Repatriation and Reconciliation in Divided Societies:
The Case of Rwanda's 'Ingando'

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFP	Agence France Presse
AI	Amnesty International
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
AGER	Association Général des Etudiants Rwandais
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
FAR	The Armed Forces of Rwanda
GLCSS	Great Lakes Centre for Strategic Studies
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
NURC	National Unity and Reconciliation Commission
NTK	The New Times (Kigali)
NYT	The New York Times
PRI	Penal Reform International
RANU	Rwanda Alliance for National Unity
RPF	Rwandan Patriotic Front
RPA	Rwanda Patriotic Army

Introduction

> *There is nothing truer than myth: history in its attempt to realize myth, distorts it, stops halfway; when history claims to have succeeded, this is nothing but humbug and mystification.*   *Eugene Ionesco (1958)*

Myths at once seem inescapable and have to be escaped. The greatest threat of simplified and fact-distorting narratives, these public dreams 'nourished by silence as well as words' (Calvino 1989:19), is not the historical precision that they eliminate, but the ends that they justify. Rwanda's history is a battle of counter-posed myths, which rationalized political regimes and excused the exclusion of segments of society from sharing equitably in rights, resources and decisions. Today, another mythologized narrative has developed, wearing a self-professedly 'neutral' and 'moral' garb; a nationalist history ostensibly enabling the dissolution of ethnicity and as such, reconciliation as 'permanent solution' to the 'ethnicized' conflict and its mass production of displacement.

The current government's new nation-building project of 'de-ethnicization' aims to replace ethnicity and other potentially 'divisive' sub-state loyalties with an undifferentiating 'rwandanness.' De-ethnicization is composed of the narrative of 'unity' and 'dissolubility of difference', both rooted in a re-reading of the already much embattled history. The discursive frame of the project is 'inclusive', setting itself in opposition to previous nationalist myths aiming to 'exclude', but this merely obscures the top-down dissemination, tightly policed boundaries and totalitarian nature of the discourse. The present study investigates de-ethnicization, the way in which it manifests itself through *ingando* (camps set up for political education of various groups), and finally, the way in which we should think about its effectiveness as a reconciliatory tool within the broader framework of transitional justice.

The post-genocide returns to Rwanda brought together a population divided in new and complex ways. This study builds on the premise that in such a context, repatriation and reconciliation cannot be treated as separate. Where the former signifies 'return', the latter (amongst other things) determines its stability, the permanence of the 'non-necessity to flee.' But repatriation is implicated otherwise in the latter concept. Reconciliation as prevention of relapse into conflict cannot be effectively pursued if one does not understand how profoundly massive return reconfigures social realities and thus grievances that underlie conflict.

De-ethnicization attempts to further such a project of 'stability' although, as will be shown, it might not ultimately serve this goal best. In what appears a distinctly modernist urge, the Rwandan government sets out to re-engineer national identity in order to 're-root' the sense of belonging and forge 'social cohesion.' To this end, it has elaborated not only a new mythology but a whole machinery of its dissemination comprising lectures, 'discussions', commemorations, television and radio programmes, and a variety of 'traditional' 'reconciliatory' activities.

Ingando camp is one such 'traditional', 'reconcialiatory' tool, a space where the contours and rules of 'new Rwanda' are imparted to participants. *Ingando* has been little studied despite seeming to be an important disseminator of the new 'mythico-history' (Smith 1986, Malkki 1995), especially so as history has not been taught in schools since the end of the genocide (Hodgkin 2006). Additionally, *ingando* is an ideal case study of the repatriation-reconciliation nexus since it is a transition space both in the literal sense (for repatriates and

provisionally released prisoners before they join their communities) and in a more figurative one (*ingando* as a rite of passage between the outside and the inside represented by the new ideology). Although *ingando* has never drawn as wide a participation as the grassroots courts of *gacaca*,[1] it has become increasingly popular in recent years, incorporating diverse segments of society in its 'solidarity-building' and 're-education' activities.

This study will show that the nationalist script of de-ethnicization, the purported glue which makes return stable and prevents conflict from recurring, is based on a simplistic binary opposition and remains weak for the same reason why it is intriguing: De-ethnicization is a 'minority' project, promoted with a victor's righteousness, forbidding and prescribing certain forms of expression and association, while not creating a concomitant attractor in the form of equal participation in state-building and 'state-sharing'. At the same time, de-ethnicization appears to be an 'imported', 'brewed-in-exile' recipe for a permanent escape from the past and attainment of an alternative future. It represents a curious 're-territorialization' of a nation-building project conceived in exile. The roots of the imagining remain uniquely 'post-Oriental', traceable to diaspora scholars 'who have finally made the long trek home' (Pottier 2002:204). It is the interstitial/liminal (Rwandan refugees in Uganda) that overcomes 'relations of dominance' and comes to the centre (the physical space of homeland). But returning triumphant, it re-establishes dominance, 'imposing' its vision.

In what follows, section one will briefly outline the importance of return migration in reconstituting the social landscape post-genocide and in that process it will challenge a simplistic notion of a 'divided society.' Section two will proceed to outline concepts central to the thesis. It will delineate the 'repatriation-reconciliation nexus', briefly explore the notion of reconciliation-cum-nation building, and will position the study vis-à-vis the literature on nationalism and ethnicity. Section three will in turn analyse de-ethnicization as a political project with roots, agents and scripts or myths, the central one being the script of 'unity'. Section four will investigate *ingando* as a space of dissemination. *Ingando* will be theorized as a re-invented tradition, a rite of passage aimed as re-education and physical, social and psychological transition from outside inside the 'new Rwanda'. Section five will both critically assess the major factors that undermine de-ethnicization and propose an alternative that might avoid its costs.

The final analysis will call for a careful incorporation of difference into the Rwandan project of national unity. Rather than opting for one of the dominant solutions such as majoritarian liberal democracy and consociationalism, or the fundamentally authoritarian attempt at de-ethnicization, the study motions towards a more nuanced understanding of 'post-genocide plurality', which accommodates yet supersedes difference as an ordering principle in political interaction.

1.   Tracing Transition: Post-genocide Returns and a Complex Social Landscape

In July 1994, after almost four years of intermittent warfare,[2] the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), composed mostly of Rwandan Tutsi exiles from Uganda, gained control of the capital, Kigali, and put an end to the genocide which had begun in April. They established a Government of National Unity and since then have dominated Rwanda's political scene. The

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[1] *Gacaca* are community courts designed to hear cases stemming from the 1994 genocide. They claim to be inspired by traditional Rwandan justice.
[2] See Annex 1 for a detailed historical timeline.

first post-genocide democratic elections in October 2003 merely confirmed the RPF's grasp on power through what was apparently a landslide but contested victory. While scholars rushed to disentangle the roots of the ultimate crime against humanity, the period that followed received relatively little attention.

This section does not attempt to fully grasp the multifaceted transition. Instead, it focuses on return migration as one less studied phenomenon and outlines its central importance in both redefining the social landscape post-genocide and problematizing the notion of a 'divided society of Hutus and Tutsis'.[3]

Importance of Return Migration

The Government of National Unity inherited not only a devastated but literally a 'displaced' country, where much of the population had fled the RPF's advance (Stockton 1994; Reed 1996). Precise figures do not exist, but approximate counts remain instructive: Up to 1.5 million Hutu internally displaced[4]; 2 million mostly Hutu refugees abroad ('new caseload' refugees; Reyntjens 2004:15); and 0.5 million Tutsi returning immediately after the RPF take-over ('old caseload'). Since 1994, about 2.1-3.4 million refugees[5] have been repatriated and resettled, a 'record in world history' (Kaiza 2003). The result is that 25-40 percent of the present population of 8.7 million (2006) is constituted by post-genocide returnees. In some areas, a third of the population is new and in two prefectures half of the inhabitants arrived recently (De Lame 2004:4).

Rwanda represents a unique case study not only due to the scale and complexity of movement in a relatively brief period, but also because the victors of the war were themselves returning exiles. They were 'old caseload' refugees and their descendants, some 120,000-300,000 Tutsi (mainly the elite) who fled Rwanda at the approach of independence (1959-61) and dispersed across all neighbouring countries and beyond (Pottier 2002:11). The 'old caseload' formed the kernel of what will henceforth be referred to as the 'diaspora.'[6] The numbers of the predominantly Tutsi diaspora grew both because return was forbidden or later effectively precluded[7] and families expanded, and also because further reprisals, notably in the early 1970s, led to a continued outflow of Tutsis from Rwanda. The formation of the RPF in exile was the only way for refugees to return (Prunier 1998), by creating what Shain calls a 'revolutionary exile organization…aiming to overthrow the home regime and reconstruct the entire social order' (1989:10). Immediately after the genocide ended, a large portion of the exiled Tutsi population returned to their country, 'most discovering it for the first time' (Reyntjens 2004:15) yet simultaneously 'becoming the new elite responsible for reconstruction, reconciliation and rule of law' (Pitsch-Santiago 2003:1).

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[3] The last available ethnically disaggregated population estimates suggest that Hutu comprise 85 percent, Tutsi about 14 percent, and the indigenous Twa less than one percent of the total population (Mgbako 2005:4). But are these 'categorical frames' sufficient in guiding our analysis of the new nation building project in Rwanda?

[4] Estimates as low as 0.5 million have been proposed. Some IDPs may have been double-counted as refugees.

[5] 0.5-1.5 million IDPs in addition to 1.1 million 'new caseload' Hutu, and 0.5-0.8 'old caseload' Tutsi.

[6] Most (90 percent) remained in Africa, mostly in Burundi, Uganda, Zaire and Tanzania, but some have migrated to Belgium, France, USA and Canada (Prunier 1998:124).

[7] 'Old caseload' refugees did obtain the 'right to return' on two separate occasions. During the first republic (1962-1973), the offer was dismissed by refugees as 'propaganda.' During the second republic, in 1986, Habyarimana allowed return under especially draconian conditions. Returnees would not be able to recover lost property or possessions, and would be allocated places to live (STJE 1996).

Return to What? Rethinking 'Divided Society'

Rwandans are charting a different course from other post-genocide societies (US Committee on Refugees 1998). With no claims to 'breakaway' statehood and no signs of 'de-facto ethnic separation',[8] 'the basic [post-genocide] choice between "political union" and "political divorce"' (Mamdani 2001:265) has been decided in favour of the former. By insisting that perpetrators and survivors can live 'side by side',[9] Rwanda is said to constitute a 'divided society.'

While the distinction between perpetrators and survivors is an analytically important one, we should avoid re-creating the simplistic image of Rwanda as a 'bi-polar' society. Such a conceptualization fails to capture i) the complex differences that have always cut across other lines; ii) the full diversity of genocide experience; and iii) the completely new reconfigurations resulting from mass returns. Today as in the past, Hutu are separated from other Hutu and Tutsi from other Tutsi by regional, lineage, clan and client affiliations, which developed previous to class and 'ethnic' distinctions (Newbury 2001, Vansina 2004). Discrimination under the two republics followed such 'non-ethnic' lines, taking the form of regional favouritism and sometimes simply nepotism. In addition, Rwanda's diversity is reflected through the various experiences of genocide not only as victim or participant, but also as bystander, absentee or saviour (Buckley-Zistel 2006b:101). The post-genocide massive returns further complicate the social landscape (Bergman 2004:4) in ways that suggest tensions but are far from known and do not necessarily 'cut along the familiar divides' (Minow and Chayes 2003:40).

Unfortunately, no academic study offers a satisfactory theory of 'division' in post-genocide Rwanda, one that would translate the observed 'complex orders of difference' (Berman 1998) into predictions regarding conflict-prone cleavage. What are the deepest divisions or horizontal inequalities along which the greatest tensions do or might accumulate? While the aim here is not to theorize the persistence and depth of each likely 'divider' and its relative weight as a possible contributor to conflict resurgence, it is crucial to highlight the 'diversity of difference' to discard simplistic assumptions of what 'division' means and hence what 'coexistence' requires, and to situate the often overlooked phenomenon of return as itself a powerful shaper of societal tensions. In fact, the study suggests that division which usually passes unnoticed and which cuts along one of these 'unfamiliar lines' is crucial in Rwanda today. The complicated and non-straightforward way in which a sub-set of 'old-caseload' returnees might form one of the most important cleavages (as regards the prospects of the nation-building project) will become fully apparent by the end of this paper.

2.   Conceptual Framework

'Repatriation-Reconciliation Nexus': From 'Durability' to 'Stability' of Return

Besides being a well-established negotiation tool (Haas; Stein; McGinnis; in Betts 2006:2), the exercise of issue linkage can have important impacts on institutional policy through what has been termed the power of ideas to alter perceptions of causal relationships (Betts 2006:2), and the 'agenda-setting value' and 'mobilizing effects' of key terms (Suhrke 2003:102). By adopting an altered reference point, we can not only shift emphasis (Suhrke

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[8] Cf. the former Yugoslavia, where mass killing and ethnic cleansing have produced both these outcomes.
[9] One important caveat to this is the government-established 'villageization' projects called *imidugudu*, which are composed of a single ethnic group.

2003:101) and creatively 're-imagine', we can also enrich vital concepts. Arrival at the 'milieu' or in-between place of the concepts of repatriation and reconciliation calls for rethinking of the discourse of 'durability' to better advocate not only against the withdrawal of agency and academic attention from refugee returnees but also for a more meaningful engagement with them. The concept of 'stability' of return offers a useful alternative; an inter-temporal tool able to dig deeper to the core of what causes (and thus what prevents) forced displacement.

i. Return/Repatriation

'Since repatriations are, by definition, journeys "home", it has been largely assumed that such movements are familiar and unproblematic' (Pilkington and Flynn 1999:195). Repatriation implies a certain finality, a return to stability and normalcy (Warner 1992:71), a restoration of order-as-was, an equilibrium of yestertimes (Malkki 1992). Such a vision, however, denies 'the temporary reality of our lives and the changes that take place over time' (Warner 1994:171). It neglects the fact that repatriation might not mean a return to the economic, social, and cultural 'status quo ante' (Kibreab 2002:55), that what results is 'integration' rather than 're-integration' (ibid.:74), and that return in fact might not be a 're-anything but the beginning of a new cycle' (Black and Gent 2006:20). The most worrisome outcome of this stylized notion of return as a good thing, a re-emplacement of people to 'where they belong', to a 'place known in shorthand as home' (Hammond 1999:227) is that 'attention to refugees might be abruptly and artificially ended at the point of repatriation. As a result, too little assistance is given to those who return and we know too little about the diverse experiences of returnees' (Black and Gent 2006:20).

Even when return leads to one's encounter with the same location, this location for different reasons might cease to be the same 'place', 'home' or 'patria.' For one, it might carry different, often negative, associations as a result of conflict and forced flight (Rogge 1994). The passing of time might change objective circumstances in the country or location of origin and make it 'unfamiliar', a 'strange and threatening place' especially for returnees born in exile (Kibreab 2002: 55; and also Rogge 1994; Malkki 1995; Hammond 2004). Encounters with other returnee groups might have similar effects. But exile and return are more than kinetic moments, political phenomena and geographic spaces. They are also spaces of experience and transformation of identity (Clifford 1994; Gilroy 1993; Matsuoka and Sorenson 2001). Exile can lead both to distanciation from homeland, and to longing and re-imagining of home and nation. All of these factors determine the experience of return and integration, and also might signal a most complex transformation of conflict.

Counting the diverse discontinuities of post-genocide return seems a herculean if not outright impossible task. But just remarking on the many ways in which return is not a simple coming home to 'familiar' ground is essential. It highlights that if return signifies the continuity of anything, it is first and foremost that of a state. Because while people settle into different spaces, while the 'patria' might be new and unfamiliar to most and even threatening to some, it survives as 'Rwanda', the only space where a people are a priori *entitled* to imagine and construct permanent 'homes.' If attention to refugees is withdrawn at the border, such complacency further 'naturalizes' the state as a continuous, stable and homely space. Yet rather than 'stability', return might signal a mere suppression of conflict within an ineffectual state (Duffield 2007).

ii. Reconciliation

Reconciliation requires a brief exposé as it is both a highly used term and a vague concept (Zorbas 2004; Jenkins 2004). Reconciliation here is not to conjure the 'sentimental and emotional meeting of hearts and minds', 'forgiving and forgetting' (Ignatieff, in Minow and Chayes 2003:325) since these hardly can be expected or even willed on more than an individual scale in a deeply traumatized society (ibid.). Reconciliation might be more usefully conceptualized as the high end of the stability-of-peace spectrum, symptomized by coexistence and later collaboration, cooperation and finally integration between segments of society (Afzai and Colleton, in Minow and Chayes 2003:21). For these 'symptoms' to occur, both negative peace (absence of violence) and positive peace (long-term durable stability) need to be fostered through political, economic and security measures detailed elsewhere.

iii. The Nexus

The basic thesis informing the concept linkage in question asserts that where flight results from conflict, one cannot think of a 'stable' or 'sustainable' return without dealing with specific issues of negative peace, particularly human and communal security, and positive peace, both being necessary ingredients to reconciliation. Although organizations' recent practice such as quick impact projects, cross mandates, the '4Rs agenda'[10] show the understanding that that there is a gap between return and 'durability', that durability does not simply ensue as a result of return but has to be worked towards, there is no solid theoretical underpinning which would connect return to a lack of repeated flight.

Vague intimations only are made in the direction of the nexus: UNHCR has for example 'realized the importance of prevention of conflict and peace-building to protect and assist IDPs and refugees in areas of conflict' (Suhrke 2003:102). Such a realization interestingly omits returnees and *post*-conflict states. Further, the discourse on return apparently shows the comprehension that 'return is not enough to promote peace' but that it has to be a 'successful return' (Black and Gent 2006). Yet causality between peace and return is not unidirectional: Prospects of peace are partly determined by return, success of return is determined by prospects of peace. The lack of a clear theoretical base connecting return with a possibility of future flight might explain both i) the agencies' inability to fully integrate peace-building and reconciliation into their imaginative and thus operative universe; and ii) the fact that they might get embroiled in reconciliation exercises they little understand.

'Durability' is a problematic notion, suggesting permanence. Yet the fact of return does not necessarily signal negative peace and certainly does not signal presence of positive peace as the 'durable' absence of violent conflict and (re)-displacement. Article 1C(4) of the 1951 Convention stipulates that 'refugee status ceases if refugees voluntarily re-establish themselves in the country of origin' (EC/GC/02/5 2004:249). Knowing that significant Hutu refoulements occurred in 1996 from Tanzania, Burundi and Zaire (Pottier 1998), and knowing that survivors, perpetrators and other voluntary returns all came together in the years following the genocide, who ceases to be a 'refugee', and when? Even if 'voluntary' repatriation into this context occurs, is this a durable solution? The present thesis is a way to show how problematic the lack of agencies' own answers to these questions can become.

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[10] '4Rs' stand for repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction. In the 'Framework for Durable Solutions for Refugees and Persons of Concern', the High Commissioner proposes '4Rs' as an 'integrated approach to post-conflict situations' (UNHCR 2004).

The notion of durability obscures what is in fact a more graduated and dynamic nature of 'stability' of return, defined as the likelihood of repeated displacement. The nexus allows reconceptualization of reconciliation (or the move towards it) along these lines, as the determinant of such 'stability', of what we might call a 'non-necessity to flee', signalling a reduced risk of future forced moves. The nexus is an attempt to surpass legalistic notions of 'refugeeness', where refugees are 'visible' only when they cross the 'definitional trip-wire' that is the international border (Frelick, in Chimni 1993:444), materializing only as an anomaly on the landscape of sovereign power. It is an attempt to approach the under-theorized political side of the phenomenon and the roots of forced displacement. The nexus is equally a way to decentre our study from 'returnees' to return as a space of relations between returnees and stayees, the latter of whom might be equally or more vulnerable.

Nation-Building cum Reconciliation: Government's Grapple with the Nexus

If conflict lies at the core of the nexus, and if reconciliation lies at the core of stability of return, then identifying the ingredients for successful reconciliation is the central challenge. De-ethnicization is conceived by the Rwandan government as 'reconciliation.' While it is not the only reconciliatory strategy pursued, it does form a meta-initiative/meta-narrative of co-existence.[11] The strategy is lodged in the government's own understanding of the conflict and its roots. Since politicized cleavages (notably, but not exclusively, ethnicity) were singled out as the core of the 'Rwandan disease' (Oomen 2004:16), the discursive complex of de-ethnicization is erected so as to call for their abolition, making them appear unnatural and redundant. They are to be replaced with an undifferentiating 'Rwandanness' (Buckley-Zistel 2006b), portrayed as 'natural' and desirable.

De-ethnicization as Nation-Building: Elites, Power and the Use of Scripts

Although researchers discard 'laymen's notions' or what has been termed 'folk sociology' (Hirschfeld 1996, in Brubaker 2000:166), and take pride in being the analysts of 'naturalizers' rather than 'analytic naturalizers', they cannot deny it is precisely these facile notions around which political entrepreneurs mobilize action and which at times, through a process of 'reification', can have a partly self-fulfilling effect (Brubaker 2002:166). As such, the task ahead is really two-fold: First, the potentially damaging dichotomy that underlies de-ethnicization as an approach to reconciliation must be exposed. Second, and much more difficult, analysis must be made relevant. In other words, the need is to raise theory to a level where it can offer a practical, not merely conceptual, antidote to the simplistic fashioning and (possible) (ab)uses of identity by political actors. De-construction needs to be translated into a useful proscription for such political opposition.

The present study builds on a 'constructivist' (ethnicity) or 'modernist' (nationalism) approach, and uses it to destabilize the partly primordial, generally simplistic and definitely self-serving approach of the Rwandan government. The study distinguishes between i) what nationalists speak of (the nation as 'looming out of immemorial past' and 'gliding into a limitless future', Anderson 1983:12); ii) nationalism being a recent historical phenomenon (Anderson 1983, Gellner 1983, Smith 1986); and, as some further argue iii) a presence

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[11] Transitional justice initiatives in Rwanda include retributive justice (e.g. ICTR in Arusha), restorative justice (e.g. *gacaca* courts), distributive justice (e.g. FARG funds) besides the overarching initiative to promote 'national unity' (Oomen 2006).

continuously 'under construction' ('imagined community'; 'daily plebiscite'; 'social work'). The constructivist/modernist debate does not ponder whether nation, ethnicity or other markers are false or true (Anderson 1983), but how, why, when, and to what extent they become salient, can be moulded, cast a certain way, 'used'. Nations/ethnicities are not 'things in the world' but rather dynamic and evolving frames, 'products of a historical process, which can only be studied in specific contexts' (Berman 1998:311).

In an essay entitled 'Beyond Identity', Brubaker (2000) warns that terms such as 'ethnicity', 'identity' and 'nationalism' obscure more than they reveal. Instead of deploying analytical categories overloaded with meaning, he suggests disaggregating them along their different internal dynamics and functions. The terms should be approached in 'relational, processual, eventful terms', as 'practical categories, cultural idioms, cognitive schemas, discursive frames, organizational routines, institutional forms, contingent events and political projects' (ibid:167).

The present study does not ponder 'nationalism',[12] but rather the way an idea of a nation is brought into (forced into) being or, alternatively, re-invented. In the trilogy of nationalism as an ideology, nation as a collectivity, and nation-building as a process, it is the latter that forms the focus of the study. More specifically, it is the evocative word 'building' in 'nation-building' around which the present approach pivots: As a dynamic term, it surpasses the notion of a collective 'imagining' (Anderson 1983) by suggesting 'enaction'. It thus embraces a more instrumental and performative concept of a 'nation as a political project'. Nation-building thus understood implies an author and underscores the role of leadership (Doob 1964). It opens an analytical space for identification of agents of dissemination and relations of power. 'Nationness' can be understood as produced, 'broadcast' and, through a complex process of adoption (or rejection), as propagated (or not). By adopting this frame, the study attempts to discern who in Rwanda re-invents a 'nation', how they do so, and what determines whether this project will be or should be accepted.

The analysis that follows uses the notion of 'scripts', which can be defined as narrative sequences of considerable robustness in terms of repetition and overlap across persons/sources and time. These are 'instrumental' in the sense that they re-interpret history and society so as to *allow* a particular nationalist project to appear as logical and legitimate, and they are 'instructive', in the sense that they are taught, 'policed' and to be followed. The new nation-building project is studied mainly but not exclusively through these scripts (also laws, spaces of dissemination, etc.).

Methodology: Treading Carefully Between Lines

> *Language connects us with society through being the primary domain of ideology, and through being both the site of and stake in, struggles of power*
> *Norman Fairclough (1989:15)*

How do we study nationalist scripts? On one side lies 'the said' and 'the written.' On the other side lies an unvoiced functionality: the interpretations that 'the said' opens and forecloses, and the aims it thus makes intelligible. Bringing the politicality of a script into the

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[12] Nationalism can be understood as the principle which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent (Gellner 1983).

light requires a minute engagement with the text through the comparison of claims with historical record and with opinions and critiques that emerge from outside the discourse. By getting a sense of the repetitive 'divergences' in this way, one can develop a sense of the 'sub-text', anything implied but not stated. By unravelling the nationalist script, the section on de-ethnicization develops our sense of sub-text. The section on *ingando* then includes a truncated de-ethnicization script (as taught in the camp) composed of both text and 'recalled'/verbalized sub-text. This method of reading is broadly grounded in theories of textual/discourse critique (Fairclough 1989, Derrida 1976).

3. De-ethnicization: The Discursive Edifice and Its Fault-lines

> *Many people who had the chance to visit Rwanda have been…intrigued by the fact that Rwandans are harmoniously living together only 10 years after the Genocide…Today, not only are Rwandans living together but they share the common aspirations as one people, as it used to be.*
>
> *'All you need to know about Rwanda', National University of Rwanda (2005)*

Is this really all we need to know, or should it rather be the point of departure in our 'project of knowing': taking as curious not the proclaimed oneness but the aspiration to demonstrate it. In what follows, I aim to take apart de-ethnicization. I ask how does the project appear different from other African nation-building attempts? What are the script's central precepts and how do they hold up to scrutiny? Is the 'authorship' of this project discernable? What are its functions? There is no study of Rwandan 'de-ethnicization' and the present study does not claim to offer a fulfilling account. Rather, it attempts to elucidate the binary opposition that underlies its structure and to destabilize it. The first two sections discern government's positioning vis-à-vis the stylized quandary of nationalism, and the motives and uses of 'appearance' that underlie de-ethnicization discourse. The remainder of the chapter pays attention to the falsely opposed poles of 'unity' and 'division'.

Nationalisms in Africa: the Rwandan Government's Answer to the 'Central Paradox'

African nationalism is typically cast as a counter-reference to the 19th century ethnolinguistic movements in Europe: Instead of the 'we', it allegedly started with the 'they', the 'illegitimate relevant other whose alien hegemony was rejected' and moved to build the 'we' on the basis of the territorial unit of colonial administration, 'however lacking it might be in historical sanction' (Young 1982:167). Such a theoretical approach, while sufficiently accurate in capturing the African 'they' versus 'we' departure, is nevertheless problematic inasmuch as it i) treats 'Africa' as an undifferentiated entity; ii) neglects those European nationalisms which were not nation-state (ethnolinguistic) but rather state-to-nation (e.g. Britain, France, Italy; Neuberger 1977:202); and iii) overlooks the fact that even in pre-colonial times in Africa political and 'ethnic'/'linguistic' boundaries rarely coincided (Colson 1968:31). There is no 'African' nationalism, merely nationalisms in Africa.

Nevertheless, the post-independence nation-building query (not unique to the region) indisputably revolved around how to achieve unity within the artificial post-colonial state often defined by a multiplicity of sub-state loyalties. This 'central paradox' was initially approached as 'inspirational summons.' In the modernist spirit of the times, post-independence leaders believed that in order to progress, states had to resolve their 'identity

crises' (Young 1982:161-163). It was thought that 'the finite energies of the state would be dissipated in fissiparous conflict unless the transcendent loyalties of the citizenry could be firmly tied to a national ideal' (ibid.:163). National integration was seen as the development of an 'integrating strand' among networks of allegiances, requiring that 'identification with the national community supersede…more limited ethnic loyalties' (Smock and Bentsi-Enchill 1976:5).

The many crises of post-independence Africa undermined the initial nationalist optimism. Slowly, the 'central paradox' turned into 'the problem of national integration in Africa' (Alexander 1968, Smock and Bentsi-Enchill 1976). Consequently, many began to question whether the 'viability of the state in all cases depends on investing this impersonal abstraction with the vibrant, nurturant, anthropomorphic properties of the nation' (Young 1982:165). Can and must the state be nationalized? The Rwandan government tailored an affirmative answer which remains very much lodged in modernist thinking: The government saw to it that if 'nation' couldn't surpass other loyalties and become the primary allegiance in the state, and rather where politicized sub-state loyalties achieved the same to considerable detriment of the whole of society, then the need was to go further, and to act so as to dissolve the 'central paradox'. The parallel with 'high modernist' (Scott 1998) self-confidence in the rational design of social order could not be more pronounced.

From 'Exclusionary' to 'Inclusionary' National Narrative in Rwanda?: Politicizing the Entrepreneurship of Absence

Nationalizing the state was presented by the power elite as a 'solution' in a post-genocide society which at once opted for a political union, yet remained divided and perhaps unfamiliar to many returnees. Nationness was understood as a way to 're-root' identity and anchor a sense of commonality, a way to achieve social cohesion post-conflict (Buckley-Zistel 2006b:103). The essentially top-down project that ensued took the form of de-ethnicization (ibid.). 'Unity', the notion of undifferentiating Rwandanness, was to replace the destructive sub-national loyalties, which were to be 'discontinued'. The discourse of unity was thus from the start inseparable from that of destruction of 'division.' As such, the project separated itself from other nation-building attempts as it did not simply try to add an 'overlay' over a multi-ethnic constituency through 'national consciousness' raising activities. The attempt was not to supersede, but to veto and replace. The preamble of the 2003 Constitution clearly resolves to 'eradicate ethnic, regional and any other form of divisions.'

De-ethnicization is a dual discourse of 'unity' and 'division', where unity is salient but central only vis-à-vis its implication of making division appear redundant. 'Division', specifically ethnic division, is interpreted by the government both as what ailed the past and as what hinders a better future. It fits in line with the general 'policy of breaking with the country's troubled past' (*Afrol News*, January 1 2002). Ethnic divisions run against the modernizing, forward-looking project of the political elite. According to Rusagara,[13] 'indeed, to emphasize Tutsi or Hutu is to cling to an outdated identity in the 21st Century Rwanda'. These are 'absurd self-identifications', if not 'insults' in today's 'Rwanda as a modern nation' (Rusagara, 13 January 2006). Although destruction of 'ethnicity' (Hutu, Tutsi, Twa) is central, the aim is to dispose of all 'division', which is however never fully defined.

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[13] General Frank Rusagara is a Ugandan returnee and former Deputy Minister of Defence, and high-profile instructor at *ingando* camps. Currently, he serves as the commandant of the Military Academy in Nyakinama.

De-ethnicization has to be framed vis-à-vis the counter-posed and zero-sum constellation of Tutsi and Hutu nationalisms that preceded it. It is from such counter-reference that de-ethnicization attempts to draw strength. As Baines (2003:483) highlights 'the construction of the post-colonial Hutu nation dialogically competed with that of the imagined Tutsi nation.' For either radical Hutu or Tutsi 'no other political reality was more definitive than that of the other' (Mamdani 2001:76). The centre of the opposition were discrepant 'origin myths', which led to 'divergent interpretations of who has access to resources and claims to citizenship within the nation' (Baines 2003:483). It is in this field of vision that unity *appears* as 'beneficial' and 'necessary', and all 'difference' as 'destructive.' Unity is after all 'inclusionary' and difference 'excludes.' Naturally, this 'play of appearances' will be challenged, and it will be shown that 'unity' as cast through de-ethnicization can also powerfully 'exclude'.

No theory of de-ethnicization exists in the sense used here, as a crusade to destroy both ethnicity-based discourse and the use of ethnicity as an ordering principle of association, whether cultural or political. But theories of the process of ethnicization can help us understand what de-ethnicization involves. At the most basic level, it attempts the undoing of social boundaries. Constructions of identity as political projects tend to 'essentialize' identities (Fearon and Laitin 2000). In a curious twist, the Rwandan government not only 'essentializes' ('unity'/'Rwandanness') but also 'constructivizes' identities in order to be able to dissolve them. The government insists that 'if ethnic differences can be learned, so can the idea that ethnicity does not exist' (Lacey 2004). Ethnic identity is actively created as fabricated and fixed, and the fabrication as imposed by the colonizer. The unity that replaces divisions thus attempts to solidify itself against this 'other' of the past and in a sense presents itself as the 'second independence' from colonial rule.

In Rwanda, possible motives and effects of the 'entrepreneurship of absence' need to be carefully assessed. Absence of ethnicity, just as its presence, has to be politicized. As Uvin (1999:267) suggests, 'absence of ethnicity is as important a political marker as its presence'. While the political functions of ethnicity are well-recognized, its rejection is less theorized as a political tool. Yet we know that in Burundi for instance 'explicit denial of ethnicity fulfilled an important legitimizing function for the power elite for three decades' (Uvin 1999:267). Under the second republic of Jean Baptiste Bagaza, all references to ethnicity were outlawed but the language of national unity was used to 'integrate, to solidify and rationalize Tutsi hegemony' (Lemarchand 1996:107). As the last section shows, while it is not evident that purposeful/coordinated self-legitimization lies at the core of Rwandan de-ethnicization, the perception certainly exists that the project legitimizes a minority rule in the sense that it enables it and perpetuates it.

The Binary Unravelling, Part 1: 'Unity'

i. Construction: Re-readings of History

> *Societies seeking to move forward from [genocide] must have the courage to go back thousands of years into their past to rediscover their inherent potential, and armed with that, to move forward again, with the force of thousand of years in order to smash their way into the future.*
>
> *Paul Nantulya (NTK November 14 2005)*

The notion of 'unity' (*ubumwe*) is central to the de-ethnicization discourse and a particular re-reading of history is used to buttress its validity. The attempt is to reconnect with the pre-colonial past of Rwanda in which 'unity and harmony' prevailed but which was 'arrested' by the colonialists (Buckley-Zistel 2006b). In this rendering, the colonialists created the ethnic categories of Hutu and Tutsi, which previously were no more than loose categories of social status with the possibility of mobility between them. Ethnicity was invented, and thereafter politicized (Buckley-Zistel 2006a). The argument boils down to how 'the type of clientship, the *ubuhake* cattle contract [with mostly Tutsi as overlords] has shaped ethnic relations over time [but] done so with *harmony* [emphasis added]' (Pottier 2002:65).

The idealized and wholly uncritical rendering of pre-colonial times permeates government documents, speeches and history instruction at *ingando* camps. A few examples should suffice. President Paul Kagame expounds: 'We...share one country, we share one language, we share everything…Why don't we look at ourselves as Rwandans?'[14] 'The Rwandan nation, known in the region since the 11th century, is founded on the common history of its citizens, on the shared common values, on unity of language and culture.'[15] Rwanda as a nation 'is not merely a geographical space, but an enduring idea that is self-generating … indestructible, and invincible. … Historical negation and self-denial of the Rwandan nation [was] propagated by colonialists and the Roman Catholic Church' (Rusagara 13 January 2006). Ex-President Pasteur Bizimungu explains that 'divisions were mostly brought about by the colonialists who had their own hidden agenda, and this brought about different situations and periods which Rwandans have undergone including genocide and the refugee life' (Radio Rwanda 1997a).

ii. Un-Construction: Where the Myth Falters

The idyllic 'unity' can be problematized on three interconnected counts: First, no sense of 'rwandanness' as self-conscious belonging existed in pre-colonial times. Second, geographical unity falters when the diachronic dissect ('historicizing of territoriality') shows past territoriality not to be 'bounded' in the present sense, and the present borders to be arbitrary in what they encompass. Third, no unity as 'harmonious coexistence' can be easily substantiated. Un-constructing unity is not an attempt to embrace the other binary pole or to undermine faith in prospects of coexistence. Rather, it aims to destabilize the nationalist construct by pointing to the complexity of the past which in no easy way supports or rejects 'unity' or 'division'.

According to Vansina (2001:2), in the pre-colonial era, self-awareness of belonging was primarily connected with 'various kingdoms, and in some cases, family communities'. Regional and sub-regional cultures also defined one's loyalty, in addition to clan, class and client networks (Newbury 2001). In fact, until some time after 1900, 'there was no general concept of "Rwanda"' (Vansina 2001:2). The word used to refer to a 'central plateau with a surrounding area.' Accordingly, one might have referred to the rwanda of Nyiginya as much as to the rwanda of Burundi or other places (ibid.). 'The self-awareness of all the inhabitants

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[14] Speech given at Woodrow Wilson Centre for Scholars in 2004.
[15] The quote comes from 'The Vision 2020', one of the 'two key government documents', adopted by government in 2000 and 'encapsulating the essence of [its] development philosophy' (UNDP 2004b).

that they were 'Rwandan' came only with the colonial period and was related to their shared experiences during that time' (ibid.).

The expression 'shared experiences' refers the added reality of territorially-demarcated and centralized rule, but obfuscates both the previously shifting and fluid boundaries (Vansina 2004) and the arbitrariness of the original colonial demarcation. Political centralization under the Nyiginya kingdom was not founded on 'uniform territorial administration consistent throughout the country and especially throughout the area known presently as Rwanda' (Newbury 2002:143). The kingdom was never a space of delineated borders, but rather conceived of its ambulatory capital with 'outlying regions' (Vansina 2004:62). Further, full centralization only happened in the 1920s when the central court annexed what is today North-West Rwanda and other peripheral regions.

At the time of partition, colonials not only 'fixed' borders, but they added some regions and left out others. Today's county of Bufumbira in Uganda had in fact been part of the Nyiginya kingdom (Van Der Meeren 1996:261). Similarly, the dynastic sphere of influence stretched into parts of Eastern Zaire (North Kivu and Idjwi Island) but the link was severed by the 1885 Berlin Conference whereby 'the Kinyarwanda-speaking population stopped paying tribute to the Nyiginya king' (Pottier 1998:153). Even after partition, the colonials at different points considered dividing the state into two, based on a broadly conceived division between east and west of the country (Newbury 2001:293), and consolidating Burundi and Rwanda in one administrative unit under a single vice governor (ibid:289).

While neither divisions nor unity completely explain the history, to proclaim that pre-colonial 'Rwanda' was a peaceful/non-conflictual society with flexible inter-class mobility is to severely simplify historical dynamics. Violent conflicts occurred between kingdoms and within the kingdom (Newbury 2001:293), between clans, and between the Tutsi and Hutu themselves (Nsanze 2002:150). It is true that in pre-colonial times we can i) better conceptualize Hutu and Tutsi as class rather than as ethnicity (even that only after 1800; Vansina 2001:2); and that ii) colonizers fixed the boundaries of these classes and heightened horizontal inequality by systematically and structurally entrenching the privilege and power of one class over the other. That said, mobility between classes was always minimal (Pottier 2002). It was further severely occluded with the introduction of *uburetwa* or corveé labour under the rule of Rwabugiri (?-1895). Most importantly, the combination of increasing exploitation and humiliation provoked 'a rift that tore the whole society of two million apart' so that in 1890, 'it teetered on the brink of total anomy' (Vansina 2004:197). As much damage as the colonials indisputably and irrevocably wreaked, the apotheosis of a 'unified' and 'peaceful' nation simply does not do justice to the complex past.

iii. Myths and Power: Can the Long-Standing Relationship be Undone?

Myth-making, meaning selective and distorting historical reading, and 'top-down history telling' is neither a novelty in nation-building (Snyder and Ballentine 1996, Smith 1986), nor in the historiography of Rwanda. Political institutions generally 'justify and legitimate themselves through discourses on the past' (Jewsiewicki 1986:12) and 'new social situations generate both new political movements and new historical myths' (Vansina 1998:38). Myths adapt to the 'necessities of the present', history becomes re-interpreted in what seems to be a 'universal quest for a useful precedent' (Lonsdale 1989:128).

In Rwanda, myth-making in the service of political legitimization has, however, proven especially harmful. Even in pre-colonial times, history told a certain way was important (Vansina 2000:378). While oral history allowed for the proliferation of different versions,[16] only the dominant one was preserved through the dynasty's courts (ibid.). The court historian's task was to 'hand down to posterity the glorious traditions of the realm – not as history might have it but, rather, as royal ordinance prescribed' (Lemarchand 1970:32). In this era, the Tutsi dynastic myth based on a poem 'The Story of the Origins' was used to legitimize the Nyiginya rule (Lemarchand 1970:33). 'Tutsi' elitism was later strengthened with the 'Hamitic hypothesis' (with Europeans as 'myth-makers'), avowing racial supremacy. During the first and second republics, the Hamitic hypothesis was turned against itself, and favoured Hutu legitimization of majority rule and the exclusion of the minority Tutsi, who, according to the myth, had migrated into Rwanda from Ethiopia. The 'superiors' and 'rulers' swiftly turned into 'foreigners' and 'invaders' (Lemarchand 1999:6).

Today, few dispute that Rwandan history dotted by a sequence of myths needs to be rewritten (Newbury 2002:140). Rewriting, however, should signify a turn to complexity, rather than the creation of another self- (those in power-) serving caricature. The past should not be 'used'; its lessons are elusive after all: Depending on when we anchor our retrospective, we learn different lessons. Across time, the borders of the Nyiginya kingdom were fluctuating and differently conceptualized, loyalties shifted, new loyalties developed, and continue to do so today. Importantly, the fact that idealistically conceived 'unity' does not hold up to scrutiny does not mean that Rwandans cannot conceive of a 'commonality' useful for future co-existence, and this idea is explored in more depth in the last section.

iv. Script Reproduction and Authorship

What is perhaps even more remarkable than the skewed reading servicing de-ethnicization, is the lack of critique of this discourse, and its reproduction. No single Rwandese intellectual could be found to take a public position on Jan Vansina's *Le Rwanda Ancien,* the most essential recent work of Rwandan history which attacks all the tenets of the official story today (DeLame 2004:10). Government maintains a 'monopoly over knowledge production' (Pottier 2002:109) and polices its reproduction. The official historical narrative is open to replication but closed to debate. Although the government has banned teaching of history in schools after the genocide (Hodgkin 2006:203), the absence of curriculum does not leave a vacuum: The 'official', 'politically correct' history gets reinforced through trials, *gacaca*, *ingando*, public addresses, documents and commemorations (ibid.:203).

Often in reporting and speeches, it is the impersonal 'Rwanda' that 'does', 'aims' and 'achieves.' But since I conceptualized de-ethnicization as a 'project', I aimed to explore the agents of its dissemination. Today, the key institution for the (re)production of scripts underlying de-ethnicization is the 1999-instituted and partly donor-financed National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC). Although NURC is 'officially' vested with overseeing the production of 'unity and reconciliation' (NURC 2005; NURC Official Website www.nurc.gov.rw/; Kaiza 2003), dissemination 'happens' in a more deregulated way through reproduction of scripts in official speeches, media, and in general in any type of publicly uttered 'text.' Authorship in this sense is dispersed and unfinished.

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[16] Oral societies do allow for a more bottom-up understanding of history, as the work of Vansina and Newbury shows. Such, currently marginal, approaches can be harnessed to destabilize official stories.

The Binary Unravelling, Part 2: 'Division'

'Division' is the silent counter-reference to the salient 'unity.' References to unity are present in the text and reproduced, division is absent with the exception of when it needs to be 'explained away.' The structure of this section should visually suggest the iceberg nature of 'division' – it is suppressed. We know its importance only through the punishment of its emergence. In the simplistic binary opposition, that which falls short of unity is to be outcast. Yet not all that falls short of unity is division. The logic threatens to subsume under 'division' all 'difference.' Division has in reality over-spilling boundaries and this is reflected in the sphere of 'prohibition' and in the punitive practice.

The government's aim is to create a population that 'identifies itself by nationality and not by ethnicity' (Hodgkin and Montefiore 2005:6). All references to ethnicity (ethnic labelling) are banned from public discourse. Citizens are no longer required to carry identity cards (*indangamutu* or *carte d'identité*), which were originally instated by the Belgians in 1933 and discontinued in 1996. Newspapers as well as radio stay clear of ethnic labels and so do schools (Hodgkin 2006). But besides ethnicity, other 'divisive categories' (such as *les rwandais de l'exterieur* or *les Ougandais*) are replaced with the broad category *Banyarwanda* (the people of Rwanda) (Zorbas 2004:43). References to identities which are not officially sanctioned are met with public shaming campaigns, labelling the individuals as *génocidaires* or negationists, and can even result in formal charges (Zorbas 2004:43). Political organizations are prohibited from basing themselves 'on race, ethnic group, tribe, clan, region, sex, religion or *any other division* [emphasis added]' (GLCSS 2006).

Punishment of 'divisionism' went into effect on 18 December 2001 when the 'Law Instituting Punishment for Offences of Discrimination and Sectarianism' was passed (Law N 47/2001). Sectarianism is defined in Article 1(2) as 'use of any speech, written statement or action that divides people, that is likely to spark conflicts among people, or that causes an uprising which might degenerate into strife among people based on discrimination as defined in 1(1).' Besides the penalties of imprisonment and fines, Article 6 provides for, 'depending on the seriousness of the consequences', dissolution of the association, political party or non-profit organization that is found guilty.

Many observers note that the law is vague, leaving doors open for 'selective and politically motivated' interpretations and enforcement (Zorbas 2004:44; Mgbako and Stubbins 2004:6) and has been used to weaken and destroy opposition (Mgbako 2005:6). During the 2003 presidential elections, the only likely rival to the RPF, the Democratic Republican Movement (MDR), was dissolved on charges of being 'harbingers of genocidal ideology' (Mgbako 2005:6). In 2004, the parliament requested the dissolution of a number of religious associations and a forum of farmers' organizations, and has reprimanded secondary schools and the national university for retaining divisionists. Other national and international organizations including human rights and civil rights groups were similarly accused (HRW 2004; Mgbako 2005).

Conclusion

To grasp a discourse in the totality of its iteration is impossible. But a partial view does allow assessment of the basic tenets and the fault lines of this 'imported' and

instrumental, deregulated but controlling discourse. Today, the government continues to wish its past-abandoning and future-embracing vision into existence by incessantly invoking 'unity' through textual presence and hushing the complex tensions that mark the social landscape. While punitive apparatus and practice speak of some real threat to be 'neutralized', the discourse of unity self-legitimizes by making 'division' seem a 'false consciousness' imposed over what was always and 'essentially' a 'unified society.' The false binary at the root of de-ethnicization pits an idealized yet never-existing harmonious unity against anything that falls short. Beyond genocidal 'divisionism' conceived of in ethnic terms (i.e. Hutu versus Tutsi), it attacks other potential 'divisions' (e.g. regional), often merely 'difference' and as such 'divergence' of opinion and diversity.

4.   *Ingando*: 'Transition Camps' as Spaces of Discourse Dissemination

Ingando camps are a microcosm of the attempted linkage between repatriation and reconciliation through de-ethnicization. *Ingando* is not a 'high profile' activity like *gacaca* and has been little studied. It is selective in its targeting and as such has drawn relatively small numbers overall. Over the past years its appeal has nonetheless increased rapidly. Importantly, by targeting populations that the government believes are most in need of 're-education', it reveals both the way in which dissemination of de-ethnicization scripts happens, and the scripts' functionality.

Ingandos are non-voluntary[17] retreats of several hundred people at a time, combining cultural activities, instruction and community work. They are presented as reintegratory and reconciliatory practices where people come together to learn and 'discuss' problems of national concern such as causes of conflict. *Ingandos* were conceived as 'calculated efforts on the part of the government...aimed at achieving lasting harmony among the Rwandese people' (Radio Rwanda December 9 1997). Closer scrutiny, however, reveals them to be a space of tightly upheld military-like discipline[18] and instruction rather than debate.

Since their inception soon after the genocide, the three to eight week long camps have been known variously as 'solidarity camps', 're-education' camps, 'civic education' camps, 'political awareness' camps, 'reorientation' camps, and 'reintegration' courses, and have targeted different segments of the population. Those who have been 're-educated' include 'old caseload' and 'new caseload' returnees, ex-FAR soldiers and demobilized rebels, provisionally released prisoners, sex workers and, most recently, pre-university students on government scholarships, teachers, youth groups, an d civil servants. The tendency has been to *expand* the target constituency. Total numbers for attendance have never been published, and only very partial counts can be gleaned from the press or deduced (e.g. prison releases).

The following analysis focuses on two groups – returnees and provisionally released prisoners – for whom *ingando* is both a physical transitory space (from outside inside their communities) and a figurative one as well (from outside inside the new ideology). The transmission of scripts might be especially clear among *ingandos* organized for these populations because they are either i) most *at disconnect* with the discourse (returnees who

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[17] While there is no law requiring attendance, it is far from voluntary. According to HRW (2000), participants attend because they feel obliged or have been told by the authorities that they must.

[18] For example: 'Before the start of each lesson, an instructor asks the ex-prisoners to sit and stand and repeats the command until they respond in perfect unison' (AFP August 12 2005).

have lived abroad for an extended time); and/or ii) most *in opposition* to them (released prisoners still potentially harbouring 'divisionism'). *Ingando* for these populations is really an integration exercise outfitted not only with 'political' and 'history' education but also practical lessons concerning health, and policies and programmes of the government (e.g. regarding poverty alleviation). The camps have the potential to enhance our understanding of both the dissemination of nationalist scripts and the use of 'tradition' and 'folklore' as a technology of discursive reproduction. The latter, being a particularly interesting take on 'performativeness' of nation-building, would require extensive fieldwork.

Since academic sources are minimal, this section draws primarily but not exclusively on 108 news articles spanning 14 years (June 1994 to May 2007). Notes produced by camp participants and gathered together in a document prepared by Penal Reform International (PRI) have also been crucial, specifically in the study of scripts. As regards print articles, while some centred around the camp issue, others merely touched upon it. Many have been written by Rwandan journalists for *The New Times* (Kigali), a government-leaning newspaper, but also for the Kenyan *Standard* and other major news agencies (BBC, AFP, Xinhua). Although the articles cannot be described as a 'mouthpiece' of the prevalent official attitudes, very few are in fact critical. Dissent and questioning of the official scripts in camps is occasionally highlighted only to be in turn refuted. Repetitiveness and thematic unity as regards description as well as value judgments are strikingly robust across years and different writers. Most worryingly, NGOs and development agencies, some of which sponsor the camps, often unwittingly reproduce the sound-bites of the official discourse in the same manner the discourse reproduces itself, compactly and unquestioningly[19] (see e.g. DFID 2007; World Bank 2007; UNDP 2004a; UNDP 2004b; UNRCS 2001).

Unwrapping the Packaging: Production of 'Traditionality'

i. Revival of the Customary, Return to 'Authenticity'?

Ingando is often highlighted as a Rwandan 'tradition', one among many restored to their glory in the recent wave of 'traditionalization' of transitional justice. On the tenth anniversary of the genocide, the Kenyan daily *The East African Standard* (April 7 2004) reports that 'from the traditional *gacaca* courts to the Solidarity camps (*Ingando*)… [Rwanda] is slowly fermenting a culture of peace in its own traditional style.' Rwanda is said to take part in the 'African Renaissance' (Nantulya 2005) reflected in the 'continent revival of the customary' (Oomen 2006:8). 'Productions' of traditionality, however, should not escape wary scrutiny. As Lonsdale (1989:132) has noted, 'the idea of African custom and tradition arose mainly as a means to hallow official histories or, better, deify officials' history'.

Reconciliatory activities claiming to be based in tradition abound. They spring up primarily from the 'factory' of NURC and are partly financed by international donors. *Gacaca* is a well-studied example, described as 'traditional', 'grassroots' courts, which partly sprang from a hostile reaction towards 'western' justice (Zorbas 2004:36), and whose rationale is being 'vested in their authenticity' (Oomen 2006:8). Among other, less known activities are the *Abakangurambaga* or peace volunteers, the *Abunzi* or mediation committee members, the *Inyangamugayo* or 'persons of integrity' presiding over the *gacaca* trials, the

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[19] If and when *ingando* is explained in programme documents/reports/annual assessments, it is in a couple of lines, whose content/phrasing is highly similar to 'official' (NURC) description, and is wholly uncritical.

NURC clubs in schools 'continuing the work of *ingando*' (NURC Official Website www.nurc.gov.rw/). Further, *umuganda* or community service has been revived 'in the interests of national reconstruction' (ibid.). *Ubusabane*, regionally- or cell-organized 'get-together festivals', are also organized with the aim to 'enhance unity and reconciliation and to promote partnership among communities' (NURC 2007:3).

ii. Archaeology of a Tradition

If *ingando* is an 'ancient institution' (Nantulya 2006:48) as claimed, how are its roots explained? Investigation produces a number of divergent explanations by Rwandans themselves. Most often, *ingando* is alleged to derive from the Kinyarwanda verb *kuganika*, which refers to a custom where the elders of a community would 'leave the distractions of their daily lives and retreat to places of isolation to solve problems of national concern such as war, famine or drought' (NURC Official Website). Others tie it to a related word *kuganda* or *kugandika* purportedly referring to the 'halting of normal activities to find solutions to national challenges' (Nantulya 2006:47; NURC 2007). While such custom continues to this day, there is no evidence that it would ever be called *ingando* (Mgbako 2005:7).

The word might be more closely related to the word *ingabo* or army. According to Rusagara, *ingando* refers to a pre-colonial military encampment or assembly area (*rendezvous*) where troops used to receive their final briefing while readying for a military expedition (Rusagara 2006a). Rusagara adds quite expeditiously that in such gatherings 'individuals are reminded to subject their interests to the national ideal and give Rwanda their all.' This means that 'whatever differences one might have, the national interests always prevail since the nation of Rwanda is bigger than any one individual' (ibid.). In another address, Rusagara (PRI 2004:111) relates *ingando* to broader practices of *Amotorero* (military regiments) of the pre-colonial period where 'both young men and women would be given lessons in history and culture, trying to instil a common identity.'

More sceptical observers suggest that *ingando* has roots in the more recent past. According to Mgbako, *ingando* is likely a pre-war, exile creation aimed at mobilization of RPF supporters in Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda itself, possibly modelled on solidarity camps in Uganda (Mgbako 2005; Reed 1995). At these schools, 'cadres learned about the goals of the RPF and received military training' (Reed 1995:51). Further, connection could also be established with so called 'political schools', originally established by the RPF with the help of its cells within Rwanda as an alternative strategy to increase its support base during the 1990-1994 civil war. Interestingly, some have speculated that it was precisely these schools that caused suspicion and made internal opposition to the Habyarimana regime 'reluctant to send their young leaders to the RPF zones' (Reed 1996:469).

iii. Invention, Reinvention, Iteration?

With regard to the divergencies in explanation, is *ingando* an invention, a re-invention or merely a show of the iterative nature of ever-evolving/never-static cultural practices? As already mentioned, re-appropriations of the past are not uncommon, and different retrospectives might have inspired *ingando* before and after it was created. But were these re-appropriations guided by the degree to which they legitimized de-ethnicization? And were the past practices themselves reinterpreted to better fit once borrowed? The divergence, along with the discrepancy (*ingando* and *kuganika*), and the use of tropes such as 'common identity' and 'give Rwanda their all', suggest that indeed reinterpretations are made to fit

present objectives. *Ingando* is not a simple iteration of a clearly identifiable cultural practice. But similarly, it is not a simple 'cultural invention', which might connote ahistoricity. In a more balanced rendition, *ingando* can be viewed as a useful re-invention.

As novel re-appropriations of the past in the service of a present goal, *ingandos* may be likened to Hobsbawm and Ranger's (1983:1) 'invented' traditions (although the term 're-invented' is more appropriate) defined as 'set of practices...of a ritual or symbolic nature', seeking to 'inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past…preferably a suitable historical past'. Invented traditions are divided among: i) those establishing or symbolizing social cohesion and collective identities; ii) those establishing or legitimizing institutions and social hierarchies; and iii) those socializing people into particular social contexts (ibid.:9). *Ingando* in fact subsumes all three functions, seeking to achieve cohesion by ingraining a new collective identity, using in the process history as a 'legitimator of action' (ibid.:12), and attempting to socialize or 'reintegrate' various population segments to the 'new Rwanda.' As a single act, however, *ingando* differs from traditions meant to inculcate values by repetition.

Although creation of these 'ritual and symbolic complexes' has not been adequately studied, we know that inventions occur more frequently when 'a rapid transformation of society weakens or destroys the social patterns for which "old" traditions had been designed' (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983:4). Rwanda's 'production of traditionality' might be a reflection of the attempted departure from the immediate past, yet simultaneous anchoring of the present in the pre-colonial era, which might offer a sense of connection and thus a source of legitimacy.

From Outside Inside, Part 1: Returnees

The original idea of using *ingando* as a reconciliatory practice allegedly arose out of meetings at the Urugwiro State House in the years following the genocide (Mgbako 2005:7) and was targeted at the integration of the Tutsi returnees, some of whom had spent decades in exile. The idea was to 'foster a sense of nationalism among the returnee populations from Congo, Burundi, Uganda and Europe, and elsewhere' (ibid.:8). As Colonel Rusagara notes,

> We thought that if we could remove these people from their daily lives and bring them together to share from a common dish—to eat and sleep together—this would build confidence in the diverse populations of repatriated Rwandans, confidence that we could in fact live together. (Rusagara, in Mgbako 2005:8)

While for the 'old caseload' returnees the primary attempt was to foster a sense of unity, for the 'new caseload' Hutu *ingando* was equally an attempt to override 'divisionism.' Human Rights Watch (1998:3) reports that these latter camps were meant to 'promote ideas of nationalism, erase ethnically-charged lessons of the previous government and spur loyalty to the RPF.' It was on 24 May 1997 that President Pasteur Bizimungu officially launched a programme for 'national political awareness' for the returning Hutu. In his address, he talked about a recently-instituted youth camp: 'This camp, like many others which will take place countrywide are aimed at integrating the youth that have just returned from exile in the current social and political life' (Radio Rwanda May 24 1997). The camps were instituted because the government felt such repatriated people needed 'disintoxication' (AFP November 19 1997), 'clearing of minds' (Xinhua February 18 1998) after exposure to Hutu extremist brainwashing in the refugee camps.

The total number of participants, either 'old caseload' or 'new caseload' returnees, is not known. AFP reported that the last of the solidarity camps for the 'new caseload' refugees who came home in 1996 were closed in mid-November 1997 having 're-educated' 44,000 people (November 19 1997). There is evidence suggesting, however, that camps continued to be organized for returnees after 1997.[20] There is no evidence to suggest that all returnees would go through *ingando*. In fact, the little evidence there is regarding 'new caseload' Hutu (both the AFP figure and report) indicates the camps in fact housed only 'elite' of sorts: students, church members, and civil servants 'who wanted to return to their jobs.'

From Outside Inside, Part 2: Provisionally Released Prisoners

Often in prison since the end of the genocide, the 'provisionally released prisoners'[21] were in a sense themselves 'newcomers' to Rwanda. Their 're-education' was thus as important as for the returnees and perhaps more so as they were seen to be the prime harbingers of 'divisionism.' A prisoner at Nsinda confessed that 'I never though I would see this country again, I have been living in this country without seeing it. I am sure many things have changed' (Internews January 31 2003). Jomba Gakumba instructs the *ingando* participants: 'You have been in prison for long and I want to tell you that Rwanda is no longer the same' (NTK February 18 2007). From 2003 when the releases commenced until 2007, approximately 56,000 released prisoners participated in *ingando*.

'Erasing of old beliefs', 'erasing of political ideologies of the previous regime', 'reorientation', 'reorienting of minds' and 'sensitization' were frequently deployed descriptions by a variety of reporters. *Ingando* was further described as teaching the participants how to be 'good citizens' (Hirondelle May 6 2003), aiding their 'harmonious integration into society' (AFP January 27 2003) or 'rehabilitation into society' (Internews February 26 2003), helping them 'learn how to lead a normal life again' (Xinhua April 23 2004), 'how to better associate with members of their own communities' (NTK February 28 2007). The participants are taught the history of Rwanda among other things (*Standard* April 6 2003). 'After being out of touch with the ordinary people, there is a need for them to be taught about what the new Rwanda needs. It is not division but unity' (ibid.). Jean Pierre, a participant at *Kucikiro* camp, says 'we learn that there are no Hutus, Tutsis or Twas, we are all and only Rwandans' (AFP August 12 2005).

Lessons in History: 'Unity'

The most direct insight into the content and manner of instruction at *ingando* comes from notes of participants at the *Gishamvu* camp for provisionally released prisoners. The notes were collected in the period February-April 2003 by Penal Reform International (PRI) and their translated version can be found in an annex to one of PRI's reports on *gacaca*. Although the notes are limited to a specific type of *ingando*, the script that emerges bears striking similarities to the government script discussed above. *Ingando* history classes seem to replicate basic tenets of de-ethnicization. Excerpts from the history notes (PRI 2004: 91-

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[20] Interview with Thobias Bergman, April 24 2007 (London). Bergman did research with NURC in 2004, and visited a camp for 300-400 returnees.

[21] To ease prison overcrowding, Kagame issued a decree in 2003 to start a phased provisional release of genocide suspects who confessed and who were either elderly or terminally ill or ran the risk of being in prison longer than the sentences they were expected to incur.

104) are organized so as to provide a distilled version of the de-ethnicization script. They are presented as what Malkki (1995:56) calls a 'panel', an 'extended narrative passage …giving [key] fragments of the standardized historical narrative.' The sub-text or the 'silenced' yet 'instrumental' implication of each key fragment is included in square brackets:

Panel 1. Unity

What today is an ethnic group was previously nothing more than a degree of wealth [ethnicity is not entrenched]. …A basic analysis of Rwanda's history shows that the colonial power was at the root of the ethnic strife that Rwanda is going through… The colonial power established the ethnic groups and categorized Rwandans according to them, even having this categorization noted in the identity papers [violence based in ethnic groupness has been forced upon us]…Today, the Government of National Unity has removed this indication from the identity cards and call on all Rwandans to consider themselves as members of the same family without any distinction whatsoever…We are all Rwandans! [we can now become one and undifferentiable because sufficient steps have been taken to allow this]…We believe that reconciliation is possible, since Hutu and Tutsi Rwandans have always lived together in peace. They shared everything, intermarried, exchanged cows, made blood pacts and practised the cult of ancestors together without discrimination [many commonalities used to bind us together in the ancient times of harmony]…Rwanda is and will be what we want it to be [we are not prisoners of any label (although we might be prisoners if we resort to them)].

Rite of Passage: Liminality and the Reproduction of Power

Ingando is not only a re-invention, drawing authority from its 'authenticity', but it is also a rite of passage, an experience signifying social and at times even physical transition from the outside inside the 'New Rwanda Order' (Mbabazi 2005). According to Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983:10), new political regimes 'might seek to find their own equivalents for the traditional rites of passage', some form of a stylized acknowledgement of or an impetus for the desired transformation of their subjects. As conceptualized for the first time by Gennep (1909), a rite of passage has three phases: separation, liminality and incorporation. The first phase refers to withdrawal from society. The second is a phase between states, and hence a space of limbo. In the last phase, having completed the rite, an individual re-enters the society.

As a re-invented 'traditionality' and thus 'authenticized' liminality, *ingando* harnesses script reproduction. Released prisoners see it as 'quasi mystic', experiencing it as a 'purgatory through which everyone must pass' (PRI 2004:19). But it is the *ingando* for returnees that perhaps most powerfully invokes the spatial metaphors that Gennep used to explain rites of passage (rite is like a domestic threshold or a frontier between places, both neither here nor there, but rather 'betwixt and between'). While passing through a 'reception centre' might be no more than a surveillance act, passing *ingando* is where 'repatriation' happens. As Annette Birungi writes 'there is no "going back" because the identity of returnees and community…have been changed. It is in this changed and changing landscape that reintegration happens' (Birungi 2005). It is also in this landscape that *ingando* is indispensable, to teach people what is expected of them in the 'new Rwanda.' The return is to a patria as 'imagined' through de-ethnicization, a selectively read nation of 'commonality without division.' Although *ingando* poses as a reconciliatory measure based on discussion and problem solving, the PRI notes clearly show that discussion questions are always

followed by the 'right answer.'[22] The camps are spaces of incantation, rather than commoners' probing of fine points of history. *Ingando* is not a space of contestation, but rather a space of imposed 'sharing' of 'general knowledge' and its 'central truths' (NTK June 17 2005).

5.   Scripts' Frontier: 'Convergent Society' and Unity as a 'Minority' Exercise

Fellow-feeling…is important to the harmonious functioning of a polity, but it cannot be achieved by the simple imposition of a national ideal through exhortation or incantation.

Crawford Young (1982:165)

How, if at all, can a project of 'unity' succeed in today's diverse Rwanda by fostering 'stability' as a non-necessity to flee? This is a complex question. Promotion of national unity is not necessarily negative in itself and its most salient alternative, consociational power-sharing, is not necessarily superior. However, as will be substantiated in more depth, de-ethnicization as nation-building cannot proceed as is. The 'overspilling' abolition of division incurs high costs in terms of loss of diversity, remembrance, liberty and historicity. National unity is imposed, creating a convergent society where opposition and division do not disappear but merely 'flee.' The project as a whole is a 'minority' vision of the future. Lastly, the present section will suggest 'ways out' of the 'convergent' society. It will be argued that difference needs to be incorporated into a project of unity, and that the current overemphasis on 'identity' needs to give way to a preoccupation with state-building, which is just as much central to nation-building as its lack might be key to a nation's unravelling.

Consociational Power-Sharing: An Adequate Substitute?

Proponents of consociational power sharing, the most famous being Arend Lijphart (1977), claim to have devised a democratic alternative for 'deeply divided' or 'plural' societies. In deeply divided societies, 'political divisions follow very closely lines of objective social differentiation or "cleavages" that can be religious, ideological, linguistic, regional, cultural or ethnic in nature' (Vandeginste and Huyse 2005:101). The consociational model has many varieties but they all concur that 'pure simple majority rule' should be abandoned, and instead elite cooperation, group autonomy, proportionality and minority veto should be the basis of stability[23] (Lemarchand 2006:2).

Besides the fact that the 1993 collapse of the Rwanda Arusha accords presents a text-book case of an 'ignominious failure' of consociationalism (Lemarchand 2006), two powerful interconnected critiques can be launched based on the very presumptions of the theory. First, in societies where 'deep divisions' are broadly identifiable, consociationalism is said to further entrench them (Kebede 2001). Secondly, the theory does not suggest how to proceed in societies like Rwanda, which might not only be complexly altered as a result of multiple returns but where 'group existence', whether political, cultural or economic has effectively

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[22] e.g. 'What strategy must be adopted in order to eradicate genocide ideology?' Answer: '…banish separatist ideas, teach love, unity and reconciliation, all of this will help us overcome the country's problems.' (PRI 2004:97)

[23] These are the four most important of the original eight features of non-majoritarian democracy as proposed by Lijphart (1977).

been prohibited along the lines of any division. What to do in such a society? Who would take on the job of instituting new divisions and thus perhaps resuscitating old ones, and how would they do so?

The debate comes down to the constructivist versus primordial dispute on 'ethnicity.' Lijphart speaks of the 'tenacity of *primordial loyalties*' when he cautions against their eradication. Unsurprisingly, if ethnicity is an everpresent being, its denial might very well be unlikely to succeed, and might merely 'stimulate segmental cohesion and inter-segmental violence' (Lijphart 1977). In such cases, a political 'unity' as a complex cooperation of difference, might be the optimal solution. However, as countless scholars have asserted through its 'historicization', ethnicity in Rwanda is not of such an everpresent, tangible substance. Surely, as shown, Rwanda is a highly diverse society, where tensions exist and where opposition is not non-existent but merely suppressed. Diversity, tensions and opposition, however, do not have to add up to a 'deeply divided' society. They most definitely will if a call to power-sharing is made. Along the lines of Horowitz's (1991) critique, power-sharing rewards politicians who mobilize support along ethnic lines. Political entrepreneurs have a further incentive to delineate such segments (niches) in an oligopolistic competition because they present a relatively easy mobilization platform (Snyder and Ballentine 1996).

In today's Rwanda, power-sharing might not be the optimal scenario. As Mamdani suggests, Bahutu and Batutsi should not be reproduced as dualities, but rather transcended (Mamdani 1996:30). He clearly operates on a simplistic and archaistic notion of a 'bi-polar' society but his general conjecture holds. 'If people of different identities can communicate only through the recognition of their differences…how [can they] ever foster supra-ethnic or universalist attitudes?' (Kebede 2001:280). We can attend to difference without instituting it as division/cleavage. The only question is how this should and should not be done.

The 'Overspilling' of De-ethnicization

De-ethnicization should not be the way forward in Rwanda. One of the key problems of the discourse and practice of de-ethnicization is that it leads to the overspilling of its categorical boundaries: What is targeted is not only 'division'/'divisionism' but any possible division. As reflected in the 2003 Constitution, de-ethnicization set out to destroy not only ethnicity and regionalism but 'other divisions' which remain undefined. 'Divisionism' as a vaguely defined crime also threatens to subsume whatever is simply different and opposed. The internal logic of the discursive domain aids such overspilling. De-ethnicization is not open to critique because once such critique is voiced, it automatically attacks its fundamental tenet of unity. All critique of 'unity' is that which unity sets itself against – divisionism. 'Unity' in Rwanda is a totalitarian unity which as a vision can hardly be politically contested.

Counting Casualties: Diversity, Remembrance, Liberty and Historicity

The 'overspilling' boundaries yet tight control of deviance create four broadly-conceived 'casualties' of de-ethnicization: diversity, remembrance, liberty and historicity. Post-genocide societies do face complex rights' trade-offs in a number of arenas such as freedom of speech and association. To deny such trade-offs is to fetter oneself to an illusion (Snyder and Ballentine). However, in Rwanda, the process of derogation is unbalanced. De-ethnicization has to be rethought away from targeting all vaguely defined 'division' to merely

targeting division which is 'unwilling to disarm' (Mamdani 2001) (i.e. genocidal/extremist ideology).

Many commentators mention that the national narrative should not suffocate 'group cultures' (Hodgkin and Montefiore 2005), Rwanda as clearly 'multicultural' (Mamdani 2001:33-34). However, few people elaborate i) what these cultures are; and ii) how they might or might not have changed after the genocide. The problem is that while abolition of ethnicity might not make Rwanda less diverse in culture, the overspilling boundaries of de-ethnicization and its 'depth' which suppresses difference all the way to the private sphere prevents those who traditionally lived at the margins of society from having their culture recognized and protected. The indigenous Twa, for instance, have been historically underrepresented in government, left out of discussions of genocide and continue to suffer discrimination (Forest Peoples Programme, CAURWA). We do not need 'ethnicity' to protect culture, but we need the recognition and valuation of diversity, which anyway might not cut across 'ethnic lines'.

It is further suggested that denial of ethnicity undermines reconciliation, because it prevents 'remembrance' which is important for healing. Some survivors of the genocide emphasize that they were attacked because they were Tutsi and to remove their ethnicity negates this horrific event. 'Can one indeed speak of the genocide while denying the identity of the protagonists?' (Ndereyehe 2006). Doesn't this amount to *la politique de l'autruche* ('ostrich politics')? (ibid.) Remembrance is important for healing, but labels other than ethnicity can be (and have been) employed to denote differing experiences during genocide ('survivor', 'perpetrator', etc.). Employing alternative labels in fact might do more justice to the victims of the genocide which cut across ethnic lines and engulfed not only, first and foremost, Tutsis, but also moderate Hutus and Twas. Some criticize the current labelling as inadequate in this respect (Zorbas 2004). Particular care should be invested in constructing more nuanced identifications. But in the end, against the wishes of the government, aren't these classifications just a more politically correct way of *dividing* the society, maintaining certain diversity as salient?

De-ethnicization also restricts rights to freedom of speech and association. The Rwandan leadership argues in effect that 'the transformation of existing states of mind is the prerequisite for the restoration of full civil and political rights' (ICG 2002:1). While most constitutional democracies rule certain forms of expression out of bounds, making their difference from Rwanda one of degree rather than kind (Dorf 2004), the current 'holding rights hostage' to the transformation of identity is extreme.[24]

Rights and freedoms should not be held hostage to the image of the worst to which they can lead. The 'marketplace of ideas' should be only *minimally* regulated. Genocidal or otherwise destructive ideology should be restricted in speech and association, rather than any ideology vested in 'identity' terms. Surely, Popper's open society and Mill's no-holds-barred debate weren't conceived as free competition of diverse myths. The marketplace itself needs to be strengthened as the sudden liberalization of the press in newly democratizing countries has been shown to lead to outbursts of popular nationalism (Snyder and Ballentine 1996:2).

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[24] Taking another post-genocide society, Article 21 of Germany's Constitution permits the banning of political parties that undermine the 'free democratic basic order', such as the Nazi party (Dorf 2004).The effectiveness of this prohibition is disputable as the operation of Neo-Nazi groups shows.

What is needed are not 'many clamoring voices' but a set of institutions and social norms that make pluralism 'a civil process of reconciling of difference' (ibid.:3).

Finally, the complexity of history suffers as well. The Rwandan past does not easily support 'division' or 'unity' as absolute proclamations over a people. The focus should rather be on continuities and discontinuities in the evolution of a society and on the full spectrum of experience that might have converged one to and diverged one from specific others. 'Unity' can be worked towards without resorting to obscurantism, to exclusion of the differences and tensions of the past and the present. The history reproduced today is a 'usable' history (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), an 'absolutist' history' which is imposed and unchallenged.

The Major Problem: A Minority Vision of 'Unity'?

In restricting parties on ethnic (and more broadly 'divisionist' lines), the government is said to 'engineer' a consensual majoritarian democracy (Edozie 2007). What comes out is an RPF-led government 'distorting the play of democracy and tending to transform Rwanda into an RPF state' (Oomen 2006:19). After take-over, the RPF attempted to form an interim coalition government 'in the spirit' of the aborted Arusha process. Yet due to the funding structure, with RPF diaspora supporters as the main backers, 'every act was undertaken with RPF personnel using RPF funds' (Reed 1996:498). Hutus were always a part of the government, taking high posts and some even being part of the inner circle (e.g. Bizimungu). Yet over the years, many were forced or decided to resign (Vandeginste 1999). The RPF's 'pinpointist' proofs of 'power's diversity' are today written off as mere tokenism. A broad-based coalition was not established and any remaining talk about 'sharing of power' merely obscures the fact that Rwanda has become 'for all intents and purposes, a single-party state' (Lemarchand 2006:5).

The minority 'capture' of the political domain represents the central problem in selling even a watered-down de-ethnicization project and explains the political-sceptical view of de-ethnicization as a way to mask the 'Tutsi monopoly of military and political power' (Buckley-Zistel 2006a:142; Reyntjens 2004:187), the 'Tutsification of power' and the nominal Hutu presence (Mamdani 2001:271), the 'manipulation of ethnicity through "ethnic amnesia," resulting in discrimination against the Hutu' (Reyntjens 2004:38), 'ethnocracy but with just enough power-sharing at the top to enlist a measure of Hutu collaboration' (Lemarchand 1997:10).

Such scholarly analyses suggest that i) 'division' has not ceased to structure cognition of social processes; and ii) a certain power-sharing is indeed expected between 'Hutu' and 'Tutsi' even if it does not label itself as such. The commentators fail on one important point, however: 'RPF state' does not equal Tutsi monopoly. As much as the elite in power are predominantly 'Tutsis', they are also predominantly 'returnees' and, more specifically, predominantly 'Ugandan returnees' supporting the RPF (which itself is fragmented). Today, there is no homogeneous 'Tutsi' category. Tensions exist between Tutsi returnees and survivors (Mgbako 2005), and within the Tutsi returnee community as well[25] (HRW 2000). As Oomen (2006:19) writes, 'military, bureaucratic and political power is consolidated in the hands of a *minority of Tutsi* linked to the RPF, of whom most returned to Rwanda in 1994

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[25] E.g. 'Tutsi who returned from exile in Burundi or Congo have found their hopes for rapid success blocked by the predominance of those who returned from Uganda' (HRW 2000).

after having been exiled in Uganda for decades [emphasis added]'. Reed (1996:498) further adds that 'while the RPF maintained virtually no civilian administrative structures [in exile], nearly all the skilled manpower now available in Rwanda has come from the exiled community which gave birth to the movement.' Pitsch-Santiago (2003) and Zorbas (2004) also relay the perception among the rest of the population that a sub-set of the Ugandan returnees are more politically connected and have more opportunities.

What is at the core of the problem of 'minority vision'? Is all this to suggest that the Ugandan Tutsis, being perceived as systematically more privileged than the rest, might perhaps represent one of the most serious cleavages/horizontal inequalities in Rwanda today and one of the biggest obstacles to the project of de-ethnicization? Such a proposition deserves close scrutiny. The nation-building project has been conceived and is executed by a minority government whose kernel hails from exile. Minority has to be here differentiated from elite: All state-to-nation nation-building projects are in a sense elite-driven and 'top-down'. Building of 'unity' would perhaps not *emerge* as a 'grassroots' exercise although it can be carried out in a participatory manner.

The real problem rather seems to be that the current 'single party' rule seems conflated with a broad group of Rwandans. This perception/conflation is both 'practically' existent, yet theoretically 'incorrect' because it is only a certain network within the returnee sub-group that is relatively privileged. Whether concentration of power is ascribed to 'Tutsi' or 'Ugandan Tutsi' of course does matter, and this raises interesting questions as regards inconsistencies among scholars themselves. Yet the important lesson to draw here is that markers can lose their salience if people feel that they can access resources, including power, on an equal footing, or at least have the same chances to do so. In other words, the solution to 'authoritarianism' might also connote the prevention of loading a certain social category with discriminatory meaning.

A Way Out of 'Convergent Society': Incorporating Difference in a Project of 'Unity'

In Rwanda, difference is suppressed and the public domain is a mere echo of the official discourse. The *ingando* 'graduation ceremonies', a public spectacle with press and officials attending, are a case in point. Participants perform traditional dances for the audience, give speeches about their happiness of being able to participate, and reiterate the inculcated lessons (Zorbas 2004:39; *Standard* April 6 2003). What we witness is a 'convergent' society based on a mere appearance of concurring, manufactured by discouraging disagreement and a preference for a 'low profile' (Buckley-Zistel 2006b; Uvin 1999; Minow and Chayes 2003). The lack of 'voice' (Hirschman 1970) or culture of silence (Longman 2004) signals merely pretend loyalty as a massive exit of 'opinion' occurs from public to private sphere or outside of the state.[26] Even the history is a convergent one: All its parts hang together so as to allow a particular interpretation.

Today, the Rwandan government tries to impose co-existence by pretending that there is no reason not to coexist. The government tries to attract to the pole of unity by prescribing its own vision of it and by forbidding anything that runs against. It thus creates a 'false togetherness' by swamping individuality and discouraging dissent. Yet unity should not

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[26] Approximately 20 opposition parties have been created in exile since the 1994 genocide (GLCSS 2006). They consider the nine Rwandan parties as mere 'accomplices' rather than opposition to the RPF.

connote 'monolithicism', but rather a certain 'connectivity' between people (Hodgkin and Montefiore 2005:20). In such a conceptualization, unity can be constituted while difference is recognized. In fact, the mutual recognition of difference, and mutual 'recognition of the the other for his alterity, can also become a mark of common identity' (Habermas and Derrida 2003:1). Difference, which is undeniable and should not be denied, yet which we should refrain from 'listing'/'capturing' as if it were a clearly recognizable and non-dynamic entity, can start to be democratized by us undermining the authority of the current 'official' narrative.

It is crucial to find a way of talking about difference, and eliciting difference rather than asking for echoes. Without such interaction, grievances cannot be vented, needs cannot be fully addressed, and perhaps most importantly, ascriptions of 'Tutsi' or 'Ugandan Tutsi' to the concentration of power cannot be avoided. If a government is to address this, it has to show that 'ethnicity', and any other 'division', 'do not matter'. This is practically unattainable unless i) the political process is pluralized; and simultaneously ii) supra-ethnic and universalist attitudes are promoted and incentivized in party formation. Rather than prescribing the 'uncritical and idealized models of liberal democracy' (Berman 1998:307), however, we should talk of 'minimally-eclipsed' plurality with the view that this is both a 'newly-democratizing' (Snyder and Ballentine 1996) and a post-genocide society.

All the above is a way of saying that 'unity' as reconceptualized cannot be built without building the state. Both power-sharing and de-ethnicization fail because they never escape gravitating around either 'accommodation' or 'eradication' of certain 'identity(ies)', which i) is insufficient in lessening their significance; and ii) treats difference as exclusionary and self-enclosed rather than allowing for a context where it would be 'open to continuous challenge, negotiation and renewal' (Norval, in Edozie 1999:12). State-building is not here to mean enhancement of a state's centralized power and hegemony over society, but improving the state's effectiveness in meeting expectations and promoting equality. The state needs to show that what it promises it promises to everyone, and that (almost) everyone has an equal right and chance to be defining his/her polity. While politicized ethnicity has led to conflict, precluding politicization of identity both through a concocted historical mythology and a strict punitive apparatus cannot foster 'unity', and in the long term, might not prevent another conflict.

Conclusion

De-ethnicization is a modernist attempt lodged in ideals of social/future engineering, which simultaneously invokes traditionality in its support: It erects the future through a particular and particularly-read past. The discourse revolves around simplistic interwoven narratives of unity, and of dissolubility and expendability of difference. It wrongly concludes that an imposed and policed prohibition will lead to reconciliation and thus stability of non-violence and of return. Such a mythology helps to perpetuate a paternalistic minority rule, while the only unity that ensues is one of forged concurrence. Government boasts people's 'ownership', allegedly reflected in their participation in various reconciliatory activities. Yet participation is often mandatory and dissent not welcome. All in all, the government's battle with the nexus is not likely to succeed and should not be pursued due to its costs. The answer to the central paradox has not been found, partly because the paradox itself is wrongly

conceived. It attempts national unity by engineering loyalties, rather than by forming a more inclusionary state

The weaving of textual webs in an attempt to arrest reality to a minority image of a future concerns all of us, particularly those who sustain the reconciliatory apparatus of post-genocide Rwanda. Because while the government prides itself in reviving home-sourced solutions, and thus remaining autonomous and authentic, we also know that 'never before was a process of justice driven so strongly from the outside'[27] (Oomen 2005:887). Donors are especially at risk of reproducing the discourse and abetting its hidden agenda. The root of the problem is the lack of agencies' own analysis. In documents, donors often expeditiously reproduce snippets of government descriptions and explanations, especially if it comes to a little-known subject such as *ingando*. Donors also sustain the machinery of script dissemination directly: UNHCR has provided tents for *ingando* participants (Internews February 3 2003), WFP financed and distributed food in the camps for at least four years (WFP February 4 2003), UNDP helps to finance NURC which lies behind all the reconciliatory 'traditions' (UNDP 2004b). But is this really the way forward as regards the return-reconciliation nexus? These questions need to be asked but cannot be answered without a fundamental rethinking of the complex relationship between 'return', conflict, and conflict 'solutions.'

Given the limitations of the government's approach to nation-building and the weaknesses of the most salient alternative, this study calls for a different approach. It attempts to reconceptualize unity as 'connectivity' which allows 'difference' to be expressed but not bound into 'departmentalized' 'division'. The joint process of connectivity cum (carefully restricted) pluralization can perhaps be initiated through an alternative engagement with the past. If there is one 'lesson of history', then it is the one showing how history can be abused. Connectivity exists between all Rwandans in the basic sense that all have been subject to the 'mythical authority.' As such, each equally can work to reject it, by un-constructing and destabilizing simplistic and instrumental narratives.

Historicization exposes the mis-uses of the past most clearly. Subject to the temporal perspective, 'ethnicity', 'nation', and any other boundary separating an outside from an inside speak of a constant flux, uneasily both connecting and disconnecting from their precedent. The precariousness of 'essentializing' and 'constructivizing' revealed through the process of historicization does not delegitimize the very real/felt attachments that people might have. It might, however, serve to reject their abuse in service of a political goal. Opening 'official history' to careful analytical questioning can be a political feat, an empowering act, in the sense that it disperses the currently centralized 'story-telling' power and vests it more directly within the individual. 'Past' after all speaks a pluralist language: It can only be captured by approximating the never-expressable totality of fragmented and diverse takes.

Many issues stand in need of further analysis, such as the manner in which nationalist scripts are negotiated (rejected/accepted/used) at the micro-level and the way in which they might affect or fail to affect the relations within communities. Much needs to be learnt as regards *ingando* itself, the full scope of its functionality and its effects. Donors' own 'knowledge production systems' need to be better understood, especially the ways in which

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[27] Over 100 projects were financed in the past decade and 80 percent of the budget of Ministry of Finance comes from outside (Oomen 2005).

they might be prone to reproduction of official discourse and thus susceptible to its manipulations. Most importantly, scholars need to carefully delve into the most difficult of questions, namely precisely what constitutes an optimal political solution in post-conflict contexts, why and in which circumstances.

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APPENDIX – HISTORICAL TIMELINE: KEY DATES AND EVENTS

Late 1800s	King Kigeri Rwabugiri establishes a unified polity with a centralized military structure.
1890	Rwanda becomes part of German East Africa.
1910	International borders are imposed.
1916	Belgian forces occupy Rwanda. Indirect rule through Tutsi kings.
1920s	Political unification. Rwanda's central court annexes the north-west and other peripheral regions.
1923	Belgium granted League of Nations mandate to govern Ruanda-Urundi.
1946	Ruanda-Urundi becomes UN trust territory governed by Belgium.
1933	Belgium introduces identity cards that 'fix' ethnic identity.
1959	Hutu 'Social Revolution.' Tutsi King Kigeri V, together with tens of thousands of Tutsis, forced into exile in Uganda following inter-ethnic violence.
1959-61	150,000 Tutsi flee to Congo, Uganda and Burundi.
1962	Independence from Belgium. Southern Hutu rule with Grégoire Kayibanda as President of the 'First Republic.'
1963-64	Tutsi exiles invade Bugasera. Pogroms follow and cause a further exodus of Tutsi to South Kivu.
1973	Military coup by northern Hutu. Habyarimana becomes president of 'Second

	Republic.'
1989	Severe economic crisis sets in.
1990	Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) invades from Uganda. Low intensity warfare results.
1993	President Habyarimana signs a power-sharing agreement with the Tutsis in the Tanzanian town of Arusha, ostensibly signalling the end of civil war. UN mission sent to monitor the peace agreement.
1994	Habyarimana's assassination triggers a genocide in which 800,000 Tutsi and moderate Hutu perish. RPF relaunches its offensive in July. RPF halts genocide and seizes power.
1994-96	Refugee camps in Zaire fall under the control of the Hutu militias responsible for the genocide in Rwanda.
1995	UN-led Operation Return peters out after initial successes. Government dismantles camps for IDPs. Massacre in Kibeho as last of the camps is being dismantled.
1996	RPA moves into eastern Zaire to assist the Banyamulenge uprising, destroy the refugee camps and lead the campaign to topple Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko.
1997	Rwandan and Ugandan-backed rebels depose President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire. Laurent Kabila becomes president of Zaire, which is renamed the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).
1998	Rwanda switches allegiance to support rebel forces trying to depose Kabila in the wake of the Congolese president's failure to expel extremist Hutu militias.
2000	Rwandan President Pasteur Bizimungu, a Hutu, resigns over differences regarding the composition of a new cabinet and after accusing parliament of targeting Hutu politicians in anti-corruption investigations.
2001 December	A new flag and national anthem are unveiled to try to promote 'national unity and reconciliation'.
2002 April	Former president Pasteur Bizimungu is arrested and faces trial on charges of illegal political activity and threats to state security.
2002 July	Rwanda, DRC sign peace deal under which Rwanda will pull troops out of DRC and DRC will help disarm Rwandan Hutu gunmen blamed for killing Tutsi minority in 1994 genocide.
2003 May	Voters back a draft constitution which bans the incitement of ethnic hatred.
2003 October	First multi-party parliamentary elections. President Kagame's Rwandan Patriotic Front wins absolute majority. EU observers say poll was marred by irregularities and fraud.
2007 February	Some 8,000 prisoners accused of genocide are released. Some 60,000 suspects have been freed since 2003 to ease prison overcrowding.