion at the individual level (by gaining increased personal strength and improved interpersonal relations). At the group level, however, only the fourth response enables the group to achieve both these goals. As the discussion of the impact of the genocide on religious beliefs in Chapter 4 suggests, processes of posttraumatic growth at the individual level are distinct from processes of posttraumatic growth at the collective level. However, just as trauma has the potential to destabilise individual drives of agency on the one hand, and communion on the other, it appears to have the same effect for groups. Thus, similarly to individual posttraumatic growth manifesting itself in areas such as self-perception and interpersonal relationships, collective growth is expressed through increased freedom (agency) and improved relations with members from other groups (communion). The principal difference between individual and collective conceptualisations of posttraumatic growth is that while individual changes take place at the cognitive level, collective posttraumatic growth takes place at the ideological level; that is to say via the socially acquired beliefs, knowledge and other social representations that are shared by members of a given group.[79]

The Social Equivalent to Schema Change

As this thesis has shown, posttraumatic growth at the individual level is thought to consist in rebuilding new cognitive working models of the world after one's previous assumptions have been completely shattered.[80] According to Tedeschi and Calhoun's functional-descriptive model of posttraumatic growth, the shattering of cognitive-emotional structures by traumatic events may set in motion a ruminative process, characterised by a

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[79] Van Dijk, p. 8.
[80] Janoff-Bulman, p. 52; Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, p. 2; Tedeschi, Park and Calhoun, p. 2.

significant amount of thinking about the event.[81] Although this process may at first be distressing and can include unwanted, negative thoughts, it can also include neutral and positive cognitive processes and its very presence is indicative of cognitive activity directed at rebuilding cognitive schemas. While initially this rumination is automatic and unintentional, it can become increasingly deliberate and effortful. As noted in the Introduction, this effortful rumination plays a role in developing a narrative which can help the individual to organise the event into a new schema, make sense of the experience and develop more adaptive assumptions about the world.

In the aftermath of trauma, Tedeschi suggests that social narratives serve a similar function to individual narratives and just as traumatic events may affect *individual* life stories, they may also serve as critical demarcations for *social* stories in which time becomes separated into pre- and post-trauma periods.[82] While creating this narrative may bring about controversy over the historical record, such as who bears responsibility for the trauma and what is to be learnt from it, the creation of such a narrative may result in what Tedeschi refers to as 'the social equivalent to […] schema change'.[83] Given that the production of a social narrative, just like the production of a personal narrative, is likely to be effortful and time consuming, it seems probable that the group cohesion and enhanced collective identity described by Vázquez and colleagues does not fit this conceptualisation of posttraumatic growth. Firstly, this cohesion is arguably part of the larger process of intergroup differentiation which, as discussed above, is far from beneficial to a society. Secondly, given that the so-called 'positive' behavioural effects observed after 9/11 were generally observed soon after the attacks and described as 'temporary', it seems unlikely that these changes could be considered 'schematic'. Just as cognitive schema change is time consuming, so presumably is ideological schema change.

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[81] Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, pp. 17–19.
[82] Tedeschi, p. 333.
[83] Ibid., p. 333.

Theories such as the Value Protection Model argue that processes of ingroup enhancement are akin to value affirmation in which individuals attempt to morally cleanse themselves by reaffirming commitment to their cultural or moral values and so reassure themselves of their own moral worth.[84] Similarly, Terror Management Theory suggests that ingroup enhancement involves the bolstering of one's cultural worldview as a defence to existential threat and fear of mortality.[85] On a schematic level, this is quite the opposite of what is generally considered posttraumatic growth, which is construed as the rebuilding of *new* working models of the world rather than a reversion to old ones. Ingroup enhancement, then, is more like the collective version of what Joseph and Linley refer to as 'assimilation'. This is where a traumatic event is 'assimilated' into pre-existing models of the world, as opposed to growth, which requires that our models of the world be modified in order to adapt or 'accommodate' information relating to the traumatic event.[86] Overall it seems that, much like at the individual level, collective posttraumatic growth is about finding new meaning in what happened so as to gain more mature and socially constructive ways of understanding events.

Although as Joseph and Linley argue, human beings are intrinsically motivated towards posttraumatic growth as part of their innate tendency toward self-actualisation, circumstances and environments 'may restrict, impede or distort this intrinsic motivation'.[87] As Janoff-Bulman maintains, the 'restorative efforts of survivors to rebuild a valid and comfortable assumptive world are always embedded within the larger context of social relationships'.[88] This is equally relevant to posttraumatic growth processes at the collective level. One of the challenges that groups face when it comes to achieving positive change and posttraumatic growth is that ideological

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[84] Philip E. Tetlock, 'Social Functionalist Frameworks for Judgement and Choice: Intuitive Politicians, Theologians, and Prosecutors', *Psychological Review*, 109. 3 (2002), 451–471 (p. 460).
[85] Solomon, Greenberg and Pyszczynski, 'The Cultural Animal', p. 16.
[86] Joseph and Linley, 'Positive Psychological Perspectives', pp. 12–13.
[87] Ibid., p. 15.
[88] Janoff-Bulman, p. 143.

change requires communication between group members. Given that elites tend to have control over the means of ideological production, their social representations about society are hugely influential and tend to favour the ruling class.[89] Elites often apply a number of manipulation strategies in order to maintain ideological control, such as dividing non-dominant groups, preventing ingroup solidarity, or preventing or limiting access to public discourse.[90] As we have seen, the RPF uses a number of these strategies, such as dividing the population and preventing free speech, making the development of counter ideologies far from straight forward. In order to produce and reproduce ideologies, access to public discourse is essential.[91]

It is possible, however, to facilitate the development of posttraumatic growth, via the role of organisations, cooperatives and other institutions. For example, the Genocide Archive of Rwanda plays a fundamental role in this respect by providing survivors with access to public discourse. Giving their testimonies provides survivors with an opportunity to fulfil motivations of communion by pursuing the objectives highlighted by Clark (truth, healing, justice etc.); and of agency by challenging the stigma that surrounds their identity as survivors and providing a counter narrative to the official version of history. Because the testimonies collected by the Genocide Archive of Rwanda enable survivors to reconstruct their life narratives freely and without coercion or contestation, they may communicate their own interpretation of events. With such an opportunity, even in the aftermath of such devastating horror and under the restrictive environment of an authoritarian regime, survivors such as RB and GM demonstrate that people, whether as group members or as individuals, are capable of developing positive outcomes.

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[89] Van Dijk, pp. 97, 233.

[90] In his book on ideology, van Dijk underscores the importance of having access to 'public discourse' in order to either propagate or challenge dominant ideologies. In this respect, 'public discourse' refers to various forms of media through which 'knowledge and opinions may be expressed and widely circulated'. Van Dijk, pp. 162, 184.

[91] Even in a restrictive setting; however, Susan Thomson has observed tacit forms of resistance against the dominant ideology in Rwanda, referred to by Thomson as 'staying on the sidelines', 'irreverent compliance' and 'withdrawn muteness'. Thomson, pp. 449–454.

Conclusion

The model proposed in this chapter provides an initial step towards understanding how growth processes at the collective level may take place and how such processes may be facilitated.[92] The ways in which drives of agency and communion are pursued following trauma are likely to vary significantly according to different social, cultural and political contexts. For example, as the following chapter will show, the ways in which survivors pursue collective drives of communion and agency in the context of the international community differ from those discussed in this chapter. However, while the specific ways in which drives of agency and communion are enacted may vary across cultures and in different contexts, these fundamental drives are likely to be universal, as is the need for dialogue and access to public discourse given that these drives take place at the shared, ideological level. Clearly further research is needed to validate and elaborate on the model. Such research should be encouraged, however, because only by understanding the motivations of groups in the aftermath of crises is it possible to conceive of ways of promoting positive social change in post-conflict societies.

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[92] The facilitation of posttraumatic growth is discussed in greater detail in the Conclusion to this thesis.

Chapter 6

Posttraumatic Growth at the International Level:
The Obstructive Role of Translators and Editors

As the previous chapter demonstrated, posttraumatic growth at the collective level involves the realisation of a group's drives of agency (e.g. autonomy, self-expansion, mastery and self-protection) and communion (e.g. contact, openness and union).[1] Because posttraumatic growth at the collective/group level involves changes to shared beliefs, or ideologies, it requires the development of social stories in order for the drives of agency and communion to be satisfied. It is possible to facilitate posttraumatic growth at the collective level by providing members of non-dominant groups with the means of ideological production through access to public discourse, enabling group members to challenge dominant ideologies and provide a counter narrative.[2] Giving their testimonies to the Genocide Archive of Rwanda not only enables survivors to work through their trauma by developing a personal narrative, but also enables them to counter the official version of events in a public domain. In addition, because the testimonies are translated and made accessible online, the Genocide Archive of Rwanda also provides survivors with an opportunity to communicate with, and contest the dominant perceptions of, the world beyond Rwanda.

As such, the act of testimony serves to fulfil group members' drives of agency and communion. For example, Dauge-Roth notes how, through testimony, witnesses may 'reclaim on their own terms the meaning of their survival' enabling survivors to 'move from a position of being subjected to political violence to a position that entails the promise of agency'.[3] Dauge-Roth cites the work of Kalí Tal, who asserts that:

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[1] For more on these drives, see Bakan, pp. 14–15; McAdams, *The Stories we Live By*, p. 71.
[2] Van Dijk, p. 184.
[3] Dauge-Roth, *Writing and Filming the Genocide*, p. 42.

> Bearing witness is an aggressive act. It is born out of a refusal to bow to outside pressure to revise or to repress experience, a decision to embrace conflict rather than conformity, to endure a lifetime of anger and pain rather than to submit to the seductive pull of revision and repression. …If survivors retain control over the interpretation of their trauma, they can sometimes force a shift in the social and political structure. If the dominant culture manages to appropriate the trauma and can codify it in its own terms, the status quo will remain unchanged.[4]

Thus, by testifying, survivors are able to contest the status quo and gain a voice with potential transformative power, interrupting the dominant understanding of events among a given audience. In addition to satisfying such agentic drives; however, as a communicative act, testimony also enables survivors to satisfy drives of communion. Often alienated by denial, survivors use testimony in order to be heard and to have their pain and their histories recognised.[5] This role of testimony is linked to what Clark refers to as 'healing as belonging', where the community acknowledges survivors' suffering, enabling them to overcome feelings of social dislocation and estrangement.[6] While Clark focuses on acknowledgement from the local community, survivors' desire to have their histories acknowledged by the international community is also a theme present in the corpus testimonies.

Chapter 5 analysed processes of posttraumatic growth in women in the context of their position as survivors in Rwandan society. The principle agentic theme identified was that of freedom while communal themes revolved around reconciliation. The present chapter considers the identities of these women as Rwandan survivors in a global society. It will show that the main agentic theme that emerges is the need to hold the actions of the

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[4] Kalí Tal, *Worlds of Hurt: Reading the Literature of Trauma* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 7. Cited in Dauge-Roth, *Writing and Filming the Genocide*, p. 26.

[5] Clark, pp. 272–273; Alexandre Dauge-Roth, 'Fostering a Listening Community Through Testimony: Learning with Orphans of the Genocide in Rwanda', *Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship*, 5. 2 (2012), <http://jces.ua.edu/fostering-a-listening-community-through-testimony-learning-with-orphans-of-the-genocide-in-rwanda/> [accessed 15 October 2013], para. 10 of 23.

[6] Clark, p. 262.

international community to account by exposing them to public scrutiny. In contrast, it will be demonstrated that the key communal theme that emerges is the desire to gain acknowledgement from the international community for the suffering caused by the genocide. The chapter will argue that the dominant ideology in the West represents Rwandan survivors as passive, voiceless victims of an inevitable, unstoppable period of violence. However, although women survivors contest such an ideology by speaking out and highlighting the failures of the international community, the interventions made by translators and editors in fact bolster the dominant ideology rather than enable this contestation. Despite making survivors' stories more visible by translating and publishing them, the effect of these interventions is to obstruct posttraumatic growth from taking place at this level.

A History of Misunderstanding

Dominant ideologies prevailing in Western contexts have led to the misunderstanding and misrepresentation of Rwandan people throughout history. For example, although the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic labels predate the arrival of Europeans, these labels were not rigid or universal categories.[7] As D. Newbury notes, 'there is no single "Tutsi history" or "Tutsi culture", just as there is no single "Hutu history" or "Hutu culture"'; other forms of identification were equally if not more important.[8] Under the expansion of the central Tutsi kingdom, identities based on corporate lineage and clan had begun to erode, but the terms 'Hutu' and 'Tutsi' never had 'a single meaning valid for the whole territory'.[9] Nevertheless, European colonists interpreted the differences between Hutu and Tutsi as primordial, racial distinctions with the Tutsi being considered a superior race to the Hutu. When the Belgian authorities switched allegiances from Tutsi to Hutu in the late 1950s, the distinctions between the groups continued to be perceived as

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[7] D. Newbury, p. 83; Eltringham, *Accounting for Horror*, p. 13.
[8] D. Newbury, p. 83.
[9] Eltringham, *Accounting for Horror*, p. 13.

racial.[10] Following the 1959-1961 Hutu revolution, an essentially racist Hutu government was backed by the Belgian authorities, despite a growing number of killings and human rights violations.[11] When massacres took place in the early 1960s, these were interpreted in the West as mere proof of the 'savagery of the negro'.[12]

Following Habyarimana's coup of July 1973, France began replacing Belgium as the foremost foreign ally.[13] Rwanda occupied an important geo-political position for French interests in Africa as it is situated at the fault line between francophone West Africa and anglophone East Africa. In order to maintain its influence, France engaged in forging close relations with heads of state in French-speaking African countries.[14] However, the relationship between Habyarimana and France was more than a question of policy; there were personal connections. As Des Forges notes, 'Habyarimana impressed French President François Mitterrand and others with his assimilation of French values'.[15] So when the RPF invaded in 1990, Habyarimana could be confident of French support.[16] During the civil war (1990-1994), in addition to moral backing, France provided practical help including a contingent of soldiers as well as a supply of arms.[17] The RPF offensive was portrayed in France as an attack by 'les Anglo-saxons', because the RPF was largely made up of Rwandan Tutsi refugees who had fled the violence of the 1960s and had been living in anglophone Uganda for

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[10] According to Eltringham, the Bahutu Manifesto, (a political manifesto written by 9 Hutu intellectuals), demonstrated that 'racial immutability had become the *modus operandi* for defining social groups in political discourse. With a sleight of hand *race* as "superiority" became *race* as "foreign interloper"'. Such racial interpretations of group identity were reiterated by the European Apostolic Vicar of Kabgayi, Mgr. André Perraudin. Ibid., pp. 19–20.

[11] Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, p. 20.

[12] Melvern reports Vuillemin's article in which the authors explains he can no longer represent Belgium in UNESCO because its government 'was responsible for complicity to genocide'. Ibid. p. 18.

[13] Ibid., p. 24.

[14] Ibid., p. 24.

[15] Des Forges, p. 91.

[16] Ibid., p. 91.

[17] Throughout the early 1990s, Rwanda was able to obtain arms from France as well as from Egypt, China and South Africa with funds supplied by major international financial institutions. See Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, pp. 5 and 66.

over thirty years.[18] According to Prunier, the belief that the whole world is a cultural, political and economic battlefield between France and 'les Anglo-saxons' is what led France to back 'an ailing dictatorship in a tiny distant country'.[19] As Prunier notes, however, 'this blind commitment was to have catastrophic consequences because, as the situation radicalised, the Rwandese leadership kept believing that no matter what it did, French support would always be forthcoming'.[20]

During the civil war, Habyarimana came under increasing international pressure to move towards democracy. The outcome, known as the Arusha Accords, was an international effort, negotiated with the assistance of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), facilitated by Tanzania and involving UN representatives from France, Belgium, the US, Germany, Burundi, Senegal, Uganda and Zaire. With a mandate to oversee the implementation of the Arusha Accords but not to use violence unless for self-defence, the first troops from the UNAMIR began to arrive in November of 1993. From the outset, however, UNAMIR was underfunded, understaffed and had little international backing. Demands for economy were voiced by the US, Britain and Belgium who all wanted to scale down the operation, despite being aware of the preparations for the mass slaughter of Tutsi.[21] The US in particular was reluctant to involve itself in any mission in Africa after an unsuccessful mission in Somalia the year before in which elite US troops were killed in Mogadishu and many more US troops were wounded and trapped by armed mobs.[22] Belgium contributed troops but only half the number requested and those sent by other countries, particularly Bangladesh, Ghana, and Tunisia, were less well trained and armed, resulting in a weakened force overall.[23] Despite calls from General Roméo Dallaire to extend UNAMIR's mandate and provide additional troops, when the

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[18] The RPF also included Tutsi refugees from neighbouring Tanzania, Burundi and Zaire but refugees living in Uganda made up the majority. Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis*, p. 104.
[19] Ibid., 107.
[20] Ibid., 107.
[21] Des Forges, p. 7.
[22] Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, p. 78.
[23] Des Forges, p. 20.

genocide broke out, the Belgian government withdrew altogether and, following a vote by the UN Security Council, UNAMIR was reduced to just 270 soldiers. UNAMIR was left short-handed with insufficient provisions of water, food, fuel and equipment.

Not only did international leaders fail to make the necessary military interventions, but also it took weeks for them to acknowledge the genocide and use their political or moral authority to condemn it. Throughout the early days of the genocide, the interim government, which was orchestrating the killings, was still given legitimacy by the international community and even held a seat on the UN Security Council.[24] Still believing that the violence was the result of a breakdown of the peace process, UN Secretary General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, argued that a ceasefire was the most important objective.[25] The ambassador from the Czech Republic, Karel Kovanda, told the Council that calling for a ceasefire was 'rather like wanting Hitler to reach a ceasefire with the Jews'; however, Kovanda was encouraged to keep quiet by British and American diplomats.[26] Britain, the US and China also objected to a proposal by the President of the UN Security Council, Colin Keating, to issue a statement recognising that genocide was being carried out in Rwanda. Such a statement would have legally bound all states signed up to the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide to intervene.[27] Eventually, a statement was issued that quoted the Genocide Convention but did not use the word 'genocide'.[28] What is more, at the French insistence, the statement also called upon the RPF to 'take effective measures to prevent any attacks on civilians in areas under their control', insinuating that the level of violence was equal on both sides.[29]

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[24] Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, p. 172
[25] Ibid., p. 172.
[26] Cited in ibid., p. 179.
[27] Linda Melvern, 'Missing the Story: The Media and the Rwanda Genocide' in *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, ed. by Allan Thompson (London: Pluto Press, 2007), pp. 198–210, (p. 204).
[28] Ibid., p. 205; Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, p. 180.
[29] Cited in Melvern, 'Missing the Story', p. 205; Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, p.180.

The genocide was also misrepresented in the international media. According to Linda Melvern, the first mention of the word 'genocide' in relation to Rwanda appeared on 11 April in Jean-Philippe Ceppi's article for the French newspaper, *Libération*.[30] Following this publication, however, the word disappeared from the media. The world had turned its attention to the other major story taking place on the African continent; the first elections to take place in post-apartheid South Africa. While in early May, 2500 accredited journalists had flocked to South Africa, the number of reporters in Rwanda never exceeded 15.[31] The few news stories that did cover the genocide were dominated by clichés and stereotypes of tribal savagery, ancient hatreds and general chaos. Such a misrepresentation of what was, in reality, a highly organised genocide suggested that nothing could have been done. As Richard Dowden writes, 'the language used by the press to describe Rwanda reinforced the impression that what was going on was an inevitable and primitive process that had no rational explanation and could not be stopped by negotiation or force'.[32] The genocide was a complex story in a country that few people had heard about; even the journalists reporting the story had very little knowledge about Rwanda.[33] Although eventually newspapers did gradually move from reporting about tribal war to reporting about genocide, by this point, the world's attention had already turned to a new story and one that was simpler to portray: the mass exodus of refugees first into Tanzania and later into Zaire. The refugee camps and subsequent epidemic of cholera attracted some 500 journalists and a flurry of media attention.[34]

Journalists only returned to Rwanda when the French launched their 'Opération Turquoise'. Authorised by the UN Security Council on the 22

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[30] Melvern, 'Missing the Story', p. 201.

[31] Ibid., p. 204.

[32] Richard Dowden, 'The Media's Failure: a Reflection on the Rwanda Genocide', in *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, ed. by Allan Thompson (London: Pluto Press, 2007), pp. 248–255 (p.252).

[33] Anne Chaon, 'Who Failed in Rwanda, Journalists or the Media?', in *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, ed. by Allan Thompson (London: Pluto Press, 2007), pp. 160–166 (p. 162).

[34] Lindsey Hilsum, 'Reporting Rwanda: the Media and the Aid Agencies', in *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, ed. by Allan Thompson (London: Pluto Press, 2007), pp. 166–187 (p. 167).

June, Opération Turquoise was launched on 18 July. The mission was given a Chapter VII mandate allowing 'all necessary means'; the mandate that Dallaire had fought so hard for but up to that point had not been granted.[35] As Melvern writes, 'at the news of the French intervention, Dallaire was incredulous. It immediately weakened and endangered his own mission'.[36] Opération Turquoise was widely criticised and several member states abstained from the Security Council vote, suspicious that this was not a purely humanitarian mission.[37] Officially, the mission was supposed to secure humanitarian areas and protect displaced people and fleeing refugees; however, the news of the French arrival only served to increase the confidence of the Rwandan interim government in its genocide project. Although the French attempted to appear neutral, they were warmly welcomed by the killers who erected French flags and garlanded their vehicles with flowers. The immediate impact of the humanitarian zone established by the French army was to provide a secure retreat for the perpetrators of the genocide. Moreover, massacres continued to take place in the so called 'safe zone'. There was even an arms delivery from the French to the genocide perpetrators in Goma while Opération Turquoise was underway.[38] In the words of Patrick de Saint-Exupéry, Opération Turquoise was 'une opération littéralement schizophrénique'.[39]

In the media, images of Rwandans were dichotomised as either pathetic, helpless victims or barbaric savages. Meanwhile, despite the controversy of Opération Turquoise, the French were portrayed as saviours sent in to 'stop the carnage'.[40] As Edgar Roskis describes it:

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[35] Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, p. 211.

[36] The French mission reduced any chance of UNAMIR receiving further troops. Moreover, while the French force, with its Chapter VII mandate, operated out of Goma, UNAMIR was refined to Kigali with limited resources. Yet the frontline of the RPF and the Rwandan government forces was in between them. Ibid., p. 211.

[37] Ibid., p. 211.

[38] Patrick de Saint-Exupéry, *Complices de l'Inavouable: La France au Rwanda* (Paris: Éditions des Arènes, 2004), pp. 210–211.

[39] Ibid., p. 128.

[40] Melissa Wall, 'An Analysis of News Magazine Coverage of the Rwanda Crisis in the United States', in *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, ed. by Allan Thompson (London: Pluto Press, 2007), pp. 261–273 (pp. 266–268).

> Courtesy of Opération Turquoise, images of the good White Man, hale and hearty, feared as much as admired by the dark masses held in awe by his confident gaze – the White Man, ready to go anywhere, anytime, to help the widows, the orphans and the sick, heedless of adversity, disdainful of danger. In the end, these were comforting, iconic images for Western eyes and easy pickings for the media.[41]

Similarly, in late July, British and American soldiers arrived in Kigali, and were applauded for taking control of the airport but, as Mark Doyle points out, this was ridiculous as the RPF had been in control of the airport for many weeks.[42]

Following the misunderstandings and disinterest of the international community during the genocide, aid money from the World Bank and the European Union was blocked.[43] Moreover, despite the guilty role played by numerous international players, there remains to this day a lack of recognition of this role. Although former US President, Bill Clinton, apologised for the international community's failure in Rwanda, there have been no congressional investigations into the decision-making process in the US government.[44] The UK, a permanent member of the UN Security Council, is also yet to question the policies of its government toward Rwanda.[45] As for France, the French consistently denied their role throughout the period of genocide. During Opération Turquoise, François Mitterrand gave a speech in which he confirmed the success of the operation which, according to him, had saved tens of thousands of lives.[46] Mitterrand denied any involvement of France in the genocide and claimed that the only

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[41] Edgar Roskis, 'A Genocide Without Images: White Film Noirs', in *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, ed. by Allan Thompson (London: Pluto Press, 2007), pp. 238–241 (p. 240).

[42] Mark Doyle, 'Reporting the Genocide', in *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, ed. by Allan Thompson (London: Pluto Press, 2007), pp. 145–159 (p. 155).

[43] Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis*, pp. 328, 336.

[44] Melvern, 'Missing the Story', p. 203.

[45] Ibid., p. 203.

[46] According to Melvern, the French military claim that Opération Turquoise saved around 17,000 people but Prunier estimates the figure to be 10-13,000. Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, p. 215.

reason France had not intervened earlier was because this was the duty of the United Nations.[47]

It was not until 1998 that, after frequent accusations, France first launched an inquiry into its role in the genocide. Although the inquiry promised much, Melvern notes that the 'report repeated rumour, speculation and intrigue and to date the most basic of facts are to be established'.[48] In the same year, the former French Prime Minister, Edouard Balladur, denied that France had continued arms deals with Rwanda during the genocide. Meanwhile, Pierre Péan, a confident of François Mitterrand launched the notion of a 'double genocide', a theory that was perpetuated by Mitterrand's successor, President Jacques Chirac. Referred to by Prunier as 'an absolute sham', the theory of the double genocide posits that the attacks led by the RPF during the early 1990s in Rwanda and those carried out in Zaire in 1996 equated to a genocide against the Hutu.[49] Though it is true that the RPF was responsible for mass killings, these did not amount to an attempt to wipe out the Hutu population and thus do not constitute genocide.[50] The theory of the double genocide has been widely discredited and is considered to be a form of revisionism as its proponents use it to detract from the genocide committed against the Tutsi.

This overview of the role of outsiders in the genocide demonstrates not only the multi-national involvement in this history but also the continuous misunderstanding and misrepresentation of Rwandan people and society by the international community. Through their testimonies, many of the Rwandan women discussed in this thesis attempt to highlight the guilt and challenge the misunderstandings of the international community, seeking accountability on the one hand and acknowledgement on the other.

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[47] De Saint-Exupéry, p. 150
[48] Melvern, *A People Betrayed*, p. 234.
[49] Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis*, p. 339.
[50] Ibid., p. 339.

Testimony as Agency and Communion

Perhaps the most vocal of the survivors with respect to holding the international community to account is LK, who draws attention to the link between Rwanda's colonial history and the genocide. She states that the violence was caused by 'a seed that was sown long ago during the colonial era'. LK also highlights the international community's failure to condemn the genocide at the time when it could have made a difference: 'other countries participated in causing the genocide. If people condemned the genocide, then it wouldn't have taken place'.

While drives of agency are pursued through exposing the actions of the international community, drives of communion are pursued through the need to gain acknowledgement for the genocide and its implications. For example, LK asks the 'international community [to be] lenient on Rwanda for it is as if Rwanda is running in a race in which it is lame while the others in the race are all fit'. The devastation caused by the genocide is often overlooked by outsiders who tend to be overly critical of Rwanda.[51] As is reflected in LK's testimony, Rwandans themselves often feel that the international community's criticisms lack an understanding of the enduring problems Rwanda faces. In the following extract, LK reaches out to the international community in an attempt to gain its acknowledgement and, consequently, its assistance:

> What I can ask the international community is to help us so that
> Rwanda may be the pride of the world instead of considering us
> a burden. They take us for regular people but we are not normal,

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[51] For example, in his review of *Remaking Rwanda: State Building and Human Rights after Mass Violence*, ed. by Scott Straus and Lars Waldorf (University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 2011), Gerald Caplan suggests that the authors present an 'unbalanced' view of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) which highlights human rights violations and democratic abuse but fails to recognise the miraculous reconstruction that has taken place in Rwanda since the genocide. Gerald Caplan, 'Rwanda 17 Years Later: What is the Truth', *Pambazuka News*, issue 553, (19 October 2011) <http://pambazuka.org/en/category/books/77258> [accessed 15 October 2013], para. 2 of 37.

we are not normal at all.[52]

Once more LK makes reference to the fact that the international community overlooks the devastation caused by the genocide. Moreover, just as many survivors avoid the perception of survivors as burdens within Rwandan society (see Chapter 1), LK also contests the idea of Rwandans as burdens in the eyes of the international community. Indeed, this extract suggests LK's frustration with the international community for failing to take into account the problems that Rwanda faces and its need for international assistance.

In a similar vein, MCK attempts to galvanise the international community into fighting against the genocide by recognising that it is not exclusively a Rwandan problem but one that extends to all of humanity:

> So the whole world should join their hands to stop genocide
> all over the world. Let it be everyone's task because genocide
> is evil, it is full of mankind's unacceptable crimes. Everyone
> with a sense of humanity should prevent it wherever they
> are... because genocide is beyond any kind of crime you can
> think of.

The shared, collective nature of the genocide and its implications not just for Rwanda but for all of humanity are evoked in MCK's lexical choices such as 'the whole world', 'everyone's task', 'mankind', and 'everyone with a sense of humanity'. By holding the international community to account on the one hand while seeking its acknowledgement on the other, Rwandan genocide survivors such as LK and MCK are attempting to pursue the drives of agency and communion.

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[52] The negative form of the verb 'gusangwa' meaning 'to be normal' is used here. The original translation of this extract is as follows: 'They need to consider us as special people because indeed we are special. We are special'. My translation is literal; however, perhaps the word 'extraordinary' would be most accurate. LK is implying that Rwandans are different from other people because they lived through the genocide; this makes them extraordinary.

For many survivors who testify for the Genocide Archive of Rwanda, giving testimony may be the only means they have of engaging with an international audience, their sole opportunity to challenge outsiders' understandings of the genocide. They may come from rural areas, not know any foreigners or speak any European languages. For them, these testimonies are a crucial means of gaining accountability and acknowledgement. Posttraumatic growth is a process rather than an outcome and, by scrutinising the acts of the international community at the same time as asking for its recognition, survivors are attempting to affirm their collective need for agency and communion. For testimony to have a transformative effect, however, the listener must be responsive. For example, in a discussion of agentic and communal growth, McAdams argues that agentic growth themes such as 'achievement' require overcoming challenges.[53] If survivors are to truly experience agentic growth, then their contestation of the status quo needs to be heard. Similarly for communal growth themes, such as 'dialogue', there needs to be an exchange: 'What is important to note is that communication […] is reciprocal'.[54]

Dauge-Roth draws a similar conclusion when he discusses the experience of listening to survivors' stories which, he argues, 'impose on us a duty to rethink how we position ourselves within the present and among the living in relationship to this painful past in order to recognise both its long-lasting aftermath and its present demands'.[55] This response is likely to lead to a 'mutually transformative dialogue'.[56] However, if as listeners we decide 'that survivors' testimonies are "too much"', then they may simply 'affirm us in our unquestioned belief that our order of things is immune to the

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[53] Dan P. McAdams, 'Coding Autobiographical Episodes for Themes of Agency and Communion' (2001)
<http://www.sesp.northwestern.edu/docs/Agency_Communion01.pdf> [accessed 15 October 2013], pp. 5–7
[54] Ibid. pp. 9–10.
[55] Dauge-Roth, 'Fostering a Listening Community', para. 23 of 23.
[56] Ibid., para. 7 of 23.

possibility of genocide'.[57] Such a response casts survivors' voices 'as interferences with respect to an exclusive social order that defines what is culturally audible and legitimate'.[58] Unfortunately, despite survivors' attempts to engage with the international community through their testimonies, a number of factors are impeding survivors' voices from being heard, and so preventing any possibility of a 'transformative dialogue'. Although survivors express the desire for accountability and acknowledgement, they also recognise the futility of this endeavour, demonstrated by their anticipation that the international community will only deny the genocide and refuse to engage with the truth.

Anticipated Denial

LK, for example, is vocal in this respect. Having worked as a reporter at the ICTR, she expresses frustration that, even in the face of evidence, people from other countries deny the genocide:

> Why do they deny it when they have all the facts? I was there at the trials [ICTR], I was reporting on it and I saw. I saw people coming, coming with evidence and they rejected it! They would show them how the genocide was prepared, how it happened but they rejected it. Will they not deny the genocide tomorrow that they once accepted?

In addition to her frustration with denial, this extract also echoes the findings of Des Forges and Longman who report 'negative attitudes toward the tribunal' which many Rwandans consider 'foreign to traditional Rwandan methods of conflict resolution' with 'little concern for community interests'.[59] LK goes on to call for acknowledgement in the form of assistance but is frustrated by the futility of her plea: 'Let them help us, instead of sitting in a meeting tomorrow, saying that the genocide did not take place'. In a similar vein, FM, who accuses foreign countries of

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[57] Ibid., para. 23 of 23.
[58] Ibid., para. 23 of 23.
[59] Des Forges and Longman, p. 56.

harbouring perpetrators of the genocide, is also discouraged by anticipated denial:

> It really hurts me to see the world overlook what happened. Especially those who know what happened but choose to ignore it. I think they should help us and arrest those people they shelter. I look around and I realise we don't have enough power. My wish is that they hand us the people they hold in their countries. I think that foreign nations play ignorant. They know about the genocide. They watched it on TV; their satellites zoomed in on us. But now they just play ignorant. But of course, they have their interests that we don't know. They just pretend as if they don't know. They know what happened.

Here, FM pursues the drive of agency by contesting the status quo, denouncing foreign countries for harbouring criminals.[60] In addition to challenging the actions of international actors, FM also seeks acknowledgement ('I think they should help us'), pursuing the drive of communion by attempting to gain the collaboration of the international community. She recognises, however, the lack of agency among Rwandan survivors (i.e. 'I realise we don't have enough power') as well as the lack of acknowledgement or connection with the outside (i.e. '[they] choose to ignore it', 'They just pretend as if they don't know'). The desire to be heard, which would provide Rwandan survivors with the sense of empowerment and relatedness they desire, is ultimately unfulfilled because, even when faced with the truth, survivors believe that the international community will continue to deny the genocide. However, it is not only the lack of responsiveness from the international community that impedes survivors from pursuing the drives of agency and communion, as other factors also restrict survivors' voices from being heard, rendering their words powerless.

In order to communicate with the world beyond Rwanda, survivors are dependent on outlets from which their voices may emerge. This thesis focuses on the testimonies collected by the Aegis Trust which are housed in the Genocide Archive of Rwanda; however, some survivors have also

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[60] Many countries (notably France and Britain) have refused the extradition of Rwandan perpetrators to Rwanda on the grounds that they would not receive a fair trial in Rwanda.

published their testimonies in book format either individually or as part of a collection of testimonies. For survivors' voices to be understood by an international audience however, their testimonies must be translated into other languages. Testimonies disseminated in book format are also subject to editorial control. In the sections that follow, the impact of translation and editing on survivors' voices will be explored.

Obstruction by Translators

One of the greatest barriers to effective communication with the world beyond Rwanda is a linguistic one. Survivors give their testimonies in Kinyarwanda with the understanding that they will be translated into English and/or French. However, this means that what is accessible to the outside world is the translator's representation of what is said, rather than the words uttered by survivors themselves. The digital archive holds testimonies that were collected between 2004 and 2007. These were translated into English and French, making them accessible to both anglophone and francophone audiences. More recently, a number of new testimonies were collected in 2011, many of which were selected for translation for a project called 'Witness for Humanity', an exhibition on genocide that was developed by the Shoah Foundation at the University of Southern California. These testimonies have been translated into English only, and thus immediately exclude a French-speaking audience. However, even for an English-speaking audience, survivors' words are not completely accessible because of mistakes and inaccuracies in the translations.[61]

All translation involves some level of error making or alteration of the original material;[62] however, the inescapable challenges of this process are particularly acute for the translation of testimonies housed in the Genocide

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[61] Throughout this thesis, where translations of testimony are inaccurate, I have amended the English so it corresponds more precisely to the original text. All my analysis has been carried out on the original Kinyarwanda transcripts.

[62] Antoine Berman, for example, discusses 13 distorting tendencies which, he argues, are inherent in all translations. See Antoine Berman, *La Traduction et la lettre ou l'auberge du lointain* (Mauvezin: Editions Trans-Europe-Repress, 1985), p. 68.

Archive of Rwanda. For example, the recent shift from French to English as the main European language used in Rwanda poses a significant challenge. Reflecting this trend, the testimonies are increasingly being translated into English alone but given that the shift from French to English in the education system is relatively recent (2008), English language skills remain less well developed.[63] The relatively poor English language skills of most Rwandan people are likely to have a detrimental impact on the quality of translation.

A second challenge to the translation process is the pressure of time. In 2011, only around 200 testimonies had been digitised and translated. There was a push for funding at this time to meet the goal of having 1700 testimonies digitised, indexed, transcribed and translated with subtitles in time for the 20th anniversary of the genocide in 2014. This is an ambitious goal as the process is particularly time consuming. In addition, donations are solicited from the Aegis Trust through sponsorship of digitisation, indexing, transcription and translation of a given number of testimonies over a specified period of time. Often donors will divide their donations into tranches, providing an initial sum of money with the requirement that a specified quota of testimonies be translated before a given deadline. Only if the deadline is met will the next tranche of funding be made available. In her descriptions of the translation process, Marjolijn de Jager refers to translation as a 'labour of love' emphasising the importance of an 'intimate reading' and 'listening' with 'the strictest possible attention to the ear'.[64] While de Jager was discussing literary translation, attention to detail is equally necessary for accurately conveying the message of genocide survivors. With pressure to meet deadlines; however, it seems unlikely that such an 'intimate reading' can take place, meaning that ultimately the quality of translation is compromised.

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[63] Samuelson and Freedman, pp. 205–209.
[64] Cited in Kathryn Batchelor, 'Introduction: Translation – Formidable Enemy or Needed Friend', in *Intimate Enemies: Translation in Francophone Contexts*, ed. by Kathryn Batchelor and Claire Bisdorff (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), pp. 1–13 (p. 2).

Beyond these practical issues, another factor which appears to affect the quality of translation is the tendency to dilute survivors' criticisms of the West. According to Carol Gilogley, 'translation is never neutral: it can only ever be an ideologically charged process' which might easily slip into 'Western hegemonic discourse'.[65] In the most recent Rwandan women's testimonies, there are a number of translation mistakes in sections of text that are critical of the international community. Many of these mistranslations make Rwanda appear stronger, less desperate and less critical of the West than the original versions. This conforms to the popular Western understanding of survivors as passive, stoical victims discussed in greater detail below. While poor language skills and time restraints undoubtedly play a role in distorting the voices of survivors, the tendency (conscious or otherwise) to alter the testimonies so that they conform to the dominant ideology is particularly obstructive of survivors' collective pursuit of agency and communion.

For example, the following is an extract from the Kinyarwanda version of IM's testimony, describing the role of foreign soldiers at roadblocks in the period leading up to the genocide. IM is referring to a particular roadblock set up at the entrance gate to a market:

Barakubitwaga	wahita	ngo:	'Ngiyo
They used to beat you	*if you passed*	*[they would say]*	*'Hey'*
'niyo yo!'	Ukajya	mu misa,	ugakubitwa,
'Here's one!'	*You go*	*to mass,*	*and you are beaten,*
ku isoko,	ugakubitwa.	Hari	amabariyeri
to the market,	*and you are beaten.*	*There were*	*roadblocks*
ku…	hariya	ku miryango	y'isoko.
in	*there*	*at the gates*	*of the market.*
Hariho	n'abazungu,	hari	nabazungu.
There were	*even Whites,*	*there were*	*even Whites.*
Umwe	ahagaze	hakuriya	undi
One	*stood*	*on that side*	*another*

[65] Carol Gilogley, 'Subverting Subversion? Translation Practice and Malpractice in the Work of Patrick Chamoiseau', in *Intimate Enemies: Translation in Francophone Contexts*, ed. by Kathryn Batchelor and Claire Bisdorff (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), pp. 161–180 (p. 162).

ahagaze	hakuno,	ndibuka	banyatse
stood	*on this side,*	*I remember*	*they took from me*
indangamuntu	ngo	ntabwo	ushobora
the identity card	*that*	*never*	*you can*
gutanga	Indangamuntu	kandi	yanditsemo
give	*the identity card*	*And [when]*	*it has written on it*
'Tutsi'.	Ndayibahereza	Ngo:	'Tutsi?!'
'Tutsi'.	*I give it to them*	*[They ask]*	*'Tutsi?!'*
ngo	bicana	amajisho,	barayimpereza
that	*they wink*	*[their] eyes,*	*they give it back to me*
ndahita	mu	mwisoko	bakajya
then I go [quickly]	*into*	*the market*	*and they come*
bakubaza:	'Hutu?!'	Tubahereza	idatite
they ask you	*'[Are you] Hutu?'*	*We give them*	*the identity card*
tujya	guhaha.	Ukavayo	ari
[and] we go	*to shop.*	*Coming from there*	*it is*
aha	Nyagasani.	Kwari	ukwihara.
up to	*God.*	*It was*	*giving yourself up.*
Ese bari	abazungu	ba hehe?	
Were they/these	*Whites*	*from where?*	
Bavugaga ko	ari ababirigi	n'abafaransa.	Ariko
They said that	*they were Belgian*	*and French.*	*But*
bari	barebare	cyane.	Bari
they were	*tall*	*very.*	*They were*
abafaransa.			
French			

The translator's version of this extract is as follows:

> -There were beatings at the church and market. There was a roadblock at the entry gates to the market, which involved even the white people, they asked for my ID, they stood on both sides. I had a Tutsi ID, I gave it to them and they said, 'It's a Tutsi!' winked at each other, gave it back to me then I walked straight into the market. Sometimes we would lie and claim to be Hutu though it was risky to do that.
> -What kind of whites were those people?
> -Majorly Belgians and French. But among the two, the French were taller and much more visible.

A more literal translation might read:

-They would beat you if you passed, saying 'here's one!'[66] If you went to mass or to the market you'd be beaten. There were roadblocks at the market gates. There were even Whites there, one on that side and one on this side. I remember they took my ID card. You could never give an ID card with 'Tutsi' written on it. I give it to them. Then they ask if I am Tutsi. They wink [at each other] then give it back to me. I hurry into the market. They come and ask if you are Hutu but when we give them our identity cards, we go and shop but leaving there is up to God. [Going shopping] was to give yourself up.
   - Where were those white people from?
- They said they were Belgian and French but they were very tall. They were French.

IM is describing the actions of the French army in Rwanda during its 'Opération Noroît' (1990-1993). Importantly, IM provides evidence that French soldiers asked people for their identity cards and were involved in the beatings of those holding a card designating them as Tutsi. In addition to some of the general distorting tendencies which may be observed in the translator's version of this extract,[67] there are also four key alterations which dilute IM's accusations against the French. Firstly, agency is more explicitly allocated to French soldiers in the original version 'Barakubitwaga' ('They would beat you') than in the translator's version: 'there were beatings'. Secondly, in the original text, the outcome of being beaten appears much more of a certainty than in the translation: '[Going shopping] was to give yourself up'. Presumably, IM means here that going shopping meant giving yourself up to the people who were beating Tutsi. In contrast, the translated version implies that it was possible to avoid being beaten ('Sometimes we would lie and claim to be Hutu though it was risky to do that'). This sentence is a distortion as IM does not mention the possibility of lying to avoid being beaten. Thirdly, the translator reduces French responsibility by

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[66] In the expression 'niyo' ('here's one'), the connective particle '-yo' corresponds to the Kinyarwanda class 9 ('in-') suggesting agreement with the word 'inyenzi' ('cockroach') rather than 'umututsi' (which would be '-wo') as in the translated version ('It's a Tutsi!').

[67] A general analysis of the ways in which the translations have been distorted goes beyond the scope of this thesis; however, a number of the deforming tendencies identified by Berman are apparent in this and other translations, such as 'rationalisation', 'clarification', 'ennoblissement', 'appauvrissement qualitative', 'appauvrissement quantitatif', 'homogénéisation' to name but a few. See Berman, pp. 69–75.

implying that both French and Belgian soldiers were involved in checking Tutsi identity cards while in the original version IM states that only French soldiers were involved. Finally, in the original version, the scenario of handing over the ID card is repeated on three occasions. On the first occasion, IM speaks in the past tense and in the first person singular ('they took *my* ID card'). On the second, IM remains in the first person singular but switches to the present tense ('*I* give it to them').[68] On the final occasion, IM continues to use the present tense but switches pronoun to use an indefinite 'you' ('ask if *you* are Hutu') and a collective first person plural ('*we* give them our identity cards'). The repetition, change in tense and shift in pronoun in the original version imply that this scenario may have occurred on numerous occasions and was not unique to IM's experience. In contrast, the translated version only recounts the scenario once and employs the past tense, suggesting that this was an isolated event. Despite holding French soldiers to account and providing invaluable evidence against the role of France in the run up to the genocide, the translation attenuates IM's accusations against the French and, therefore, reduces any sense of agency that IM might have gained from her interpretation of history.

Similar changes and omissions may be found in the translation of LK's testimony. This is particularly the case when LK is accusing the international community of complicity in the genocide and failure to provide effective assistance in the aftermath. For example, in the following statement LK appears to blame major international players for causing the genocide:

Genocide	ni	produit	yimbaraga
The genocide	*is*	*a product*	*of forces/powers*
zafatanyijwe.	Mu buryo	bwinshi	zijyera
that cooperated.	*In ways*	*many*	*they led to*
ku kwica	abantu	abandi	batavuze.

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[68] The present tense can be used in Kinyarwanda to explain things that happened in the past. It is referred to as the narrative tense.

the killing [of]	*people*	*other people*	*they didn't speak.*

The translated version of this extract is as follows:

> The genocide is a product of strengths in different aspects and these strengths made people kill while others were quiet.

The extract might more accurately be translated as:

> The genocide was caused by [world] powers. In many ways, [world powers] caused the killing of people while other people remained silent.

Given that, in this section of her testimony, LK is discussing Rwanda's history in a global context, it seems safe to assume that LK is referring to 'world powers' whom she accuses of causing the genocide. The translator's use of the word 'strengths' and of the phrase 'different aspects' renders LK's words in this extract more or less meaningless. When trying to point the finger at international players, therefore, LK's words are changed to the point of incomprehensibility to an international audience. This is also the case for the following extract of her testimony:

Imbaraga	zitera	Genocide	zituruka
The forces	*that caused*	*the genocide*	*they came from*
hanze.	Ziva	hanze	yigihugu
outside.	*They came from*	*outside*	*this country*
Kuko	burya	abantu bo	mu gihugu
Because	*these*	*people*	*in [this] country*
bafite	uko	babana	
they have	*how [a means]*	*they live together*	

This extract was translated as follows:

> But mostly so that forces that caused the genocide are outside the country because people in the country have a way of living together.

A more accurate translation might read:

> The forces that caused the genocide came from outside. They came from outside this country because the people in the country have a way of living together.

This mistranslation makes it appear as if the forces that caused the genocide are currently outside Rwanda (i.e. Hutu extremists) when, in the original, LK states quite clearly that the forces that caused the genocide *came* from outside the country (i.e. the international community). The translator's use of the verb 'to be' ('*are* outside') is clearly misrepresentative of the verbs 'guturuka' ('to originate from') and 'kuva' ('to come from') used by LK. However, a few seconds later in LK's testimony, the phrase 'Iteka ikibi kiva hanze' ('Bad things always come from outside the country') is correctly translated. Clearly the attribution of 'bad things' to the international community is not as explicit an accusation as the statement 'the forces that caused the genocide came from outside', demonstrating that the translator was able (or willing) to translate the verb 'kuva' accurately in a less critical context. In another part of her testimony, LK discusses the role of the international community in Rwanda after the genocide:

Njyewe	ndavuga	hari	abantu
Me	*I say*	*there are*	*people*
batazagira	acces	ku Rwanda.	Iki
who don't have	*access*	*to Rwanda.*	*This*
kintu	cyabaye,	abantu	bakunda
thing	*happened,*	*people*	*like*
kuza	hano	bakavuga	ngo
to come	*here*	*and say*	*that*
ntikizongere.	Ariko	wajya	kumva,
it musn't happen again.	*But*	*you come*	*to hear,*
ukumva	ahantu	hariya	hariya
you hear	*in this place*	*there*	*there*
ubuzima	bwabacitse ku icumu	buri	menacer.
the life	*of survivors*	*is*	*threatened.*
Ahubwo	niba	bishoboka,	bazafashe
But	*if*	*it is possible,*	*they should help*
Abanyarwanda,	banafashe	isi.	Bo
Rwandan people,	*and they would help*	*the world.*	*Them,*
no,	gufata	ibyo	bintu,
even,	*they take*	*those*	*things,*

babijyane	ahandi.	Bababwire	uko
they take them	*elsewhere.*	*Let them tell them*	*that*
ibintu	bimeze.	Bafashe	isi
these things	*happened.*	*Let them help*	*the world*
kutongera	kugwa	mu makosa	nkayo
to not repeat	*to fall*	*into the mistakes*	*like*
yaguyemo.			
it fell into.			

The translated version of this extract reads as follows:

> I normally say that there are people who don't have access to Rwanda. They say that the genocide should not happen again but again people's lives are being threatened. If it is possible the Rwandese should help the world by sharing our history with the rest of the world, tell them how things really are.

A more faithful translation might read:

> I usually say that there are people who don't have access to Rwanda. This thing [the genocide] happened. People like to come here and say that it should never happen again. But then you hear that the lives of survivors are still being threatened here. But if it is possible, they [people from outside Rwanda] should help Rwandans, and they will help the world but they say they will help Rwanda and then they go and take their help elsewhere. Let them [Rwandan people] tell them [people from outside Rwanda] about what happened. Let them [Rwandan people] help the world not to repeat what happened and fall into the same mistakes [as Rwanda].

In this extract, LK attempts to seek agency by holding the international community to account for its failure to assist Rwanda in the aftermath of the genocide ('they go and take their help elsewhere'). She also seeks communion by proposing a dialogue between Rwandan people and the rest of the world which, she asserts, might prevent future genocides in other places ('help the world not to repeat what happened'). However, both of these aspects of the extract have been omitted from the translated version, quashing LK's attempt to seek agency and communion. These changes also appear to be ideologically motivated as, by removing LK's criticism of the West, the translator reinforces the dominant perception of survivors as

passive. Moreover, by omitting LK's suggestion that genocide could take place elsewhere, the translator reinforces the perceived 'immunity' among Western people to the sort of violence that was committed in Rwanda.

A final example of mistranslation from LK's testimony shows interference with her attempt to gain acknowledgement and establish a connection with the international community:

Genocide	ni	ikintu	tudashobora
The genocide	*is*	*a thing*	*that we cannot*
kudekriva,	consequences	zayo	ntitwazidekriva
describe,	*the consequences*	*of it*	*we cannot describe them.*
Gusa,	nyaboneka	isi	izatwumva,
Only,	*I would show*	*the world*	*it will listen to us*
izadusoma	njya	nkunda	kuvuga
it will read us	*I*	*I like to*	*say*
ngo	abantu	bajya	muri
that	*people*	*they went*	*into*
competition,	bakica	ubuzima	bwabandi.
a competition	*they killed [took]*	*the life*	*of other people.*
Batubabarire	kabisa,	bazepargne	uRwanda
Let them relieve us	*truly,*	*let them spare*	*Rwanda*
kuri	kopetisiyo	zisi.	Kuko
in	*the competition*	*of the world.*	*Because*
ntago, ntago	tunariho,	twarangije	gupfa.
never, never	*are we even living*	*we ended up*	*dying.*
Ubuzima	turimo	ntabwo	navuga
The life	*we live*	*never*	*I would say*
ngo	ni…	ubwanyuma	yurupfu,
that	*it is…*	*after this time*	*death,*
ubwarwo	ruracyahumuramo	urupfu.	
now	*you can still smell in [Rwanda]*	*the death.*	

The translator's version of this extract is as follows:

> The consequences of the Genocide cannot be skipped over. Maybe when we tell the rest of the world through writing and talking it will prevent conflicts that lead people to kill others at

national level. Internationally, Rwanda should not take a part in conflicts between nations because of our history, we are still rebuilding our nation, the consequences are still fresh.

A more literal translation of the extract reads as follows:

The genocide is something that cannot be described, we cannot describe its consequences. Only by showing the world, will they understand us, will they read our words. I like to say that people were in a competition, they killed others.[69] Let them leave us, save Rwanda from the competition. Because we are not even alive, we ended up dying. Our life, I couldn't say that… after all this time, you can still smell death in Rwanda.

Here, the translator misses the sense of desperation in LK's words which show the extent to which Rwanda is at the mercy of the international community ('let them leave us', 'save Rwanda') and instead portrays Rwanda as having a choice, ('Rwanda should not take a part in conflicts'). With the translation of being able to 'smell death' as simply 'consequences', this desperation is further moderated.

There is also a certain irony in this mistranslation of LK's words. When the translator writes, 'the consequences of the genocide cannot be skipped over', it appears that this is precisely what has been done. The translated text misses many of the details of what was actually said. Although LK says that the horrors of genocide 'cannot be described', she attempts to do so with statements such as 'we are not even alive', 'we ended up dying' and 'you can still smell death in Rwanda'. Yet, such descriptions are omitted from the translator's version, giving literal credence to LK's assertion that the consequences of genocide 'cannot be described'. This mistranslation intercepts LK's attempt to connect with the international community by gaining its acknowledgement for the misery caused by the genocide and thus impedes any genuine dialogue that may result from her testimony.

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[69] On three occasions LK speaks of a 'competition among foreigners to ensure that the genocide was carried out'. She does not clarify this point but she is presumably referring to a competition/conflict among nations and other powers for regional control, for example, the perceived conflict between France and 'les Anglo-saxons'.

Similar cases of mistranslation can be found in the following extract from CN's testimony:

Abanyamahanga	bo	rero	bari
People from other countries	*they*	*so*	*they*
bakwiye	kumenya	yuko,	en tout cas
should	*know*	*that,*	*in any case*
uko	tubanyeho.	Mu Rwanda	ubu
that	*we are living together.*	*In Rwanda*	*now*
nta	kibazo	dufite.	Twebwe,
no	*problems*	*we have.*	*Us,*
nabo	d'ailleurs	barabibona.	Nta
them	*what is more*	*they see it.*	*Not*
n'ubwo	ari	ngombwa	kubibabwira.
even now	*it is*	*necessary*	*to tell them it.*
Parce que	ni	ikintu	batumva
Because	*it is*	*something*	*they cannot understand*
cyabarenze.	Bavuga	ni	gute
it surpasses them.	*They say*	*it is*	*how [?]*
abantu	bapfa	kuriya,	bakicwa
people	*die*	*in this way,*	*they kill*
kuriya	ariko	ubungubu	bakaba
in this way	*but*	*now*	*they live*
bakibana.	N'iki?	Ni	ibintu
they live together.	*What is this?*	*It is*	*something*
bigenda	bigaragara	mu bintu	byinshi
that happens	*that is clear*	*in things*	*many*
bigenda	bikorwa	mu Rwanda.	Rero
that happen	*that are done*	*in Rwanda.*	*So*
bari	bakwiye	kumenya	yuko
they	*should*	*know*	*that*
we are ok	we are	living,	kandi
we are OK,	*we are*	*living*	*and*
on est	vraiment forts.	Mbese	tugerageza
we are	*truly strong.*	*We*	*try*
kuba	forts	kubera ko	sinon
to be	*strong*	*because*	*otherwise*
ntabwo	twari	kuba.	Tukiriho,

never	*would we be*	*living.*	*We live in this,*
bamwe baba	bariyahuye,	abandi	baragerageje
some of them	*would have committed suicide,*	*others*	*would have tried*
kwica	ababiciye.	N'iki?	Donc
to kill	*those who killed.*	*What is this?*	*Therefore*
tubayeho.	Yeah.	Kandi	nibazajya
we live together.	*Yes.*	*And*	*if they will go*
batubona	il ne faut pas ko	batubona,	batu jugea
if they see us	*it mustn't be that*	*they see us,*	*they judge us*
kubera	ubwoko.		
on the basis of	*ethnicity.*		

The translated version of this text is as follows:

> Foreigners should know that, we live in a perfect harmony. We don't even have to tell it to them, they can see it with their eyes. It is seen in so many things done here in Rwanda. They have to know that we are living and we are strong. Otherwise some would have committed suicide and others would have taken revenge themselves. And they shouldn't judge us according to our ethnic groups.

A more literal translation of this extract might read:

> People from other countries should know that we are living together in Rwanda now and we don't have any problems. What is more, they can see it. It isn't even necessary to tell them because it is something that they cannot understand; it surpasses them. They ask: 'how can these people die like that? How can they kill like that and then live together?' It is something that can be seen in everything that is done in Rwanda. They should know that we are OK, we are living. We are truly strong. We try to be strong because otherwise we wouldn't be able to live in this situation. Some people would have committed suicide while others would have tried to kill the killers. How could that work? Therefore we live together. And if they come to see us, they shouldn't judge us on the basis of our ethnicity.

The translated version of CN's words paints a somewhat rosier picture compared to the Kinyarwanda version. 'We live in perfect harmony', for example, suggests a much more positive situation than 'we don't have any problems'. The statement about the strength of Rwandan people is also more confident in the translated version ('they have to know that we are living

and we are strong') as opposed to the original version. In the original, CN's repetition of this statement, first in English ('we are OK, we are living'), then in French ('on est vraiment forts'), and then, more hesitantly in Kinyarwanda ('we try to be strong'/'tugerageza kuba forts') intimates that this assertion is more tentative than suggested by the translated version. In addition, as CN makes clear, this strength only exists because there is no alternative ('otherwise we wouldn't be able to live in this situation'). Another difference between the original and the translated version is the omission of the statement:

> [I]t is something that they cannot understand; it surpasses them. They ask: 'how can these people die like that? How can they kill like that and then live together?' It is something that can be seen in everything that is done in Rwanda.

In the translated version, it appears that CN is saying that there is no need to tell foreign people about Rwanda because the impact of the genocide is obvious. In the original version, however, it appears that CN is saying that there is no need to tell foreign people about Rwanda because they will never understand. It is ironic that CN's words 'they cannot understand' are in effect true because these words remain untranslated in the English version. As such, the international community has no way of knowing that this Rwandan woman is accusing it of being unable to understand. Thus, CN's sense of helplessness with regards to gaining understanding or acknowledgement from the international community is exacerbated by the mistranslation which serves only to obstruct any potential dialogue with an international audience.

It appears that the overall tendency of the translators is to portray these Rwandan women as more accepting of their situation and less critical of the West. Unfortunately, I have little knowledge regarding the identities of the translators as this work is outsourced to an external translator and his team. The French translations appear to be less subject to ideological manipulation than the more recent English translations. Among the testimonies from my

corpus that have been translated into English, I identified 12 extracts in which the individual referred to the West. In 7 of these 12 (58%) there were mistranslations which appear to be ideologically motivated. Of the earlier recorded testimonies (2004-2007) that were translated into French, 5 extracts in which the individual discussed the West were identified and 2 of these contained changes which appear to be ideological (40%).[70] It is possible that the earlier French translations were carried out by survivors and that the more recent English translations were carried out by English-speaking returnees. However, this is conjecture. A more systematic investigation into translation errors would need to be carried out to draw more concrete conclusions but such an investigation goes beyond the scope of this thesis. What my analysis does show is that, while language skills and time restrictions may have played a role in the above examples of mistranslation, there also appears to be an underlying ideological component involved.

The earlier recorded testimonies that were translated into French and English have also been made available on the digital archive which is accessible throughout the world.[71] Some of these have been collated into a volume and published by the Aegis Trust in 2006 as a book entitled *We Survived: Genocide in Rwanda*.[72] It would seem that such a project would provide survivors with the opportunity to have their voices heard by an even broader audience. However, as the following analysis will reveal, the testimonies included therein stray significantly from their original form. Excluding a francophone audience, the book is in English and relies on the English translations. This is problematic because these were of a lower quality to the French versions. The versions printed in *We Survived* were

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[70] Changes to the French translations are discussed in the next section of this chapter.

[71] Between 10 December 2010 when the digital archive was launched and 30 September 2011, around 50,000 people from 148 different countries visited the site, demonstrating that these testimonies are indeed being accessed by a broad international audience. Visitors spent an average of 13 minutes on the site, suggesting that many people spend a considerable amount of time engaging with the site's contents. The digital archive, therefore, plays an important role in relaying the voices of Rwandan survivors to a worldwide audience.

[72] *We Survived: Genocide in Rwanda* ed. by Wendy Whitworth, (Laxton, UK: Quill Press, 2006), referred to hereafter as *We Survived*.

edited by Wendy Whitworth, Publishing Manager at the Aegis Trust, who is a British woman and who speaks neither French nor Kinyarwanda. Having once been interpreted by a translator with relatively poor English language skills, the testimonies have subsequently been modified by an editor with no specialist knowledge of Kinyarwanda. What is more, comments made by survivors about the international community and/or foreign people appear to be censored. This poses a significant obstruction to any potential dialogue that could be generated by this book between survivors and the outside world.

Obstruction by Editors

Seven of the women's testimonies included in the sample of 18 analysed in this thesis are present in edited form in *We Survived*. Of those seven, four make reference to foreign people or to the international community in the original versions but these references have been significantly modified in the book versions. For example, in the following extract, which appears in the original version of SPM's testimony, she describes how pleased she is when the international community accepts that genocide took place in Rwanda:

> Ce qui nous a réjouis était de savoir la Communauté Internationale admettre qu'il a vraiment eu lieu. C'est vraiment une bonne chose. Parmi ce qui m'édifie figure le fait d'en garder mémoire.

Above all, this paragraph demonstrates how important it is to SPM that the international community acknowledges the genocide. The following passage, however, is what appears in place of this statement in *We Survived*:

> One of the things that keeps me strong is commemorating the genocide. That's why the history of these killings should never be forgotten. Not only my testimony, but everyone's. The events must be written down in books so our grandchildren will be able

> to read about it and know what happened. All future generations should learn that there was genocide here. We must keep remembering our loved ones who were killed – and what happened to them.[73]

Clearly this paragraph is a distortion of SPM's words. Not only does the replacement text omit SPM's attempt to achieve communion by communicating to the international community the importance of its acknowledgement, but also it could be interpreted as a form of self-veneration on the part of the Aegis Trust. Of course the work of documenting the genocide carried out by the Aegis Trust is invaluable. In this instance, however, SPM's testimony is being used as a means to promote and endorse this work. This endorsement comes at the expense of SPM's attempt to engage in a dialogue with the world.

Similar editorial interventions can be found in BN's testimony. In the original version, BN describes how, while still recovering from injuries incurred during the genocide, she was taking care of her son when, 'certains blancs m'avaient demandé de le leur donner pour qu'ils le prennent en charge mais j'ai refusé'. BN's son was her only child at the time and she managed to keep him with her throughout the genocide. The son plays a central role in BN's story as she reminds her listeners of his presence throughout her experience. BN's account offers a negative portrayal of these white people, whose attempt to take a woman's child away when she is in such a position of vulnerability demonstrates their lack of respect for BN's relationship with her son and her ability to care for him. Her refusal to hand him over ('j'ai refusé') emphasises BN's agency in the situation. In the version printed in *We Survived*, however, this sentence has been omitted. In fact, even the French translation of this statement does not include the full extent of BN's hostility towards these people's actions as, in the Kinyarwanda version, she continues 'niwe nsigaranye, ntabwo namubaha', meaning 'I stayed with him, I would never give him up to them'. Thus both the edited English version and, to a lesser extent, the French translation,

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[73] Whitworth, p. 99.

reduce or even remove BN's negative portrayal of white people and her display of agency in the face of their attempt to interfere with her relationship with her son.

In a similar vein, the following extract from MCU's testimony is also omitted in *We Survived*:

> La communauté internationale? Souvent, elle n'admet pas qu'il y a eu Génocide au Rwanda. A moins que j'aie l'occasion de rencontrer un président qui nie le Génocide, de n'importe quel pays, pour lui faire comprendre qu'il a eu lieu. Je pourrais lui faire visiter les endroits où des innocents ont été tués, lui montrer où ils sont enterrés, lui montrer leurs ossements… j'irais même jusqu'à lui montrer des gens devenus handicapés à cause du Génocide jusqu'à ce qu'il comprenne que le Génocide a eu lieu au Rwanda.

The language adopted by MCU in this paragraph demonstrates not only her desire to have the genocide acknowledged but also her dissatisfaction with the international community and her dream of forcing foreign presidents into confronting the graphic reality of the genocide. This portrayal of imagined, self-assured confrontation with the international community is an expression of MCU's pursuit of both agency and communion, yet, in *We Survived*, it is nowhere to be seen. The paragraph has been redacted from her testimony.

Similar interventions may be found in OM's testimony. In the original version of her testimony, OM describes how a Swiss charity named *Sentinelles* takes her to Switzerland after the genocide for medical treatment. OM explains how, after receiving numerous operations, she is told by the charity to return to Rwanda. Having undergone several operations, the high level of anaesthesia in her body means that they can perform no further treatment. Although she is reluctant to return ('je savais qu'en rentrant au Rwanda, cela me serait difficile de revenir [en Suisse]'), she is reassured by the charity that 'il n'y avait pas de problème d'argent'

and they agree to pay for her to come back later. OM goes on to describe how other Rwandans present at the time encourage her to follow this advice:

> Puis les autres Rwandais sont venus me dire que je ne devais pas refuser parce que ce serait une non-reconnaissance alors que ces Blancs m'avaient beaucoup soutenue. Qu'ils étaient même en mesure de refuser de m'aider à poursuivre avec les trois opérations qui me restaient. On me disait que si je ne rentrais pas, ils refuseraient de continuer à m'aider, que je ne devais donc pas gâcher mes chances.

This passage from OM's testimony clearly shows the precariousness of her situation and her belief that the Europeans will cut off medical assistance if she fails to comply suggests that she perceives them as somewhat punitive. Moreover, in the original Kinyarwanda version of the text, OM uses the verb 'gusuzugura' which could more accurately have been translated as 'désobéir' rather than 'refuser', implying that OM's return to Rwanda was more an order than a request. In the original, the Rwandan people are even reported to say, 'abazungu ntabwo bakunda abantu babasuzugura nyine' meaning 'white people do not like being disobeyed', further demonstrating their perceived authoritarian manner. This sentence is left untranslated in the French version and the entire paragraph is omitted from *We Survived*.

After returning to Rwanda, OM describes how she receives help from an uncle who is a doctor. The uncle writes to *Sentinelles* to explain OM's condition. In the following extract, OM describes the response they receive:

> Après un mois, ils avaient déjà répondu [à mon oncle] en lui disant qu'ils étaient très étonnés du fait qu'il n'avait rien fait pour moi à l'époque mais que tout d'un coup il s'était mis à parler! Ils ont ensuite ajouté qu'ils ont fait tout ce qu'ils pouvaient, que le Gouvernement devait faire le peu qui restait. C'est ainsi que le gardien avait refusé de continuer à m'aider.

Given her deteriorating condition, the decision to cease support to OM leaves her in a helpless situation: 'Mon état s'aggravait, j'allais de mal en pis'. Though present in *We Survived*, the extract appears in modified form:

> They replied that the difficult operations had already been done in Switzerland and the rest could now be done elsewhere. *Sentinelles* had done so much for me, but now it was up to my own country.[74]

This edited version of OM's words clearly paints a very different picture of the Swiss charity. The book version suggests that OM is grateful for all that the charity did for her, ('*Sentinelles* had done so much for me'). Moreover, it implies that it was her country's choice to help her ('it was up to my own country') rather than the result of her abandonment by the charity that left OM with no choice but to try and find treatment in Rwanda. Overall, *We Survived* portrays OM as a passive and grateful recipient of benevolent Western charity when, in reality, OM presents a much more critical depiction of this organisation. At the end of OM's testimony in *We Survived*, two entirely new paragraphs appear under the subheading 'Amazing news', in which OM apparently describes 'how an Aegis staff member came to visit me in the evening and told me something I've been dreaming of for years'.[75] This staff member explains how the 'Aegis Trust and some other people in the UK have managed to gather together the money for me to have another operation'.[76] OM goes on to 'thank all the people who have contributed towards raising the money for further surgery. I am so happy to know that some people think and care about me'.[77] None of this information is present in the original version of OM's testimony, suggesting that this text was added by the editor.[78]

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[74] Whitworth, p. 108.
[75] Ibid., p. 111.
[76] Ibid., p. 111
[77] Ibid., p. 112.
[78] It is possible that the additional content in OM's testimony (as well as the distortions observed in other testimonies in *We Survived*) came from subsequent interviews; however, it is not part of her video testimony in the Genocide Archive of Rwanda and there is no acknowledgement in *We Survived* that this information came from a subsequent interview.

Bolstering a Western Ideology: The Role of Translators and Editors in Preventing Posttraumatic Growth

It would appear that the presentation of the testimonies in *We Survived* is not solely to give a voice to survivors. Credited in the acknowledgements for having 'shaped and edited' the testimonies, Whitworth, it seems, has also distorted, modified, omitted and added words to present a certain image of Rwandans. It is not simply the case that a Western audience cannot accept criticism as the introduction to *We Survived*, written by James Smith, CEO of the Aegis Trust, includes a short summary of the role played by the international community in the genocide.[79] Rather it seems that an international (Western) audience cannot tolerate the idea of being challenged by those it perceives as victims (or at least that the editor believes a Western audience cannot tolerate such an idea). It appears preferable to the editor to portray Rwandan survivors as passive, defenseless recipients of Western good will, even if this perpetuates the stigma of victimhood that most survivors try to dispel.[80]

The sort of editorial intervention observed in *We Survived* is not uncommon, however. As Madelaine Hron observes, Rwandans 'rarely speak for themselves'.[81] Although several Rwandans have now published testimonial accounts of the genocide, the vast majority of these are written in collaboration with a Western author or have been revised by Western editors.[82] In her discussion of Hatzfeld's *Machete Season*,[83] Hron shows how Hatzfeld makes the testimonies of genocidal killers more digestible and

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[79] Whitworth, p. 9–10.

[80] See Chapter 1.

[81] Madelaine Hron, '*Gukora* and *Itsembatsemba*: The "Ordinary Killers" in Jean Hatzfeld's Machete Season', *Research in African Literatures*, 42. 2 (2011), 125–146 (p. 133).

[82] Examples of testimonies written with a collaborator include: Immaculée Ilibagiza [with Steve Erwin], *Left to Tell* (London: Hay House Ltd., 2006); Yolande Mukagasana [avec Patrick May], *La Mort ne veut pas de moi* (Paris: Fixot, 1997); Esther Mujawayo [avec Souâd Belhaddad], *SurVivantes*. Examples of testimonies published as edited collections include: de Brouwer and Ka Hon Chu, *The Men Who Killed Me*; Hatzfeld, *Dans le nu de la vie*, Jean Hatzfeld, *Une Saison de machettes* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2003), Hatzfeld, *La Stratégie des antilopes*.

[83] The second book in Hatzfeld's trilogy, *Une Saison de machettes*, (translated as *Machete Season*), collates the testimonies of killers from the Nyamata region of Rwanda.

accessible to a Western audience by shaping 'our perception of their motives and actions'.[84] Hron questions the reliability of the testimonies presented in *Machete Season* which has in the past been referred to as if it were 'an accurate historical document'.[85] For example, she highlights the fact that Hatzfeld censored the killers by asking them to rephrase if they used heroic, military vocabulary to refer to the killing. On the other hand, Hatzfeld allowed them to use agricultural terms to describe the killing which, Hron argues, leads the reader to perceive the killers as ordinary, innocent and ignorant.[86] As Hron notes, farming vocabulary has been used in past anti-Tutsi campaigns and thus, rather than reflect ignorance and ordinariness, 'it exposes a long-term campaign of extermination and an institutionalised genocidal ideology, deftly inveigled in language itself'.[87] By omitting historical context from the book, Hatzfeld leads readers to 'assume that these killer-farmers are uneducated, historically deracinated simpletons. By contrast, a historically and culturally-informed reading presents us with a much more uncomfortable scenario: that these killers are politically, historically and culturally informed actors'.[88] Overall, Hron argues that the editorial and translator interventions portray the killers as '"ordinary" before 1994' and suggest 'that this "primitive" African ethnic group is not as culturally or psychologically complex as […] a single Western serial killer'.[89] This, Hron intimates, 'reflects popular Western stereotypes about the "savage", "dark continent" of Africa, while also positing the genocide in Rwanda as an exceptional, unpredictable catastrophe'.[90]

One of the few examples of a survivor publishing their testimony without the collaboration of a Western author is LK's book, *Rwanda 1994, Le Génocide: Témoignages et Réflexions*.[91] Written in French, this work is very

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[84] Hron, p. 134.
[85] Ibid., pp. 126, 133.
[86] Ibid., p. 138.
[87] Ibid., p. 138.
[88] Ibid., p. 139.
[89] Ibid., pp. 139, 141.
[90] Ibid., p. 136.
[91] Kameya, *Rwanda 1994*. LK will henceforth be referred to as Kameya. The only other example of a survivor who has published a testimony in a European language without the

clearly addressed to the international community and to France in particular: It has a cartoon caricature on the front cover depicting the French judge Jean-Louis Bruguière and five of its fourteen chapters relate to the role of France and the international community in the genocide. Moreover, the fact that *Rwanda 1994* is written in French shows that it is intended for international readers, (as opposed to Kameya's other book, written in Kinyarwanda, *Kami yanjye: Urwibutso rwa data*, a tribute to her late father, André Kameya).

Rwanda 1994 stands out from other published testimonies as not only was it written without a foreign collaborator or editor but also it was published in Rwanda (rather than in Europe) and draws heavily on Rwandan sources.[92] Despite targeting an international audience, *Rwanda 1994* remains largely inaccessible to an international readership. A World Cat search reveals that it is only available in a few university libraries in the US and one European library located in the Netherlands.[93] It is not available in any libraries in France, despite being addressed most specifically to a French audience. This is largely because it is self-published and therefore does not have access to the same marketing and distribution resources that a Western publishing house can offer. However, the fact that it is self-published perhaps reflects a bias against authors who question dominant understandings of 1994. Perhaps if the book conformed to Western expectations then Kameya would have been able to publish it in the West. But the book lauds local Rwandan

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help of a collaborator or editor is Venuste Kayimahe, *France-Rwanda, les coulisses du génocide: témoignage d'un rescapé* (Paris: Dagorno, 2002). Kayimahe, however, had the advantage of cultural knowledge and connections, having worked for 20 years at the *Centre Culturel Français* in Kigali. This work was part of the *Écrire par devoir de mémoire* project, a campaign to commemorate the genocide organised by 10 African writers living in France as part of the commemorative Fest'Africa project. See Nicki Hitchcott, 'A Global African Commemoration – Rwanda: Ecrire par Devoir de Mémoire', *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 45. 2 (2009), 151–161 (p. 151).

[92] It tells the story of the genocide using extracts of testimony and newspapers. In particular, Kameya makes reference to *Rwanda Rushya*, a newspaper established by her father as an advocacy tool against Habyarimana's government.

[93] In the US, these include libraries at Columbia University, New York University, Harvard University, Northwestern University, Indiana University, University of California, Stanford University as well as the Library of Congress. In the Netherlands, the book can be found at NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, which has collaborated with the Genocide Archive of Rwanda.

heroes and vehemently condemns the role of the international community in the genocide and its subsequent denial. In the blurb on the back cover, Kameya highlights the fear associated with contesting dominant viewpoints and the ensuing stigmatisation of those who do this. She does this by discussing the choices available to her readership. According to Kameya, either you accept dominant discourses advocating notions such as 'double genocide' or:

> Vous n'acceptez pas toutes ces propositions et nous allons user de plus grands moyens à notre disposition et nous allons vous bannir de la scène internationale, faire en sorte que vous soyez haïs de tout l'univers, celui qui vous verra pensera que vous êtes couverts de sang, nous vous rendrons instables de façon que vous ne puissiez plus vous organiser, nous couperons de l'herbe sous vos pieds et vous tomberez pour ne jamais vous relevez. Que préférez-vous de tout cela?

In no uncertain terms, Kameya challenges her readers to relinquish their self-protecting beliefs and plunge into the terrifying reality that genocide was committed against fellow human beings and that the international community is, in great part, responsible. However, Kameya's voice remains unheard: her testimony is poorly translated and her book is inaccessible. Translation errors and editorial intervention mean that these problems also afflict other survivors whose testimonies have been entrusted to the Aegis Trust.

Conclusion

Just as perpetrators tend to be portrayed in accordance with Western stereotypes of the 'savage' continent of Africa,[94] inhabited by 'animal-like creatures' or 'barbaric savages'[95], there also appears to be a tendency to perpetuate the culturally acceptable view of survivors as 'pathetic and

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[94] Hron, p. 136.
[95] Wall, p. 267.

helpless victims'.[96] Such reductionist dichotomisations of the people involved in the genocide provides an international audience with a sense of immunity to the possibility of genocide. If killers can be perceived as politically and historically-informed actors, and survivors as agents with the ability to contest, criticise or reinterpret, this would humanise them and threaten this perceived immunity. As demonstrated in this thesis, theories such as Terror Management show that cultural worldviews have evolved to provide people with a sense of meaning, a perceived worth and various forms of symbolic or literal immortality.[97] Individuals who violate our worldviews by reminding us of our inevitable mortality evoke a sense of terror. Chapter 1 demonstrated that such individuals are stigmatised or dehumanised to minimise the fear and anxiety that they provoke. Much like popular media images at the time of the genocide, *We Survived* perpetuates the comforting stereotypes of Western heroes saving poor, helpless African victims by omitting survivors' criticisms of the West.

Of course, without the role played by the Aegis Trust, the voices of survivors would not be heard at all. As Kathryn Batchelor notes, 'for all the potential pitfalls and dissatisfactions that accompany the translation process, translation is nevertheless an activity that is needed' as it provides a certain visibility to texts.[98] Batchelor adds that publishers tend to assess the quality of a translation not on its faithfulness to the original text but on 'how well it reads in the new language' and in terms of its 'commercial viability'.[99] If the Aegis Trust were to include criticisms of the West and enable survivors to challenge the dominant ideology, this would no doubt impact on the commercial viability of *We Survived* as well as discourage interest and consequent monetary donations to the Aegis Trust. Given that the book is sold to support the work of the Aegis Trust, it is in the interest of the charity to make the testimonies as appealing as possible. Nevertheless, the distorted versions of these testimonies obstruct survivors' attempts to take control

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[96] Ibid., p. 266.
[97] Solomon, Greenberg and Pyszczynski, 'The Cultural Animal', p. 16.
[98] Batchelor, p. 4.
[99] Ibid., p. 9.

over the interpretation of their trauma and instead impose on them conformity to the dominant culture which labels them powerless victims. As discussed above, ideological change is necessary for posttraumatic growth at the collective/group level to take place. By developing social stories through access to public discourse, group members are able to challenge dominant ideologies and provide a counter narrative through which they may fulfil their collective needs of agency and communion. The interventions made by translators and editors, however, remove any chance of genuine engagement or dialogue with an international audience and hinder survivors' attempts to gain acknowledgement and overcome feelings of estrangement from the world beyond Rwanda. Survivors are thus rendered helpless to restore drives of agency and communion in the face of a dominant worldview which cannot tolerate those who violate this view.

Paradoxically, Westerners are extremely vocal in their condemnation of the Rwandan government for the lack of free speech in Rwanda. The evidence discussed in this chapter demonstrates that, as members of the international community, it is time we examined our own role in preventing the free speech of Rwandan survivors and ask ourselves if we are prepared to listen.

Conclusion

Determining the ways in which posttraumatic growth occurs among Rwandan women has been the focal question of this thesis. Through a discursive analysis of their testimonies, I have identified the themes of posttraumatic growth that emerge and how these interact with socio-cultural factors (growth themes are summarised in *Table 2*). At the individual level, the themes of posttraumatic growth among Rwandan women are largely consistent with the dimensions discussed in Western literature. For example, the themes labelled 'agentic' in *Table 2* equate roughly to the dimensions under the domain of 'self-perception' in Tedeschi and Calhoun's Posttraumatic Growth Inventory, namely 'personal strength' and 'new possibilities'.[1] Similarly, the individual 'communal' growth themes observed in Rwandan women are comparable to Tedeschi and Calhoun's domain of 'relating to others' which encompasses sub-factors of compassion and intimacy.[2]

Agentic Growth Themes	Personal Strength New Possibilities	Freedom	Accountability (for the role played by the international community in the genocide)
Communal Growth Themes	Compassion Intimacy	Reconciliation (including forgiveness, peace, healing, truth and justice)	Acknowledgement (for the pain and suffering caused by the genocide)
	Individual Level	National	Global
		Collective Level	

Table 2. Summary of agentic and communal growth themes found in the testimonies of Rwandan women survivors.

What is specific about these growth themes in the context of Rwandan women survivors is the particular ways in which they interact with external socio-cultural factors. For example, Chapters 2 and 3 showed that many aspects of personal strength (such as self-reliance and new skills) and

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[1] Tedeschi and Calhoun, p. 460.
[2] Ibid., p. 460.

interpersonal relationships are closely linked to the impact of dominant ideologies. These include the genocidal ideology of the former government, which sought the extermination of all Tutsi, and the dominant ideology in post-genocide society, which portrays survivors as unstable burdens, victims or parasites.

Paradoxically, these dominant ideologies appear to encourage growth in the domain of self-perception. For example, many women counteract the genocidal ideology of the former regime by rejecting their victimhood in defiance of the perpetrators. For some, survival alone is sufficient to prove that this ideology has failed. The desire to counteract the current dominant ideology also appears to provide a source of strength. Many survivors attempt to avoid the stigma associated with their identities by presenting themselves as strong and courageous, rejecting the negative attitudes towards survivors. However, while these ideologies favour growth in the domain of self-perception, they appear to discourage interpersonal growth. Although the genocidal ideology failed in so much as it did not wipe out every living Tutsi, it did destroy as many as three quarters of the Tutsi population and its aim of obliterating interpersonal relationships proved highly effective. The current dominant ideology has also had a damaging effect on interpersonal relationships as, through the desire to avoid stigmatisation, many survivors avoid seeking social support from their fellow survivors. Moreover, the fear of being associated with negative stereotypes and the desire to avoid being perceived as psychologically unstable often promotes the culturally appropriate coping mechanism of silence.[3] This is the opposite of increased self-disclosure which is identified by Calhoun and Tedeschi as instrumental in improving interpersonal relationships in the wake of traumatic event.[4]

Another specificity of the posttraumatic growth observed among Rwandan women is the interaction between posttraumatic growth and the impact of

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[3] Burnet, *Genocide Lives in Us*, p. 116.
[4] Calhoun and Tedeschi, 'The Foundations of Posttraumatic Growth', p. 5.

the genocide on women. Women suffered disproportionately during the genocide and in its aftermath but, as a matter of necessity, women have taken on new roles, reinvigorated the women's movement in civil society and taken on new positions in politics. As Chapter 2 demonstrated, these changes have had a positive impact on the self-perception of individual women, providing them with a source of strength and agency. However, the differential impact of the genocide on women has also served as an inhibitory factor for interpersonal growth, as many women were left widowed with few or even no remaining family members. It appears that the same socio-cultural factors (victimisation, stigmatisation and gender) have had opposing effects on self-perception compared with interpersonal relationships, resulting in an overall shift towards a more individualist culture among these women.

One domain of posttraumatic growth frequently cited in Western literature is that of spirituality and religion. As reported in Chapter 4, while many of the women interpret their experiences through a spiritual lens, none of them report gaining a better understanding of spiritual matters or a stronger religious faith (measures of posttraumatic growth on the Posttraumatic Growth Inventory).[5] Rather, religion features primarily as a framework within which trauma is interpreted. Yet while there were no direct references to gaining an enhanced sense of spirituality, many survivors use religious coping strategies that lead them to growth in other areas (such as connecting with others in church or providing a sense of meaning and strength). Thus, within my framework of posttraumatic growth in Rwanda, religion is accorded the position of socio-cultural factor as it enables posttraumatic growth but is not a domain of growth itself.

While religion appears effective in promoting posttraumatic growth among survivors at the individual level, it seems to have a detrimental effect at the group level. Throughout Rwandan history, religion has been entangled with dominant ideologies and encompasses many of the features that Allport

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[5] Tedeschi and Calhoun, p. 460.

suggests are apt to invite bigotry.[6] The feature of religion having caused the most harm throughout history is the notion of theocracy, where a monarch rules by divine right. As highlighted in Chapter 4, pre-genocide propaganda frequently portrayed President Habyarimana as a saint or priest, suggesting that God had given him power over the country. Similarly, although not as tightly allied with the church, the RPF is also portrayed as being sent by God. Some women even present the RPF as God incarnate, continuing this history of theocratic leadership. By representing leaders as divine, survivors give religious credence to their ideologies despite the fact that these ideologies have caused much suffering to survivors as a group: Habyarimana's leadership promoted the genocide ideology which targeted Tutsi for extermination while the current ideology which favours RPF leadership promotes the perpetual victimhood of Tutsi survivors, portraying them as weak, parasitic or insane. By highlighting the differential impact of religion on individuals relative to groups, Chapter 4 demonstrated the distinction between posttraumatic growth at the individual level and posttraumatic growth at the collective/group level.

This distinction is the most significant difference between the model of posttraumatic growth proposed in this thesis and understandings of posttraumatic growth that prevail in Western literature. An analysis of intergroup dynamics is particularly important in Rwanda because genocide is a political act which targets people on the basis of their group identity. Therefore individual and shared beliefs about the nature of groups and their interaction with other groups in the aftermath of the genocide have been deeply affected. Although some authors have considered the notion of posttraumatic growth at the collective level, Chapter 5 of this thesis proposed a new model for understanding how growth at this level takes place, with a focus on collective motivations of agency and communion. Just as traumatic events appear to undermine these drives in individuals, they also appear to have the same effect on groups. Chapter 5 examined collective growth at the national level through the interaction of genocide

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[6] Allport, 'Religious Context of Prejudice', p. 449.

survivors as a group with the rest of Rwandan society. It was shown that survivors may re-establish their collective need for agency through the pursuit of freedom from the stigma that surrounds their identity as survivors. In contrast, communal growth involves engaging in activities to promote reconciliation between groups such as seeking justice, speaking the truth and promoting peace, healing and forgiveness. Chapter 6 extended the enquiry to focus on growth at the international level through an analysis of the interaction between Rwandan genocide survivors and the international community. At this level, it was shown that survivors pursue agency by attempting to take control over the interpretation of their trauma and by seeking accountability for the role played by the international community in the genocide. The drive of communion is pursued by attempting to gain acknowledgement from the international community for the pain and suffering caused by the genocide and for the fact that genocide is not a Rwandan phenomenon but one that affects all of humanity. This level of growth appears to be affected by an ideology adhered to in the West which portrays Rwandan genocide survivors as passive, voiceless victims rather than as fellow, equal human beings. Despite attempting to provide a counter narrative to the dominant understanding of the genocide in the West, Chapter 6 showed how such attempts are being obstructed by translators and editors who distort survivors' words so that they appear consistent with Western beliefs.

Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth in a Clinical Setting: A General Overview

As discussed in the Introduction, psychologists have in the past attended primarily to the distressing emotional, cognitive, behavioural and physical symptoms that occur in the aftermath of a traumatic event. As a result of this medicalised orientation, clinical assessments of individuals suffering the effects of trauma have tended to focus on identifying these 'symptoms' by

applying 'a deficit- or problem-focussed approach'.[7] This medical model may be misplaced in cross-cultural situations, however, as the diagnosis of psychological dysfunction may be culturally alien in some contexts.[8] Tedeschi and Kilmer suggest that the deficit-approach is insufficient and instead propose a strength-based assessment, 'attending to and assessing positive factors and pursuing means to facilitate their development or enhancement'.[9] As Calhoun and Tedeschi observe, 'the exclusive focus on the need to identify and address the negative consequences of trauma may lead clinicians to overlook the possibility that some, and perhaps many, individuals can experience positive change in the wake of tragedy and loss'.[10]

On the other hand, the notion of posttraumatic growth may also seem alien to some survivors, and thus, before the idea of growth is introduced, the initial focus of therapy in any context should be to the help the individual to manage their psychological distress.[11] This involves a process of desensitisation by re-exposing the individual to the trauma through detailed descriptions or thinking about the event(s) in a safe, therapeutic atmosphere. A second aim of this process is to support the individual during the rumination process so that he or she may create a narrative which will enable them to gain a model of the event to refer to in therapy.[12] Indeed as Calhoun and Tedeschi suggest, therapy is 'a continual process of narrative development, where events and experiences are revisited and retold many times, with new details included in each version, and different perspectives are taken on the same events'.[13] Finally, before the notion of growth is introduced, trauma treatment should also help the individual recreate a worldview that encompasses what happened. According to Calhoun and

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[7] Tedeschi and Kilmer, p. 230.

[8] Rizzini and Dawes, p. 316.

[9] Tedeschi and Kilmer, p. 235.

[10] Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, p. 54.

[11] Ibid., p. 58

[12] Because traumas are often poorly encoded in memory, the generation of a narrative enables individuals to link together elements of their traumatic memories. Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, p. 60.

[13] Ibid., p. 60.

Tedeschi, 'this aspect of trauma treatment is involved in the construction of the narrative that describes the trauma and provides some understanding of it'.[14]

Tedeschi and Kilmer propose that a strength assessment may be made via informal qualitative methods, such as listening to the client's narrative for evidence of strengths. The authors suggest using a growth scale such as the Posttraumatic Growth Inventory or the Stress-Related Growth Scale to serve as a template for discussion with trauma survivors.[15] Tedeschi and Kilmer suggest that the clinician should make the decision as to when to introduce the notion of growth and subsequently focus questioning on positive changes. It is clear that the clinician cannot produce growth for the individual nor should he or she try to push the individual into a conversation about growth too soon. However, labeling growth when it is apparent and discussing positive changes with an empathic understanding of the individual's worldview can, according to Tedeschi and Kilmer, 'encourage further development of the cognitive processing of trauma into growth'.[16] Overall, Tedeschi and Kilmer conclude that efforts to harness and promote posttraumatic growth may 'not only enhance the health and well-being of clients in the context of their current presenting concerns but potentially reduce their need for formal mental health services in the future'.[17]

Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth in Rwandan Women: A Culturally Informed Approach

A similar approach to that outlined above could be adopted by those engaged in psychosocial programmes in Rwanda.[18] When it comes to

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[14] Ibid., p. 53.
[15] Tedeschi and Calhoun, p. 460; Park, Cohen and Murch, p. 78.
[16] Tedeschi and Kilmer, p. 234.
[17] Ibid., p. 235.
[18] There are a number of counselling/psychosocial projects in Rwanda. For example, World Vision Rwanda runs 'Healing, Peace Building and Reconciliation' (HPR) which is a psychosocial counselling project focussing on individual emotional understandings of the genocide in group therapy settings (World Vision Rwanda, 'Healing, Peace Building and Reconciliation in Rwanda', (2008),

facilitating posttraumatic growth among Rwandan women, however, certain socio-cultural factors should be taken into consideration. For example, at the individual level, strength and courage are commonly observed agentic growth themes. Yet, it is important to distinguish between genuine psychological growth and stigma avoidance. It is possible that, to avoid being associated with the negative stereotypes of survivors as psychologically unstable, some survivors may present a façade of strength without actually experiencing personal strength. This, Shih argues, may ultimately be damaging to individuals.[19] It is therefore important for clinicians and other practitioners working with Rwandan women to confront these social stigmas and create an atmosphere in which survivors feel accepted and comfortable to display vulnerability, as this, according to Calhoun and Tedeschi is what ultimately leads to strength.[20] It is particularly useful to promote a positive image of survivors and encourage them to adopt empowering stigma management strategies such as rejecting the stigma and seeking action to remove it.[21] Breaking down the stigma by encouraging such strategies as well as promoting the cultural acceptance of displays of vulnerability are likely to improve not only growth in self-perception but also interpersonal growth. As Shih observes, individuals who adopt empowerment strategies are more likely to identify with other members of the same group.[22] Given that one of the negative interpersonal

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<http://www.worldvision.com.au/Libraries/3_3_Responses_to_Poverty_2008_case_studies/Healing_Peace-Building_and_Reconciliation_in_Rwanda.pdf> [accessed 15 October 2013], p. 2). World Vision Rwanda also runs a mentoring programme where members of the community are trained to monitor the well-being of vulnerable children and youth; give them love, attention, and encouragement; provide guidance and support; transfer life skills; and help ensure their health and safety (Population Council/Horizons, 'Psychosocial Benefits of a Mentoring Program for Youth-Headed Households in Rwanda' (2007) <http://www.popcouncil.org/pdfs/horizons/RwandaPsychOVCImpactSum.pdf> [accessed 15 October 2013], p. 1–2). AVEGA offers individual and group-based counselling programmes which aim to confront issues such as depression and psychological trauma by building confidence and challenging the social stigma surrounding widows and victims of sexual violence (Association des Veuves du Génocide d'Avril (AVEGA), 'Achievments of AVEGA: 1995-2010' < http://survivors-fund.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/AVEGA-Achievements-1995-2010.pdf> [accessed 15 October 2013], pp. 4–5). There is also a Counselling Programme run by the Aegis Trust for visitors and staff at the Genocide Memorial.

[19] Shih, p. 180.
[20] Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, pp. 78–79.
[21] Shih, pp. 180–181.
[22] Ibid., p. 181.

factors observed was the avoidance of other survivors, it would appear that such strategies may promote both agentic and communal growth.

The benefits generated by changes in gender relations may also prove useful for promoting posttraumatic growth at the individual level. For example, making women aware of changes in law which give them more rights could enable female survivors to feel more empowered.[23] Additionally, it is important to make women aware of and encourage them to get involved in the numerous women's groups which actively support women and survivors materially, educationally or socially.[24] In their testimonies, many women link their changes in self-perception to the empowerment provided by training, or housing offered by these groups. Moreover, given that most of the negative interpersonal problems arise from no longer having one's friends and family for support, these groups have, in many cases, taken on the role of providing such social support.[25] Involvement in women's groups is thus likely to promote both agentic and communal growth.

As discussed above, religion is a factor that was cited by survivors as promoting posttraumatic growth as it provided women with a sense of meaning and empowerment as well as a source of social support from fellow churchgoers. These findings are consistent with empirical findings of religious coping in other contexts.[26] Some aspects of religion have, however, been found to be potentially harmful to psychological adjustment such as hostility from religious communities towards those who express religious doubts.[27] Although there is no direct evidence of this in the testimonies, the belief held by some women that losing faith will lead to illness suggests that religion is a necessary aspect of life in Rwanda. The

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[23] Many of the new laws that benefit women which were introduced after the genocide do not necessarily reflect what happens in practice (such as laws extending the rights of pregnant and breastfeeding mothers in the workplace, laws of inheritance guaranteeing that women have the same rights as men to inherit property, laws against gender-based violence, laws against discrimination against women etc.). See Chapter 2.

[24] Burnet, *Genocide Lives in Us*, p. 216.

[25] Ibid., pp. 193, 216.

[26] Pargament, Desai and McConnell, p. 132.

[27] Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, p. 113; Pargament, Desai and McConnell, p. 132.

fact that none of the women voices religious doubts could also imply that it is culturally unacceptable to do so. Therapists and trauma practitioners should be aware of this and provide an environment in which survivors feel at ease to raise religious concerns if necessary. Such an approach has been found to be effective in other contexts. Nancy Kehoe, for example, led Spiritual Beliefs and Values groups for people diagnosed with schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder and major depression in the US.[28] In these groups, individuals were able to raise religious concerns in a caring milieu which promoted a forum for people suffering from mental illness to voice and resolve their spiritual concerns. In most cases, however, survivors' references to God appear to provide them with existential reassurance and a sense of belonging and meaning. Although their religious appraisals also lead survivors to interpret the RPF's position in spiritual terms which may go against the interests of their group, given the sensitivity of spirituality, I am inclined to agree with Calhoun and Tedeschi. These authors suggest that 'even if the clinician views the client's experience of positive change as illusory, the clinician should tolerate and respect the clients perception' because 'the ultimate arbiter of posttraumatic growth in spiritual and religious matters is the client'.[29] Given the very personal nature of spirituality and the sensitive nature of politics in Rwanda, a wiser approach would be to break down aspects of the stigma engendered by the RPF's ideology rather than try to promote criticism of the government.

Concerning the promotion of growth at the collective level, this falls not only to the clinician or trauma practitioner but also to policy makers and non-governmental organisations. The main inhibitory factor for growth at this level is the lack of access to public discourse. Survivors are typically not in positions of political, economic or religious power and thus have relatively little access to public discourse. Another factor which inhibits collective posttraumatic growth is the adoption of silent coping among survivors. Silent coping has emerged in Rwanda for two main reasons. First,

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[28] Nancy C. Kehoe, 'Religious-issues Group Therapy', *New Directions for Mental Health Services*, 80 (1998), 45–55 (pp. 46–54).
[29] Calhoun and Tedeschi, *Facilitating Posttraumatic Growth*, pp. 57, 121.

it is a culturally appropriate coping mechanism because it saves the individual from appearing weak, insane or being associated with any of the other negative attributes associated with survivors (discussed in Chapter 1).[30] Second, it is quite literally a survival mechanism. Though survivors may be freer to speak than members of the Hutu population, criticising the Rwandan government is still dangerous and may result in persecution (see Chapter 5). Moreover, many survivors fear that taking part in processes of reconciliation (such as speaking the truth and seeking justice) will lead to reprisals from those who perpetrated the genocide. For example, SB explains her frustration at the silence of other survivors at Gacaca:

> There are some people who won't even give their testimony. If you give it, people accuse you of slandering them. Indeed when you give your testimony, you believe it will help you but you end up testifying on behalf of the people who took part in the killings. I saw this: we went to Gacaca and you explain the way they tried to kill this person or how he was attacked but he ends up fighting against you because you said what you saw. […] There are survivors who are afraid of accusing killers and instead call them innocent.

The women who have given their testimonies to the Aegis Trust are in many ways exceptional. Most people in Rwanda still fear to speak openly about politically contentious issues because doing so may put their lives at risk. RB, for example, has to live in a military camp because she has experienced several attempts on her life as a result of her outspoken performances in Gacaca and in the media on issues surrounding rape and the genocide. RB boldly confronts the stigma surrounding genocide victims, particularly the stigma of sexual violence, and seeks justice and truth. However, this is at great sacrifice to her personal security. Issues of security make the facilitation of growth at the collective level extremely difficult. Of course it is desirable, psychologically speaking, for these women to gain justice and dispel the negative stereotypes surrounding their identities. However, doing so is potentially dangerous. There are no easy solutions to such problems in Rwanda but there are some signs of hope. For example, although it has

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[30] Burnet, *Genocide Lives in Us*, p. 78.

received much criticism from human rights organisations and the international community, Clark believes that Gacaca constitutes 'one of the most revolutionary traditional justice approaches pursued anywhere in the world'.[31] Because of the sense of popular ownership over Gacaca and the agency it accords to all Rwandans via its *modus operandi* of popular participation, Clark suggests that Gacaca has 'proven effective in many communities at initiating processes of restorative justice, healing, forgiveness and reconciliation'.[32] Indeed, Bernard Rimé and colleagues found that, although participation in Gacaca increased negative emotions and other symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder among survivors, it also reduced feelings of shame and enhanced social integration. For example, survivors reported reduced perceptions of outgroup homogeneity; increased non-ethnic self-identitfication; and increased positive stereotypes of outgroup members (Hutu).[33] While Gacaca may come under criticism in many of the survivors' testimonies, there are those, such as CK, who have made the most of this institution for achieving positive outcomes:

> How Gacaca has helped me is that, I now have a place where I can express myself. I now have a place where I can say, 'My husband and my children were killed', 'So and so destroyed our house' 'So and so stole from our house!' I was working at the level of the cell, but now I work at the level of the sector. I often judge trials involving the death of people, not trials involving stealing wealth. Gacaca has helped survivors in general. We used to accompany each other, that is the first thing AVEGA told us. 'Accompany each other, sit next to your colleague, help each other.' They now call us 'those ones'. We used to have meetings to discuss who would be judged on which day. I used to write Gacaca summons and issue them.

It is clear from this statement from CK's testimony that Gacaca has helped her pursue individual drives of agency and communion by providing her with employment and enabling her to stand together with other women. It is

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[31] Clark, p. 355.

[32] Ibid., p. 342.

[33] Bernard Rimé, Patrick Kanyangara, Vincent Yzerbyt and Dario Páez, 'The Impact of Gacaca Tribunals in Rwanda: Psychosocial Effects of Participation in a Truth and Reconciliation Process after a Genocide', *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 41 (2001), 695–706 (pp. 703–704).

also apparent, however, that Gacaca has enabled CK to fulfill motivations of communion at the collective level, by providing justice for survivors and promoting steps towards reconciliation.

The Aegis Trust also contributes to the needs of survivors by providing them with access to public discourse. Clark highlights truth-telling as an important step towards personal healing and gaining a sense of release, referring to this function of truth as 'therapeutic truth'.[34] The testimonies collected by the Genocide Archive of Rwanda provide survivors with the opportunity to reconstruct their life narratives which may in turn lead them to catharsis. Unlike the ICTR or Gacaca, the Genocide Archive of Rwanda allows survivors to give their version of events without coercion and without their stories being contested by opposing parties. During the recording phase, both the cameraman and interviewer are survivors themselves, and usually conduct the interviews in survivors' homes or chosen location. Survivors are therefore provided with a comfortable environment in which they can speak openly, which may ultimately help them on the path to healing.

As well as enabling survivors to make sense of their experience and gain a sense of release, the testimonies serve an important role in healing by providing a forum for remembering lost loved ones.[35] Survivors frequently express difficulties in coming to terms with losing their families because often they have never seen the bodies and are unaware of the circumstances in which they died. The Genocide Archive of Rwanda thus plays a vital function in providing a form of digital memorial. The interviewer always encourages survivors to give full names of all those who died and to describe their characters in as much detail as possible so as to provide the deceased with an identity and sense of humanity. Another type of healing described by Clark is 'healing as belonging' which refers to the experience

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[34] Clark, p. 187.
[35] Clark suggests that healing may be facilitated through collective mourning and remembering which provides a form of memorial to lost friends and relatives. Ibid., pp. 264–265.

of greater psychological and emotional wholeness through reconnecting with a community and gaining a sense of acknowledgement.[36] Knowing that their testimony has been recorded and can be accessed by others may also provide survivors with this form of healing. Thus the Genocide Archive of Rwanda contributes in many ways to achieving posttraumatic growth at the national level.

When it comes to facilitating growth at the international level, the responsibility lies beyond Rwanda's borders. Chapter 6 showed that survivors are attempting to engage in a dialogue with the international community but external factors are impeding their success. A significant impediment to this growth is the dominant ideology that prevails in the West which portrays survivors as passive victims. While the translation of testimonies held in the Genocide Archive of Rwanda is making them accessible to an increasingly international audience, this ideology affects the process of translation. It appears to be internalised by the Rwandan translators who often mitigate survivors' criticisms of the West, obstructing the possibility of genuine dialogue. The ideology also interferes with the presentation of survivors' testimonies in *We Survived*, the book of testimonies published by the Aegis Trust. In Chapter 6 it was suggested that this editorial intervention was necessary at the time as the book was intended to promote the work of the Aegis Trust and thus sought to avoid interrupting dominant understandings of events which might appear subversive. Despite the problems of translation and editorial intervention, however, thanks to the work of the Aegis Trust, the testimonies of survivors are becoming increasingly accessible from around the world. Not only have many been made available via the online digital archive but also the Aegis Trust's American partner, the University of Southern California's Shoah Foundation has now incorporated 50 testimonies into its Visual History Archive. Some of the testimonies will also be added to the Institute's public web portal, called the Visual History Archive Online (vhaonline.usc.edu). While the voices of survivors may be mistranslated to some extent, such

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[36] Ibid. pp. 258, 271.

projects provide them with a much larger audience which would not have been possible without the work of the Aegis Trust.

Another project which has promoted posttraumatic growth at the international level is a pair of courses offered by the Department of French and Francophone Studies at Bates College in the US. Pioneered by Dauge-Roth, these courses provided students with 'immersion experiences' through which a 'space of dialogue' was enabled. In both courses, Dauge-Roth facilitated correspondence between Rwandan genocide survivors and his students. The aim was to create and define 'a space of encounter that would allow survivors to bear witness on their own terms and challenge us, their interlocutors, to explore what it means to be a listening community and what forms of responsiveness we ought to forge as heirs of the histories of pain being passed on to us'.[37] Dauge-Roth encouraged among his students 'a willingness to be interrupted, an openness to seeing our social imagery challenged, and a readiness to finding ourselves estranged within our own community'.[38] One of the tasks given to students was to publically translate and document the histories of their interlocutors to relay their voices within the academic community of Bates College. After the students had selected excerpts from the survivors' testimonies, the Rwandan survivors read the draft and 'amended its content according to their sense of appropriateness and how they desired to be perceived'.[39] Overall, the courses 'were conceived around the transformative experience of testimony to foster civic skills such as critical thinking, social listening, collective action, civic judgment, imagination, and creativity'.[40] In short, there are some projects, albeit few, which contribute to processes of collective posttraumatic growth in Rwanda both at the national and international level by providing survivors with a platform from which to develop counter ideologies and pursue collective needs of agency and communion.

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[37] Dauge-Roth, 'Fostering a Listening Community', para. 23 of 23.
[38] Ibid., para. 4 of 23.
[39] Ibid., para. 19 of 23.
[40] Ibid., para. 7 of 23.

In conclusion, this thesis offers a qualitative analysis of posttraumatic growth and its manifestations in Rwandan women genocide survivors and provides some culturally-informed suggestions as to how posttraumatic growth may be facilitated. The small sample size used for the study limits the generalisability of findings and clearly further research is needed to further investigate the impact of applying the suggestions made in this thesis. Unfortunately, genocide and mass violence appear to be part of the human condition and cause unimaginable consequences for those who have the misfortune to experience them. As this thesis demonstrates, however, even after experiencing such unspeakable trauma, positive change is possible. Yet while a number of scholars argue that human beings are intrinsically motivated towards positive change as part of their innate tendency toward self-actualisation,[41] circumstances and environments play a significant role in this process and may obstruct this intrinsic motivation.[42] By listening to the voices of survivors to gain an understanding of their needs, it may become possible to facilitate an environment in which posttraumatic growth can take place. Efforts to rebuild the fabric of Rwandan society should therefore not simply be left to the individuals who suffered but a concerted effort should be made by policy makers, NGOs, educational institutions, trauma professionals and ordinary individuals to promote positive change so that a brighter future for Rwanda can be achieved.

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[41] Carl Rogers, for example, believed that humans could be relied on to know what is right for them and their 'self-actualisation' potentialities. Carl R. Rogers, 'A Theory of Therapy, Personality and Interpersonal Relationships, as Developed in The Client-Centered Framework' in *Psychology: A Study of a Science. Formulations of the Person and the Social Context*, vol. 3 ed. by Sigmund Koch, (New York: McGraw Hill, 1959), pp. 184–256. Other theorists take a similar point of view. See Joseph and Linley, 'Growth Following Adversity' pp. 1045–1046; Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Deci, 'On Happiness and Human Potentials: A Review of Research on Hedonic and Eudaimonic Well-Being. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52 (2001), 141−166.

[42] Joseph and Linley, 'Positive Psychological Perspectives', p. 15.

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