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The Politicisation of Rwandan Military Intelligence towards Ethnic Genocide and Post-genocide Reforms for National Security

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Abstract

This article examined the politicisation of Rwandan military intelligence towards genocide and the post-genocide reforms for national security. The article, using secondary data and the relative deprivation theory and the custodian theory of military politics as its theoretical framework of analysis, found that the inter-ethnic political power struggle between the Tutsis and Hutus equally politicised and polarised the Rwandan military intelligence towards ethnic affiliation, and weakened the quality and effectiveness of intelligence gathering to contain the genocide. While the Hutu-dominated domestic military intelligence promoted the genocide, the exiled Rwandan intelligence force, led by Paul Kagame, ended the genocide but perpetrated more persecution against the Hutus in Diaspora. Tremendous socio-economic improvements have been recorded in post-genocide Rwanda, but objective reforms of the military intelligence towards all-inclusive ethnic participation is far from being achieved, thus serving as a threat to inter-ethnic cohesion and national security. This article recommended that the Rwandan intelligence should be de-politicised to enhance national security.

Keywords: *Politicisation, Military intelligence, Ethnicity, Genocide, Reforms, National security.*

Introduction

National security remains the primary focus of most countries across the world both in their domestic and foreign policy objectives to promote domestic and international peace and socio-economic stability (John, 2015). Such security concerns revolve around the protection of nations from internal and external aggression, safety of lives and property, and human development. In Rwanda, the components of national security objectives include territorial and regime security, political and social security, and economic security (Rwandan Ministry of Internal Security, 2018). In particular, the Rwandan national security policy focuses on the protection of national sovereignty and territorial integrity, promotion of national unity and integration, security of critical strategic infrastructure and safety of Rwandans, among others (Rwandan Ministry of Internal Security, 2018). Despite its political and security agenda of promoting national security and stability, Rwanda was largely bedevilled by conflicts and serious national security breaches at a particular point in history, which eventually led to genocidal attacks, involving deliberate and mass extra-judicial killings and intense sufferings. The Rwandan genocide was an ethno-politically rooted war that took place between 7th April and 15 July 1994 (Raji, Anthony, & Abubakar, 2018). Within this period, members of the Tutsi minority ethnic group alongside some moderate Hutus and Twa were slaughtered by armed militias having been aided by the military intelligence, thus undermining national security. The most widely accepted scholarly estimate of the killings is around 800,000 Tutsi deaths. However, the estimate for the total death toll, including those of Hutu and Twa victims, was as high as 1,100,000 (David, 2001). The main perpetrator of the Rwandan genocide was the then Hutu-led government of Theoneste Bagosara; others were the Robert Kajuga-led Inter ahamwe militia and the Impuzamugambi militia led by Jean-Bosco Barayagwiza and Hassan Ngeze; the genocide was financed by Felicien Kabuga (International Tribunal on Rwanda, 1997). With over 500,000 human displacements within and outside Rwanda, the motives for the genocide were anti-Tutsi racism and agitation for the enthronement of the Hutu's political power (International Tribunal on Rwanda, 1997). Most of the victims were killed by their neighbours, while the Hutu gangs searched out victims hiding in churches and school buildings (David, 2001). The militias murdered people with machetes and rifles, and sexual violence was rife with an estimation of about 400, 000 rape incidences (James, 2014).

The Rwandan military participated in the 1994 genocide, which led to the loss of lives and property worth \$23 billion (International Tribunal on Rwanda, 1997). During the mass attacks, the military and the militias executed key Tutsi and moderate Hutu military and political leaders (Anthony, 2021). Most of the victims were killed by the military in their homes while the military intelligence also revealed the hiding places—churches, school buildings, etc. of genocide victims to the militias (David, 2001). Despite the documented involvement of the military intelligence in the Rwandan genocide, there is a dearth of literature on the interplay between ethnic politics and the politicisation of the military intelligence towards the genocide. Also, few studies exist on the effects of the post-genocide reforms of the Rwandan military intelligence on national security. This article examines the politicisation of the Rwandan military intelligence along ethno-political lines and its linkage to the 1994 genocide. It discusses the reform of the post-genocide Rwandan military intelligence and its implications for national security and socio-economic stability. Though the article alludes substantially to the study of the intelligence community generally, it essentially focuses on military intelligence, being the unit primarily used to prosecute the genocide project in Rwanda.

The article presumes that the Rwandan political squabbles and inter-ethnic power struggle between the Tutsis and Hutus equally politicised and polarised the military intelligence along tribal affiliation, which affected the quality and effectiveness of the required intelligence needed to contain the 1994 genocide. It presumes further that the Hutu-dominated domestic military intelligence promoted the genocide, while the exiled Rwandan intelligence force, consisting of the exiled Tutsi Rwandese in Uganda, and led by Paul Kagame – the erstwhile Chief of Intelligence to President Yoweri Museveni –ended the genocide but perpetrated more persecution against the Hutus in Diaspora. The article equally assumes that, though tremendous socio-economic improvements have been recorded in the post-1994 genocide Rwanda, an objective reform of the military intelligence towards military cohesion based on all-inclusive ethnic participation is far from being achieved, and this continues to serve as a veritable threat to national security in the country.

This article contributes to scholarly knowledge by unveiling the danger of playing politics with the military profession and national security and reveals the nexus between ethnic fragmentations and violent political agitation in Rwanda. The article draws the attention of the Rwandan government and other relevant stakeholders to areas where the

post-genocide reforms are required, including the streamlining of the operational and structural components of the Rwandan intelligence community for optimal performance, abolition of ethnic consideration for recruitment and promotion, and improved work ethics.

Operational Definition of Terms

The following key terms in the article are defined for better understanding of their intended meanings.

Security: This means safety and protection from all forms of danger and calamities, and non-exposure to any form of vulnerability.

National Security: This refers to protection of nations and its nationals from internal and external aggression, and ensure territorial and regime security, and safety of lives and property. National security, as used in this article, also means human security, including political, environmental, social, community and economic securities.

Genocide: This is a deliberate killing or massacre of a large number of people from a particular nation or ethnicity with the primary aim of exterminating them from the surface of the earth.

Politicisation: This means giving political consideration to issues with the primary aim of achieving political or socio-economic gains. It is a situation in which interested parties put pressure on the government and authorised decision-makers to influence government policies in their favour. The concept, as used in this article, explains how ideas or facts are interpreted within political consideration and contestation.

Literature Review

According to White (2020), human environment is largely insecure due to many security threats, one of which is ethno-political conflict. Some of these conflicts, triggered by political power struggle and inter-ethnic furore, have led to genocide-induced deaths of about 20 million people globally between 1917 and 2007 (Liewellyn, Michael, & Steve, 2019). Wiebel (2015) identifies the characteristics of genocidal attack to include indiscriminate shelling, human slaughter, ethnic cleansing, mass rape and human displacement, while the main causes of genocide, according to the author, included rabid nationalism, xenophobia sentiments, ethno-religious chauvinism and irreconcilable ideological differences.

Further, Liewellyn et al. (2019) find that, apart from mass extra-judicial killings and intense threat to national security, the common denominators to most genocidal attacks were the politicisation of the military and their involvement in the pogrom. As noted by Liewellyn et al. (2019), Japan's territorial invasion and the massacre of the Chinese, which led to the death of about 10, 000,000 victims, was carried out by the military regime between 1937 and the end of World War II in 1945, while the Red Terror pogrom in the defunct USSR that claimed an estimated 200, 000 lives was carried out by Bolsheviks secret military police called the Cheka, after an assassination attempt on Vladimir Lenin. The Ethiopian pogrom, which claimed over 100,000 lives, was perpetrated by the Derg coordinating committee of the armed forces, while the list of perpetrators of genocide in Germany, which killed about 6,000,000 Jews, included Adolf Hitler, Heinrich Himmler, Reinhardt Heydrich and Adolf Eichmann, among others, who were military commanders..

In another study, Wiebel (2015) finds that the Bosnian genocide, in which about 100,000 people were massacred, was perpetrated by the Republika Srpska (VRS) Army who encouraged the Scorpions paramilitary rebels to attack their victims. Caswell (2010) posits that the Cambodian genocide attack was directed towards Cambodia's ex-military and political leaders. The basic fact from the reviewed literature was that the military has remained one of the prime perpetrators and victims of genocidal attacks over the years, but few studies exist on the politicisation of the military towards genocidal attacks.

Aremu (2010) establishes the nexus between ethnic conflict and military politics across African countries, including Ethiopia, Rwanda and Burundi. According to the scholar, ethnic conflicts in Africa are caused by many factors: arbitrary border partitioning by the colonial masters, bad governance, inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic marginalisation. Aremu posits further that conflicts in Africa are also induced by the "divide and rule" tactics of the colonialists and the struggle for political power among African political elite. He also notes that the arbitrary partitioning of African countries by the colonial masters without regard to ethnic and cultural affinities and bad governance has not only created inter-ethnic rivalry but has also enthroned the groundswell for intense agitation for endogenous governance and violence struggle to reclaim pre-colonial ethnic territories across the colonially created borderlines. These negative tendencies have prompted military take-over in some countries, including Nigeria, to de-escalate national security threats generated from such

intense conflicts. Some of the recommendations provided by Aremu to curtail inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic confrontations to de-escalate national security threats in Africa include: enthronement of fairness, justice and equity in the distribution of collective wealth; promotion of the principle of rule of law, which is principally characterised by corporate political and socio-economic governance; and respect for fundamental rights of individuals.

In his discourse on the involvement and influence of the military in politics, Huntington (1995) found that, beginning from the mid-1960s, the military has become an alternative government to civilian administration in African countries due to perceived security threats from different sources, especially from disputed interparty and intraparty politics, bad governance, weak socio-economic development, and corruption. Huntington identifies three different means of military intervention in politics to include influence, blackmail and displacement or supplant. Influence is the use of lobby by the military to get favours from the civilian government. For instance, the military often requests the government to increase their budget for optimal operational efficiency to secure the nation. The military had equally used displacement or supplant as direct means of removing an incumbent civilian government through coup d'états to have direct control of government on the excuse that the former is incompetent. Huntington notes that the involvement of the military in governance sometimes encourages resentment and mass violent agitation for democracy, which undermines national security.

On the rationale for military intervention in African politics, especially in the sixties, Onder (2010) finds that democratic regimes in the then newly independent African states were very nascent and fragile because they were products of hurried agreements between the largely discredited colonial masters who were pressurised to vacate political office for many untrained and ill-prepared African leaders. Thus, the political governance based on these narrow-minded and hurriedly assembled elected indigenous representatives could not function maximally after independence as most of them lack the required vision and public administration experience to govern properly. The inept leadership styles of the contemporary civilian governments in many African countries have also led to national security threats arising from intense sectional agitation, electoral violence and riot, and eventual overthrow of civilian governments by the military.

Raji et al. (2018) identify the geographical boundaries and narrate the socio-tribal configuration of the Rwandan nation. Rwanda is located in central Africa's Great Lakes region. The country, which got its independence in 1962, is surrounded by a landmass of 26,338 square kilometres with a population of 12 million people, out of which women account for about 8 million of the population (Raji et al., 2018: 6). Rwanda is bordered in the East by the Democratic Republic of Congo; Burundi to the South; Uganda to the North; and Tanzania to the West. Though there are many tribes in Rwanda, the dominant ones are the Hutus, Tutsis and Twas (John, 2021: 4). The forebear of the Rwandan State was the Nyiginya Kingdom founded around the 1650s, while the heartland of the kingdom is between the Nyabarongo and Akanyaru Rivers before expanding to the current Rwandan borders (John, 2021: 5).

Writing on the nexus between ethnic politics and the roles of the military intelligence in the Rwanda civil war, Curran & Takata (2003) traces the history of the formation of the Rwandan intelligence service to the pre-colonial period when national security was largely sustained by the Rwandan culture and traditional laws, which curtail the acts of criminality in the society through intelligence gathering on the profile of each member of the neighbourhood with serious suspicion being reported to community chiefs and the native authorities while there was imposition of sanctions where necessary. The pre-colonial Rwanda was also characterised by the establishment of the local intelligence troops responsible for training the community army and teaching communal intelligence gathering by encouraging and raising the awareness of every citizen to keep vigilance over his neighbours in particular and against both internal and external security threats within Rwanda. As noted by Curran & Takata, national warriors from different Rwandan ethnic groups, including Tutsi, Twa, Hutu, Abega, Abasindi and Abagesera, among others, were integrated through an inter-ethnic synergy, to dissect security information provided for the local army to defend their borders before the colonial period. Duclos (2001) avers that the primary interest of the post-colonial Rwandan Intelligence Service, an amalgamation of different security outfits, was to protect the parochial interest of the Rwandan leaders at the helms of affairs, which essentially bordered on regime survival and warding off of political opposition rather than the protection of the Rwandan people.

The specific roles of the Rwandan military intelligence in the pre-genocide politics were amplified by John (2021) having found that the Rwandan Intelligence Service played partial roles. The Rwandan

Intelligence Service equally served as a regionalist organisation whose focus was on the sustenance of the power of the two north-western prefectures of the Ruhengeri and Gisenyi regions of Rwanda and to ensure that this vested interest did not only undermine the capacity of the intelligence service to curtail the civil war in the country. It also prevented the force from providing quality military intelligence and operational loyalty to promote national security while also sowing a seed of discord within the rank of the Rwandan Army.

According to Laura (2016), the material benefits of killing and redistribution of Rwanda wealth in favour of the disadvantaged Hutu tribe was the trigger of the 1994 genocide in the country, while the author linked inter-tribal squabbles in the country to poverty, citing Rwanda as one of the poorest nations in the world shortly before the genocide as confirmed by the ranking of the country in the 149th position out of 173 countries in the UNDP Human Development Index of 1993; the year before the genocide. As a result of intense poverty within the pre-genocide period in Rwanda, relative deprivation and structural violence were mostly cited as the basic reasons for inter-ethnic violence and national security threat in Rwanda.

While efforts were focused on the involvement of the military in the Rwandan genocide in the reviewed literature, there are far fewer studies on the interplay between ethnic politics and the politicisation of Rwandan intelligence towards genocide, a gap this study intends to fill.

Theoretical Framework

This work uses the relative deprivation theory and the custodian theory of military politics as its frameworks of analysis. The relative deprivation theory harps on the assumption that people deprived of things they deemed valuable, including political participation, economic advancement and social justice are easily disposed to social violence to redress their grievances. The custodian theory of military politics presumes that the military is the best custodian of national political and socio-economic interests, especially in times of national crisis insurmountable by the civilian government.

The concept of relative deprivation theory was propounded by an American sociologist, Robert Merton (1966) cited in Curran & Takata (2003). Expanded by Runciman (1966), relative deprivation revolves around lack of adequate resources and opportunities required to maintain standard quality of life, including primary needs for human survival such

as food, money, employment, human dignity and material possession, which an individual or a group considers very vital to its survival. Deprivation of necessary resources for survival is also considered by the theorists to have negative consequences for behaviour and attitudes, including feelings of frustration, aggression and stress, which lead to participation in violent political actions. Duclos (2001) distinguishes between egoistic and fraternal relative deprivations in which the former is driven by an individual's feelings of being treated unfairly compared to others in his group. This explanation is akin to a situation in which an employee feels he should have got a promotion that went to another worker instead; this transforms his ego from that of optimism to that of relative deprivation of his rights and privileges. Fraternal relative deprivations revolve around the denial of group development aspiration rather than personal aspiration, which often leads to mass agitation and revolt.

The central thrust of the relative deprivation theory is that people affiliate with social movements to achieve what they think they should have which were deprived, especially when it falls short of what others have which they do not have. Unlike absolute deprivation, which borders on non-provision of the required needs or when the needs fall short of what is required to survive, relative deprivation revolves around deficiency in good governance along natural and artificial shortages of resource availability, which leads to structural inequity in the society, thus denying the vast majority of the citizens optimal access to those resources for personal and group development needs. Thus, relative deprivation is what people think they should have relative to what others within the same domain have or compared with their past or present achievements, and future anticipation of personal wealth acquisition. The deprived relative needs include improved conditions for optimal existence and adequate resources to survive, including socio-economic advancement and social amenities and good governance for all-inclusive political participation. Such relative deprivation is a form of social exclusion, which engenders frustration, aggression and violent action in some instances.

Measuring the rates of relative deprivation allows an objective comparison of the standard of living of an individual with the rest members of the society in which he lives. However, emphasising the perspective of the individual concerning the extent to which he has been deprived of his needs makes objective measurement problematic because optimal availability of human needs rests on other social factors which

are unevenly distributed, including different talents and uneven access to socio-economic opportunities. Despite its shortcomings, the relative deprivation theory is central to this study as it has sufficient explanatory weight on the Rwandan conflict. The Rwandan civil war and genocide was triggered by intense inter-ethnic marginalisation and deprivation. The political and socio-economic profiles of pre-genocide Rwanda were largely characterised by poor and undemocratic governance, politics of tribal exclusion, depending on the tribe in power, while there was also the concentration of political and economic powers in the centre in Rwanda, which were largely distributed along tribal affiliations and loyalty, to the detriment of the socio-economic advancement of the other tribes. Thus, the Rwandan conflict revolves around the fundamentals for human survival, including land, food, safety, security, identity, recognition, self-esteem and unhindered opportunities for human development as a whole, which is a form of relative deprivation. Therefore, this theory has a strong explanatory weight to unveil the factors responsible for the politicisation of the Rwandan military intelligence along ethno-political lines and its linkage to the 1994 genocide and the post-genocide reforms of the military.

Custodian Theory of Military Politics

The custodian theory of military politics has been discussed by Orman (1967), Hibbs (1973), Fourney (1977), Finer (1988) and Huntington (1995). The theory postulates that the military is the best custodian and protector of national interests, especially against internal and external aggression because it is their prime constitutional responsibility to curtail violence and because of the patriotism of the military institution towards national unity far above ethno-religious consideration (Finer, 1988). Thus, the custodian theory justifies military intervention in politics to protect the national interest while also rescuing the State from total collapse, especially when acts or decisions of the civilian authorities threaten the permanent interest of such nation (Fourney, 1977). Though there are different justifications for the military to serve as the primary custodian of national interests, domestic crises and foreign threats have served as primary justifications for military intervention in politics (Raji et al., 2018). Such domestic crises include political instability, electoral violence, corruption, intertribal and intertribal violence and economic mismanagement. According to Raji et al. (2018), the distinctive characteristic of the military bureaucracy with more hierarchic firmness,

authoritative disposition and legitimate source of coercion make it easy for the institution to defuse security threats and instil the required attitudinal discipline by force to curtail acts of criminality in the society, which are the conditions for sustainable development and national security. The custodian theory of military politics best explains the reasons behind the politicisation of the Rwandan military as their intervention is often explained off as being in the best national interest. Some of the reasons given by military leadership after their intervention in Rwandan politics include their patriotic zeal to end ethno-political violence and curtail corruption and socio-economic mismanagement, etc.

Research Methodology

The data for this exploratory study were collected from secondary sources, including relevant textbooks, unclassified security documents, journal articles, newspapers, academic projects and monographs. Prominent among these secondary data were the materials collected from the proceedings of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), which are readily available online. Documented reportage from Rwandan newspapers on security intelligence and speeches and official pronouncements from relevant government agencies and security bulletins were retrieved. With the use of Google Alerts, the researchers were regularly updated on unclassified issues relating to national security intelligence and national security challenges in Rwanda. The reliability of the obtained secondary data was measured by the levels of consistency of views and information expressed in the diverse literature on the issues under investigation. There are several advantages derived from using secondary data (Hox & Boeijs, 2005). It provided different volumes of relevant reviewed written materials to capture their intents, especially as most of these documents are published in English while the meanings of those published in other languages were decoded, using the language conversion mobile application. With the adoption of Katherine, Zwiers and Atkinson's (2018) re-analysis model bordering on the generation of new findings from the re-analysis of existing literature, the collected data were subjected to evaluative interpretation and re-analysis from where conclusive findings were drawn.

Rwandan Military Intelligence Service

The Rwandan military intelligence is a critical unit of the Rwandan Army, formerly known as the Forces *armées rwandaises* (FAR) (John, 2021). Between 1973 and 1990, the Rwandan intelligence service consisted of three distinct organisations that included the Service Central de Renseignements, also known as the Sûreté de l'État, the only civilian intelligence agency then. There was the General Staff intelligence (G2 sections) of the FAR and the Gendarmerie, both of which came under the Ministry of Defence. The Rwandan Gendarmerie was an independent branch of the armed forces acting as a paramilitary police intelligence force responsible for maintaining domestic law and order. Both the Sûreté de l'État and the FAR G2 carried out operations inside and outside Rwanda. The most important of their assignments, especially in the late 1980s, was the reconnaissance of the Rwandan exiled military intelligence force and refugees in Uganda and Burundi. The Presidential Guard Regiment was not officially part of the intelligence service but it nonetheless carried out intelligent duties in the country in collaboration with both military intelligence and the Sûreté de l'État (John, 2021).

However, the recruitment, promotion and deployment for operation in the Rwandan military and its intelligence unit, especially between 1964 (the Revolution year) and 1994 (the genocide year), were largely based on ethnic sentiments (Raji et al., 2018). Also, there were two categories of Rwandan intelligence communities during this period, internal and external, which were formed along ethnic interests. Members of the FAR military internal intelligence community, which was the pre-genocide officially recognised government intelligence force, were principally recruited from the Hutu ethnic tribe to support the governments, especially the governments of President Kayibanda and Habyarimana, who were of Hutu extraction. There were large numbers of Rwanda's military intelligence community consisting mostly of the Tutsi intelligence force, who were exiled in Uganda. The exiled Rwandese consisted of high-ranking military intelligence officers trained by Uganda. One of them was Paul Kagame, who eventually became Chief of Intelligence to the Ugandan president, Yoweri Museveni, and the current president of Rwanda. Thus, the loyalty of the pre-1994 Rwandan military intelligence unit was more to their tribal affiliation rather than to the country.

Inter-ethnic Political Power Struggle and Politicisation of Rwandan Military Intelligence

There are different tribes in Rwanda but the three dominant ones in the country are the Hutus, Tutsis and Twas. However, there are a lot of mistrusts between these leading tribes, especially between the Hutus and Tutsis, which led to civil war-cum-pogrom in the country as witnessed in 1994 (James, 2002). The Rwandan Civil War of 1994, just like those before it, was a clear precursor to national security challenges largely characterised by destruction of lives and property.

The inter-ethnic power struggle dated back to the colonial rule of 1884-1962, in which colonial rule enthroned antagonistic and dissimilar divisions between the two principal ethnic groups – the Hutus and Tutsis—in the country (Raji et al., 2018). From 1884 until the end of World War I, Rwanda, along with Burundi, was part of German East Africa while Belgium claimed the territory thereafter by becoming the administering authority of the geographical entity from 1924 to 1962 (John, 2021). During the colonial era, the Germans and Belgians ruled Rwanda indirectly and anointed the Tutsi ethnic tribe and their chiefs with Hermitic hypothesis that they were humanly and intelligently superior to both the Hutus and Twas (John, 2021). Consequently, between 1933 and 1934, the Belgians conducted a census and introduced an identity card system that segregated the Tutsi, Hutu and Twa ethnicities into different vocations and social class categories with the unfortunate consequence of firmly attaching a sub-national identity and consciousness to most Rwandans. The sub-national consciousness, which largely divided the people along tribal affiliations, carried a negative history of dominance–subordination, superiority, inferiority, exploitation and suffering of other tribes by the Tutsis. This scenario created national security challenges in Rwanda. Sixty years of such prejudicial fabrications inflated the Tutsi egos inordinately and crushed the feeling of the Hutus: the majority tribe. The tribal mistrust eventually coalesced into an aggressively resentful challenge to Tutsi superiority claims, violent demonstration and civil wars that undermined national security (Tara, 2015).

Though the categorisation of Rwandese into "Hutus" and "Tutsis" was a pre-colonial practice, the class category denotes more of socio-economic status than ethnic superiority (John, 2021). In specific terms, the Tutsis are cattle-herder and warriors while the Hutus were mainly the porters, servants and peasant farmers who mostly work for the Tutsis.

Nevertheless, this class categorisation in social status did not create fundamental class division in pre-colonial Rwanda because inter-marriage still took place between the two social classes, and a Hutu man who acquired cattle could also become a Tutsi and vice versa until the German and Belgian colonial masters imposed their methods of public administration, which formally divide them into social class categories.

As Rwanda was on the verge of political independence in the 1950s, the United Nations Trusted Territory adopted the principle of a simple majority voting process, which centred on one person, one vote (Raji et al., 2018). Though the Tutsi ethnic tribe was confident of preserving its aristocratic power under the anticipated electoral arrangement, it realised this would be difficult under the democratic political dispensation with the possibility of the Hutu ethnic tribe having the majority votes because it has up to 85% of the population (Raji et al., 2018). The Tutsis opposed this electoral arrangement but preferred regional proportional representation in which all regions are equally represented in the parliament rather than a simple majority arrangement that would ultimately favour the Hutus, with the latter supporting the simple majority electoral process. Moreover, political parties were antagonistically organised along ethnic lines while tensions over accusation of marginalisation and counter-marginalisation between the Tutsis and Hutus rose and culminated in civil war in 1959. This war, a social revolution against the Tutsi minority monarchical rule, led to the monarchy's overthrow in 1959. In the ensuing conflict that lasted until 1964, the Hutus seized power and engaged in a mass killing against the Tutsis, many of whom were forced into exile in other countries, including Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Following the 1959 to 1964 Social Revolution, which put Kayibanda from the Hutu tribe in power, Rwanda could best be described as a dictatorship of the majority on revenge, in which the Tutsis were largely marginalised from governance (John, 2021). Apart from inter-ethnic furore between the Tutsis and Hutus over unending accusation of marginalisation, there was also intra-Hutu disunity over accusation of marginalisation between the northern and southern Hutus, in which President Kayibanda from Southern Rwanda was accused by the northern Hutus of favouring his southern region to the detriment of the North (John, 2021).

The political power struggle and intra-ethnic squabbles within the Hutus prompted the military led by an intelligence officer of Hutu origin from the North, Lieutenant Joachim Maramutsa, to stage a coup d'état against President Kayibanda who was also of Hutu extraction in 1967

(James, 2014). The coup d'état marked the beginning of the politicisation of the Rwandan military intelligence. However, the coup attempt failed due to the failure of the police and the nucleus of the military to support it. The lack of support for Maramutsa's coup among the high northern commander of the *Garde Nationale*, as the military was then called, was also a demonstration of the politicisation and polarisation of the military commanders from the northern Hutus in the political power struggles (John, 2021). While some of the top northern military officers of Hutu extraction were in support of Maramutsa's coup, most other officers, including Major Juvénal Habyarimana who had been made Minister of Defence by President Kayibanda in 1965, opposed the coup. Other military intelligence officers who also opposed the coup included Major Alexis Kanyarengwe and Commander Pierre-Celestin Rwagafilita, even though they were from the northern Hutu tribe as Maramutsa. Those who opposed the coup cited the fact that President Kayibanda had shown them magnanimity and trust by allowing them to rise through the ranks, although they were from the North, to give that region a sense of belonging. The personal political ambition of senior military intelligence officers was also a major reason for the lack of support for the Maramutsa's coup d'états (John, 2021). This latter assertion was confirmed when Juvenal Habyarimana – another Hutu intelligence officer who was then Minister of Defense – overthrew Kayibanda on July 5, 1973 and subsequently became the president.

The internal wrangling within the military, which led to Habyarimana take-over in 1973, created a negative impact on the FAR and its intelligence unit by polarising it (John, 2021). At the core of the problem was the mistrust President Habyarimana had against the leading FAR operational and intelligence officers inherited from Kayibanda. Thus, members of the military intelligence comprising 90% Hutus were recruited almost exclusively from the country's North-West where Habyarimana came from to the disadvantage of the other Hutu regions, especially the North (Raji et al., 2018).

The introduction of multi-party democracy also had its effects on the military intelligence. The first multiparty government of Rwanda was sworn in on April 7, 1992, under President Habyarimana and his political party, the *Mouvement révolutionnaire national pour le développement* (MRND). The MDR was the main Hutu opposition party. In contrast, the *Parti libéral* (PL) was a more urban and all-inclusive party that got the support of many important Tutsis among its members. The *Parti social-démocrate*

(PSD) was strong in the South and was an inclusive party with a socialist outlook.

The introduction of multiparty politics and a power-sharing cabinet also had profound implications for the military intelligence as the *Sûreté de l'État* was broken up. Its external intelligence department was attached to the Ministry of Defence, while its internal intelligence department was attached to the Prime Minister's office held by the MDR. Although the *Sûreté de l'État* technically no longer existed, it was replaced by a new organisation called *Service de sécurité*. This latter outfit consisted of former members of the *Sûreté de l'État* and was most certainly involved with Rwanda's internal politics. This operational reorganisation created havoc within the military intelligence community because the partisan politicisation of the administration compelled the military intelligence officials to pass more critical intelligence to their parties and political allies than superiors (John, 2021). Thus, the break-up of the intelligence service was already an important source of inadequate intelligence cohesion and operational confusion.

Destabilising Roles of the Military Intelligence Service in Pre-genocide Rwanda

From April 1994 onwards, the Rwandan military intelligence service played destabilising roles to unsettle the socio-political environments which created the groundswell for the genocide. First was the assassination of President Habyarimana; the Uganda-based intelligence force, led by Paul Kagame, was accused of perpetrating the assassination. This incident triggered the 1994 genocide (James, 2002). Thus, after Habyarimana's plane was shot down on the evening of April 6, 1994, the officers and troops loyal to Habyarimana's government killed virtually all the president's possible replacements that were very sympathetic to the Tutsi cause, including moderate Hutus. Included on the assassinated list were the designated Prime Minister of the Broad-Based Transitional Government (BBTG) Agathe Uwilingiyimana; Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Joseph Kavaruganda; and the leaders of the moderate opposition parties (John, 2021). The military intelligence officers, who were largely of Hutu origin, gave vivid descriptions and locations of those Tutsis to be killed to the FAR officers that executed the plans, while some of the military intelligence officers directly pulled the trigger to kill (International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda [ICTR], 1997).

Some of the officers identified by the ICTR were from the Rwanda's northwest region. Two of these indicted military officers who were eventually convicted of genocide included Colonel Theonester Bagosora and Lieutenant Colonel Anatole Nsengiyumua. The FAR military intelligence department also had better local knowledge of the environment with their overwhelming presence in the local communities. Despite this strong operational capacity and the early intelligence report that the ethnic militias, including the Interahamwe and Impuzamgambi, were planning attacks on the Tutsis, the FAR did little to curtail the killing while the military intelligence unit gathered tactical intelligence on the hideout of the Tutsis, which was given to the rebels (Scott, 2014). From the above narrative, there is no doubt that the FAR military intelligence contributed to the Rwandan genocide. Other factors contributing to the perpetration of the 1994 Rwandan genocide, apart from the complicity of the military intelligence, included long-term fierce inter ethno-political antagonism, media instigation to warfare, pre-genocide economic deterioration, and the death of the then Rwandan president, Juvenal Habyarimana (Tor & Lennart, 2017).

Stabilising Roles of the Rwandan External Military Intelligence against Genocide

The killing of the then Rwandan president, Juvénal Habyarimana, a Hutu man, in 1994, sparked a campaign of genocide against the Tutsis and their moderate Hutu allies by the Hutus as supported by the Rwandan intelligence community. To curtail the extermination of the Tutsis, the Rwandan external military intelligence force, which consisted of the Tutsi descendants whose progenitors were driven into exile in the 1964 social revolution, launched a counter-attack from Rwanda. The attack was led by Paul Kagame with a force of about 14,000 officers and men from the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) against the conventional and military Hutu forces perpetrating the genocide (Timothy, 2018). Having carried out an intensive and sustained artillery attack on the enemy strongholds, Kagame's forces were able to de-escalate and curtailed the mass killing of the Tutsis and the moderate Hutus. It also captured the capital, Kigali, in July 1994 and then formed a government. However, by that time, more than 800,000 people had been killed in the genocide, but the RPF force was able to stop the killing after Kagame took over the government (Timothy, 2018). The Tutsi-led external military intelligence attack on Rwanda also forced many Hutus into exile in neighbouring Zaire, now

the Democratic Republic of the Congo, while the latter used the DR Congo as a base from where it launched retaliatory attacks on Rwanda. It is important to note that the defeat of the FAR, which forced many of its combatants and its military intelligence officers who are mainly of Hutu origin into exile, equally led to the shifting of the intelligence geographical status and their roles narrative from internal and external intelligence classification between the Hutus and Tutsis. Thus, because of their defeat, the dissidents from the Hutu-led FAR military were forced out of Rwanda as external intelligence force who now has the primary ambition of overthrowing the government of Kagame, a Tutsi. The Tutsi had earlier played this role; a platform that was used to launch an attack on Rwanda during the genocide.

Kagame was frustrated that Zaire's government was not taking enough action to stop the attacks on Rwanda by the Hutu-led external military intelligence force. This made him to send the Rwandan military intelligence for reconnaissance on the location of the Hutu dissidents before deploying combatant troops into Zaire in late 1996 to attack the DRC-based Hutu armed groups, led by those implicated in the 1994 genocide. While in Congo, the Rwandan troops also intervened in the rebellion against the then government by supporting Laurent Kabila to depose the then Zairean President, Mobutu Sese Seko who was accused of supporting the Hutu rebels. After Kabila had been in power for a little more than a year, Kagame shifted his military support to the M23 rebels who sought to oust Kabila in 1998 when they promised to help him curtail the activities of the Hutu rebels who were destabilising Rwandan government from their base. The Kagame government supported the Zaire (now DR Congo) rebel forces until 2002 when he signed a peace accord, which consented to remove the Rwandan troops from the country in exchange for the disarmament and repatriation of Hutu military force in Congo, who were undermining his regime.

However, while much of the literature established the complicity of the Hutu-dominated military intelligence in the extermination of a very large chunk of the Tutsis in the 1994 Rwandan genocide, it is important to note that the Tutsi-dominated military intelligence under the Paul Kagame-led government also carried out post-genocide mass persecution against the Hutus in the diasporas because, by July 1995, the RPF, with the tactical and operational support of the military intelligence, had deliberately targeted and intentionally killed over 300,000 Hutus, including those killed in the 1995 Kibeho Camp massacres in which as many as 8,000 predominantly Hutu refugees were killed. After

eliminating many Hutu military intelligence officers accused of complicity in the genocide at home, the RPF continued its campaign to hunt down those who had fled across neighbouring borders. These counter-insurgency operations continued in border regions through 1997 when, between January and August alone, at least 6,000 people, including the military and unarmed civilians, were killed by government forces (Timothy, 2018).

The Post-genocide Reforms and Re-organisation of the Rwandan Intelligence Service

The pre-genocide Rwandan military intelligence was largely based on parochial interest because the recruitment, promotion and discipline of personnel were subjected to ethnic affiliations. This earlier negative trend promoted tribal loyalty to the political parties and government leadership rather than to the country (Rwandan Ministry of Internal Security, 2018). This operational narrative was reformed by the Kagame-led government, including the subsuming of military intelligence as part of the larger intelligence outfits. The first public policy against ethnic affiliation has been the abrogation of ethnic identity by the government. The government also removed any reference to ethnicity from all official documents to promote national unity. This policy was carried out in public recruitment policies across the government agencies which recognised merit and regional and gender-equitable representation rather than ethnic affiliation. This structural governance public policy designed to enthrone fairness, justice and equity also reflected in the recruitment of the security personnel, including the military and its intelligence unit. Thus, the appointment and promotion of such officials and men was expected to have been done meritoriously rather than on ethnic consideration, to improve the loyalty of such recruited officers to the country rather than to the political leaders (Rwandan Ministry of Internal Security, 2018).

Structural reforms of the Military Intelligence Service were carried out towards making the organisation more effective (Rwandan Ministry of Internal Security, 2018). First were the dissolution of its three distinct organisations that included the Service *Central de Renseignements*, General Staffs intelligence and the *Gendarmerie*, and the formation of a new security intelligence outfit now known as the State Security Force (SSF). The SSF is an amalgamation of the intelligence units of major security outfits, including the Rwandan Defence Force (RDF), the National

Intelligence and Security Services (NISS), and the Rwandan National Police (RNP). Other members of the Community are the Judicial Police under the Ministry of Justice, Rwanda Defence Forces (RDF), National Security Service (NSS), and Local Defence Unit (LDU). These security agencies are coordinated by the Ministry of Internal Security managing the inflow of actionable intelligence data from the contributing intelligence agencies deployed to ensure the safety of lives and property (Rwandan Ministry of Internal Security, 2018). The major tasks of the Ministry of Internal Security, according to the Rwandan National Security Policy, are to prepare, monitor, implement and disseminate internal security policy countrywide; analyse internal security intelligence reports; and recommend appropriate strategies to the concerned authorities to prevent crimes while also promoting the use of the ICTs to improve intelligence gathering.

Using the above policy guidelines as its main operational strategies, Rwanda has exited from large-scale violence, which has been replaced with a rare degree of political stability, relative level of public safety, and an economic growth rate of over \$5,000 per income average (World Economic Forum, 2020). These socio-economic improvements have toned down youth restiveness and promoted national security. Due to credible intelligence-gathering strategies for pre-empting criminal activities, the number of criminal cases and restiveness has been declining continuously since the 1994 crisis (Rwandan Ministry of Internal Security, 2018). This effort contributed to the reduced numbers of criminal cases which fell from 113, 956 in 1994 (during the genocide) to 8,838 in 2016 (Rwandan Ministry of Internal Security, 2018).

Despite these relative achievements, there are proven allegations of operational impunity against the Rwandan military intelligence service despite the reform. The allegations include torture, severe beatings, use of electric shocks, asphyxiation and mock executions of suspects. Many suspects were held in isolation, sometimes in a constantly dark or brightly lit cell devoid of respect for the fundamental rights of the suspects. President, Paul Kagame, was also accused of using the SSF to stifle dissents, including his close confidant, Tutsi rebel and later Chief of Staff of the Rwandan Army, Kayumba Nyamwasa, who fled to South Africa to form the opposition against the government (Tara, 2015). The arrest of the then Rwanda's intelligence Chief, Karenzi Karake, in the United Kingdom (UK) in 2015, in connection with war crimes in Rwanda, was a confirmation of the use of the intelligence service to persecute the opposition (Tara, 2015). Thus, despite the end of ethnic

induced genocide and post-genocide reforms of the military intelligence, the security situation in Rwanda is still relatively tenacious because the Rwandan society under the Kagame-led government is still dangerously dichotomised into an antagonistic intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic relationship, especially between the Tutsis within the country and the exiled Hutus in the DR Congo, due to the politicisation of such ethnic affiliations, which has also penetrated the psyche of many military intelligence officials. Further, despite the tremendous socio-economic achievements and impressive growth and development indicators, the real conflict issues in the pre-genocide Rwanda, which revolves around the denial of fundamental opportunities for human survival, including food, safety, security, identity affiliation, recognition, self-esteem and unhindered opportunities for the vast majority of Rwandese still persists. Thus, the modern Rwanda is more of a land of contradictions, in which there is a country with two pasts and two presents (John, 2021).

One Rwanda is an unabashed African success story, lauded by the international community for a GDP growth rate that averages eight percent, its impressive halving of infant and maternal mortality ratios, and for exceeding parity in women's representation in parliament. This Rwanda not only returned from the brink of self-destruction in 1994 but also went on to achieve stability and prosperity, with Paul Kagame being the hero. The president is regularly applauded by the international community for putting an end to genocide, restoring order, building a sense of lasting peace and ushering in an era of prosperity with official erasure of ethnicity and enthronement of forgiveness (John, 2021). Yet, there is the other contemporary Rwanda, where the Kagame government has continued to build a post-genocide consolidation based on the exclusion and marginalisation of his enemies after consolidating himself in power. The characteristics of such power consolidation include the repression of civil liberty organisations that criticise the government, while Kagame continues to deflect criticism against his authoritarian regimes by manipulating the memory of genocide and whipping up ethnic sentiments to perpetuate suffocating brutality against perceived opposition. Under these latter conditions, there is ample reason and motivation for unrest, discord, resentment and eventually renewed violence in Rwanda, which could continue to undermine national security if not checked (John, 2021).

Conclusion

The politicisation of ethnic affiliations in Rwanda also politicised and polarised the military intelligence, which instilled the culture of partisanship in the internal security outfit, thus making it ineffective in containing national security challenges currently characterised by sustained attacks on the country and subversive activities by the Hutu rebels in the DR Congo. The tremendous socio-economic improvements have been recorded in the post-1994 genocide Rwanda, but an objective reform of the military intelligence towards military cohesion based on all-inclusive ethnic participation is far from being achieved, and this continues to serve as a veritable threat to national security in the country.

Recommendations

There should be more emphasis on genuine reconciliation through the convocation of all ethnic national conferences to reconcile different interest groups. The government should be magnanimous enough by pardoning the exiled Hutus in the DR Congo to enhance military cohesion and improved national security in Rwanda.

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