African states, citizenship and war: a case-study*

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In this article I want to caution against taking common sense for granted by exploring the other side of some issues on which a conventional wisdom has become established. In the 1970s and 1980s, we in the African world spoke the language of political economy. Faced with crisis, our tendency was to reflect on its structural underpinnings, and to ask: What kind of relations underlie the reproduction of crisis? The tendency now is to highlight agency, not structure. This essay seeks to join the two ends of this swing through a reflection on contemporary political developments that links agency to structure. I ask questions such as: Is it not true that we always choose from a limited menu? Like the menu from which we choose, are we too not a product of history? Is not common sense the name we give to that element of our historical legacy we have ceased to question, the element that we carry around as part of our tradition? To confront that legacy is to unpack and question the common sense we take for granted.

Rather than advocating a return of focus to questions of political economy, the inert constraints on our action, I seek to understand agency as historically crafted and thus framed by structural constraints. Instead of highlighting the alternatives we lack, I will focus on the choices we do make, on our political agency. Three types of agency interest me: the first is *citizenship*, centred on the citizen as the bearer of rights; the second is *civil society*; and the third is *political majorities* and *political minorities* as outcomes of the democratic process. To explore how our notions of citizenship, civil society and political majority/minority have been changing over the past decade, I will explore the dilemma of a particular cultural group in the region of the African Great Lakes, the Banyarwanda.

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The Banyarwanda: the focal point of the contemporary crisis

The Banyarwanda are first and foremost a cultural identity. Speakers of a common language, Kinyarwanda, they live both within Rwanda and outside its boundaries, particularly in Uganda and Congo. Together, they number roughly twelve to fourteen million persons. As such, they are East Africa's largest ethnic group.[1]

The Banyarwanda who live outside Rwanda can be defined as a cultural diaspora. This cultural diaspora divides into three groups: nationals, migrants and refugees. When we speak of Banyarwanda *nationals* of Uganda, we usually refer to those Banyarwanda considered indigenous to Uganda. This term refers to persons who can establish an ancestral presence on Ugandan soil pre-dating the beginning of colonialism. In contrast, we tend to consider those who came to Uganda in the colonial period as non-indigenous *migrants*. Unlike nationals of pre-colonial vintage, and migrants from the colonial period, *refugees* are by and large a post-colonial phenomenon.

On what basis do we make these distinctions? I would say there are two elements. The first is *descent* as the basis of citizenship and rights. When we define ancestry, we do it by using two terms, race and ethnicity. Obvious as these distinctions may seem to us today, it is worth examining them. The law in colonial and post-colonial Uganda, as in other parts of Africa colonized by Western powers in the twentieth century, defined every individual as belonging to a race or an ethnic group. In law, who belongs to an ethnic group and who to a race? There is no single answer to this question, none that will hold regardless of context. The answer depends on the type of state under which we live. Under the *indirect-rule state*, the type created by British colonialism in Uganda, only those considered indigenous were said to belong to ethnic groups.[2] Those considered non-indigenous were said to be without ethnicity; legally, they were defined as belonging to races. Your rights depended on your ancestry, on whether you were defined as indigenous or non-indigenous, as belonging to an ethnic group or a race. Under colonialism, only races had full rights, not ethnic groups. After independence, the tables were turned: full citizenship rights could only be claimed by those considered ethnically indigenous.

My second observation flows from another question: Who is indigenous? In 1997, CODESRIA—the Council for the Development of Social Research in Africa—asked me and a colleague to research the citizenship question in Kivu, particularly the citizenship of Banyarwanda living in Kivu.[3] There are three major groups of Banyarwanda in Kivu: the Banyarutshuru and the Banyamasisi in North Kivu, and the Banyamulenge in South Kivu. In North Kivu, we found

[1] For a detailed discussion, see, David Newbury, 'The invention of Rwanda: the alchemy of ethnicity' (mimeo, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill) n.d., pp. 14–17.

[2] For an analysis of indirect rule as a form of the colonial state, see Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and subject: contemporary Africa and the legacy of late colonialism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press; London: James Currey; Kampala: Fountain; Cape Town: David Philip, 1996).

[3] For a report of the CODESRIA mission to Kivu, see, Mahmood Mamdani, 'Citizenship crisis in Kivu, Eastern Congo' (Dakar: : CODESRIA, 1999).

that the Banyarutshuru were considered indigenous, but the Banyamasisi were not. We wondered why. Those we asked told us that the answer was obvious: the Banyarutshuru lived in Congo before the Belgians colonized it, whereas the Banyamasisi came to Congo after it was colonized by the Belgians. Let us ponder the meaning of this ostensibly common-sensical distinction. It means we consider colonialism to be the dividing line between who is indigenous and who is not. It means that the independent state of Congo identifies its own history with the birth of the colonial state. Looking more widely, it becomes apparent that in this respect Congo is not the exception; it is, in fact, the rule.

Both ideas—one, that ancestry should be the basis of rights, and two, that colonialism is the dividing line between the indigenous and the non-indigenous—are at the root of indirect-rule colonialism. In the framework of the nation-state, they express a particular relationship between politics and culture. Globally, the development of the modern state illuminates two kinds of relations between politics and culture. The first is where the state is clearly identified as the state of a particular nation, of a particular cultural group. As such, this state actively suppresses cultural diversity, meaning the cultures of other groups. This is the mainstream European experience, typified by two variants, the French and the German. The French state defines indigeneity as cultural and has through history actively pursued *cultural assimilation* of all immigrants into mainstream French culture. The German state defines indigeneity as biological and has historically tended to safeguard the biological purity of the German nation through policies of *ethnic cleansing*.

The second kind of relationship between politics and culture can be found outside western Europe, either in the former socialist states or in the former colonial states. Whereas the modern state in Europe *suppressed* cultural diversity, the modern state outside Europe tended to *reify* cultural difference. The Soviet state system was multinational; it defined group rights based on distinctions between nations, nationalities and national groups. Similarly, the colonial state system was multi-ethnic; every ethnic group was supposed to have its own native authority enforcing its own ethnicized version of customary law. From the point of view of nineteenth-century colonialism—what historians call *direct-rule colonialism*—it was anathema for the colonial power to create and enforce separate legal systems on different sections of its population: civil law for all those called races, and separate sets of customary laws for each ethnic group.

The younger generations may ask of our law-makers: To what extent have you tried to change the colonial constitutional legacy? In this article, I want to focus on three attempts to reform the legacy on the question of citizenship. The first was made in Uganda, in the period of the guerrilla war in the Luwero Triangle; the second in Rwanda, during the Second Republic led by Habyarimana; and the third in Kivu, by the Banyamulenge. All three initiatives were sustained for a while, but all were challenged and ultimately abandoned. All three, I suggest, are worth considering and offer lessons to be learnt.

The experience of Luwero

The Luwero Triangle in the Buganda region of Uganda was geographically the heart of the guerrilla struggle led by the National Resistance Army (NRA) in 1981–6. To understand the social composition of the Luwero Triangle in the 1980s, we need to turn to the 1959 census, the last to record the tribal affiliation of the population. According to the 1959 census, roughly 45 per cent of the population of Buganda was comprised of migrants.[4] The largest single category of migrants was that of the Banyarwanda. This demography defined the imperative that would face every political movement in Buganda: how to weld these two groups, those indigenous to the land and those not, into a single movement. The NRA succeeded in forging such a unity precisely because it moved away from ancestry and towards residence as the basis for defining the individual's rights.

Every time the guerrillas took charge of a village, they called upon its adult population to meet as a resistance council and to elect a nine-person resistance committee to run its internal affairs. The key political questions in the struggle were: Who can attend a resistance council meeting? Who can run for office in a resistance committee? Who can vote in an election? It is significant that the NRA's answer to these questions was not 'those indigenous to the land' but 'those resident in the village'. It allowed the NRA to recruit support from all those resident in the Triangle, indigenous and non-indigenous. The proof is that when the NRA entered Kampala in 1986, at least a quarter of its 16,000 fighters were Banyarwanda.

The political legacy of Luwero did not survive for long. It was in fact undermined with the first political crisis of the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) government. That crisis revolved around the issue of rights and indigeneity, and it came to a head in 1990. Its context was the confrontation between pastoralist squatters and ranchlords in Masaka District, particularly in Mawogola County. The squatters included a large section of Banyarwanda herders, many of whose children had joined the NRA and returned from the bush with the experience of handling arms. The list of ranchlords, on the other hand, read like a who's who of every regime in the history of Uganda. The ranchers formed their own organization, the Masaka Livestock Farmers' Association (MALIFA), and accused President Museveni not only of ethnic favouritism among Ugandans, favouring Banyankole over Baganda ranchers, but also of extending this favouritism to include non-indigenous Banyarwanda—cousins across the border, so to speak.[5]

[4] J. M. Fortt, 'The distribution of the immigrant and the Ganda population within Buganda', pp. 77–118, and Cynthia Postan, 'Changes in the immigrant population in Buganda, 1948–59', appendix F, table 8, both in Audrey Richards, ed., *Economic development and tribal change: a study of immigrant labor in Buganda* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956).

[5] For a detailed analysis of the parliamentary discussion that followed the Mawogola uprising of 1990 and preceded the RPA invasion that same year, see, Mahmood Mamdani, *When victims become killers: colonialism, nativism and genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press; London: James Currey; Kampala: Fountain; Cape Town: David Philip, 2001), ch. 6.

The result was a major political crisis that led to a special session of parliament, meeting over three days in the last week of August 1990. It publicly pitted the president, first, against his own minister of state for defence, who reminded him of the NRA's commitment to those who fought the struggle, and then against his own attorney-general, who reminded the president of his publicly professed pan-Africanist commitment. The debates notwithstanding, President Museveni and the NRM backed off from the political promise of Luwero. The citizenship requirement was changed from ten years' residence back to ancestry; under the new constitution you could claim citizenship of Uganda only if at least one of your grandparents was born in the land colonized by the British as Uganda. The change affected both the elite and ordinary persons among the Banyarwanda in Uganda. The elite, including cadres in the NRA, had been increasingly sidestepped in promotions since the NRA won the guerrilla struggle; now they found themselves the object of something resembling a witch-hunt. At the same time, when it came to redistributing ranch land, ordinary Banyarwanda pastoralists found themselves disqualified from access to pastures on grounds of citizenship.

This, then, was the background to the NRM's first major political crisis. Less than two months later, in October 1990, cadres of the Rwanda Patriotic Army (RPA) crossed the border from Uganda into Rwanda. Most analysts of these events have focused on how much help the RPA got from the NRA at the time of crossing and in the years that followed. My point is different. No matter how much help the RPA received from the Ugandan side of the border, the underlying message was clear: do not come back. The RPA's crossing of the border not only signified an armed invasion of Rwanda by a section of the NRA; it also signified an armed repatriation of Banyarwanda from Uganda. With this armed repatriation, the NRA exported its internal political problem to Rwanda.

Two points must be made clear. First, even before the Mawogola events and the parliamentary debates of August 1990, there was already a strong current among the Banyarwanda in the NRA calling for crossing the border to 'liberate' Rwanda; yet this point of view was opposed by those who thought it best for the Banyarwanda to make a political home in the countries where they had come to reside. Before August 1990 this alternative was attractive to ordinary Banyarwanda, certainly more than to members of the elite. The significance of August 1990 was that it rendered this alternative futile for many ordinary Banyarwanda. Second, this single event—the RPA's crossing of the border—signified a meeting point of citizenship crises on both sides of the border, the Ugandan and the Rwandan. As I will show below, while the Second Republic under Habyarimana began to explore ways of recognizing the citizenship rights of those Tutsi resident in Rwanda, it had nothing to offer Tutsi who had left Rwanda as refugees during the crises of 1959–63 and 1973. It is precisely for this reason that Banyarwanda refugees were open to joining the struggle in the countries where they were resident. Of all refugees, those in Uganda had expressed the fullest commitment to the land of their residence; their commitment, after

all, extended to willingness to shed blood for the land they now defined as their home. To them, the denial of citizenship rights in the wake of pledges of comradeship in a joint struggle must have come as no less than an unanticipated betrayal by former comrades in arms.

Inside Rwanda

When the RPA crossed the border into Rwanda, it lost its political innocence in more ways than one. Recall the reports of the first journalists who visited 'liberated' RPA territory inside Rwanda: Catherine Watson, an American journalist living in Kampala; Charles Onyango-Obbo, one of Uganda's own senior journalists; and Gérard Prunier, a well-known French academic.[6] All three commented that there were hardly any people in the 'liberated' areas: only 2,500 or so remained in an area where a million people had previously lived. All three used the same word to characterize the emptiness of the 'liberated' areas: the silence, they said, was 'eerie'.

The reason for this could not have escaped RPF cadres. Those who realized that the very peasants they claimed to 'liberate' were running away from them discovered the world of Hutu and Tutsi inside Rwanda. At that point, however, return to Uganda was no longer an option. Henceforth, liberation for the RPF meant the liberation not of people but of territory. No doubt the effect was different on different cadres: at one extreme, those preoccupied with power were confirmed in their cynicism; at the other, those innocent of the political world of Rwanda discovered that they were, after all, Tutsi.

The world of Hutu and Tutsi was not primarily a world of two different cultures, not even a world of poverty and wealth. It was, first and foremost, a political world. The proof that Hutu and Tutsi were not names for different *market-based identities*—whether founded on class or division of labour, a distinction between rich and poor or between cultivators and cattle-keepers—were the petty Tutsi, the Tutsi who were poor and who had no cattle. Nor were Hutu and Tutsi names of two different *cultural identities*, for—as the RPF is fond of telling every visitor to Kigali—Hutu and Tutsi spoke the same language and shared a common culture and religion. Yet, Hutu and Tutsi exist—not as market-based identities, nor as cultural identities, but as *political identities*. The clearest proof that Hutu is not an ethnic but a political identity is provided by the Hutu of northern Rwanda: before being incorporated in the state of Rwanda, they were known as the Bakiga, just like their cousins in western Uganda. With incorporation in the state of Rwanda, they became Hutu. Rather than a transhistorical ethnic identity, Hutu was really a transethnic identity of subjects, of all those who came to be subjugated to Tutsi power in Rwanda.

[6] Catherine Watson, 'Rwanda: war and waiting', *Africa Report*, Nov./Dec. 1992, p. 55; Charles Onyango-Obbo, 'Inside rebel-controlled Rwanda', *Africa News Service*, 26 April 1993; Gérard Prunier, *The Rwanda crisis: history of a genocide, 1959–1994* (London: Hurst & Co., 1995), p. 175, n. 33.

To understand the historical formation of Hutu and Tutsi, one needs to look at the historical formation of the Rwandan state, not the development of markets or of communities speaking a single language. The simple fact is that Hutu and Tutsi were not ethnic identities. Just as Hutu was a subject identity, an identity of all those subjugated to power in Rwanda before Belgian colonization, Tutsi was an identity of power. It is not that all Tutsi were in power, but simply that all were associated with power. For example, in the colonial period, all whites—including poor whites—were associated with power. The association may not have made them all rich, but it gave even the poorest of whites an exemption from the most degrading treatment reserved for those not white. To take an example: Mwami Rwabugiri introduced coerced labour—*ubureetwa*—in late nineteenth-century Rwanda, but *ubureetwa* was reserved for Hutu only.[7]

Tutsi, too, was not an ethnic identity. The prosperous Hutu got absorbed as Tutsi over generations, mainly through intermarriage. Though not statistically significant, this process was of sufficient social significance to be given a name; it was called *Kwihutura*. Similarly, poor Tutsi were discarded as Hutu over generations, through a reverse process called *Gucupira*. This is where colonialism made one big difference. It introduced the notion of *race*. It branded Hutu as Bantu—those presumed indigenous and ignorant—and hailed Tutsi as Hamites, presumed to be a foreign, civilizing influence. It closeted Hutu from Tutsi, legally, and issued identity cards to all. There was no more *Kwihutura* or *Gucupira*.[8] Privilege was henceforth tied to race, to whether you were defined as indigenous or alien. This is the fact that we cannot afford to forget when we try to understand the genocide. Ask yourself: When Hutu killed Tutsi in the genocide, who did they think they were? And whom did they think they were killing? They thought they were sons of the soil killing aliens seeking to grab power. They thought they were natives killing settlers.[9]

When Rwandese intellectuals discuss the question of Hutu and Tutsi, you can trace sharp differences between two points of view. The Hutu point of view emphasizes that Hutu and Tutsi were always different, whereas the Tutsi point of view maintains they were the same people, divided—as in any 'normal' society—by circumstances, of wealth or occupation. But there is one thing they seem to share in common: the preoccupation with origins. And this preoccupation is the mark that colonialism has left on us all. It marks the unthought collaboration between imperial ideology and history-writing in this region. This collaboration is etched in the table of contents that prefaces the history we write.

[7] Catharine Newbury, *The cohesion of oppression: clientship and ethnicity in Rwanda, 1860–1960* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), pp. 10–11, 51–2.

[8] Captain Eugene M. Haguma, 'The Rwandese crisis: the political economy of genocide', paper presented to symposium on Interface, Dialogue and Cooperation between Government and NGOs for Popular Participation in National Reconstruction, Conflict and Psycho-Social Trauma Management, Kigali, 28 Feb. 1995.

[9] For a fuller discussion of the 1959 revolution, perversely 'popular' agency in the 1994 genocide, the equally perverse preoccupation with origins in Rwandan history writing, the Second Republic, and the nature of the post-genocidal state in Rwanda, see, respectively, chs 4, 7, 2 and 5 and the conclusion in Mamdani, *When victims become killers*.

Before the genocide, Rwanda had two republics. The first republic, led by Kayibanda, retained the distinction between Hutu and Tutsi as a classification between two races. True, the 1959 revolution turned the world colonialism created upside down; but it did not change it. Lenin once wrote to Rosa Luxemburg that she had become so preoccupied with fighting Polish nationalism that, like the rat, her eyes could see nothing but cats. The world of Hutu and Tutsi had become like the world of the rat and the cat. For the rat, there is no animal more dangerous than a cat; no lion, no tiger, no elephant, just the cat. And for the cat, there is no animal more delicious than the rat. We cannot dismiss the social and political gains of the 1959 revolution, from land reform to the reform of governance. But nor can we overlook the key limitation of that revolution: it failed to overcome the political legacy of colonialism. Instead of challenging the political identities colonialism created, of Hutu as indigenous Bantu and Tutsi as alien Hamites, it embraced them. It failed to recognize that colonialism was not simply an economic system that had expropriated the native; it was also a political system that had poisoned political life by politicizing indigeneity.

The coup of 1973 ushered in the Second Republic of Habyarimana. In Uganda, we have tended to see Habyarimana as the real villain in the Rwandan tragedy; yet Habyarimana represented an attempt to reform the political system put in place by Kayibanda. Habyarimana officially redefined Tutsi from a race into an ethnic group—from a non-indigenous minority without political rights into an indigenous minority with political rights and with proportional representation in parliament, in embassies, in the cabinet, even in the army. Habyarimana's dilemma was that he had no future to offer to the Tutsi political diaspora, the refugees of 1959 spread around the region. He thus turned the post-1959 Tutsi refugees into the Jews of Africa. I use the identity 'Jew' here as a metaphor for the politically homeless—those adrift in a world of nation-states where all nations must have states, and in a world of indirect-rule former colonies where all ethnic groups must have a home area. From this point of view, October 1990 represented a meeting point of two failures on both sides of the border: of the Habyarimana leadership in Rwanda and of the Museveni leadership in Uganda. The October 1990 invasion of Rwanda by the RPA was testimony to a citizenship crisis on both sides of the border.

The *genocidaire* opposed Habyarimana, and they opposed the idea that the Tutsi were an ethnic group. This opposition first surfaced in the Lizinde coup of 1978. Hutu power propaganda organs and the Coalition pour la Défense de la République (CDR) created after the 1990 invasion transmitted a central message: that the Tutsi were a non-indigenous race, not an indigenous ethnic group. The genocide of Tutsi was perpetrated on them as Hamites, not as Tutsi. When the pre-colonial Tutsi claimed privilege, they did so not on the basis of foreign descent but on the basis of a divine sanction from the god above, Imana. In contrast, colonial Tutsi claimed privilege as non-indigenous Hamites. Genocide is not carried out against neighbours whom we consider to be legitimately living on the same soil, no matter what other differences we may have with

them. Genocide is carried out only against those whose very presence in the political arena is considered illegitimate, and whose very bid for power is thus considered an alien usurpation.

The genocide has created a new type of state in Rwanda, a state marked by two convictions. First, the post-genocide state considers itself morally responsible for the safety and security of every living Tutsi everywhere, globally, not just in Rwanda. In this sense, it is a diasporic state, like Israel. Second, this state believes that the precondition for Tutsi survival is Tutsi power: if the Tutsi lose power, they will also lose life. In this sense, the post-genocide state is also a national security state—once again, like Israel. Consider the implications of the Rwandan state putting these lessons into practice. If Tutsi power is indeed the precondition for Tutsi survival, then Tutsi and Hutu will continue to be reproduced as separate and even antagonistic political identities in Rwanda. In that case, the only peace possible between Tutsi and Hutu will be an armed peace.

This is, indeed, increasingly the case with contemporary Rwanda. The tension that characterizes post-genocide Rwanda resembles a volcano more than anything else. When the RPA crossed the border for a second time in less than a decade, this time from Rwanda to Kivu in 1997, its forward march was like that of molten lava, which tends to destroy every living thing in its path. The RPA seemed determined to annihilate not only the Interahamwe in cross-border camps, but other Hutu as potentially Interahamwe, and even indigenous Congolese as complicit hosts of the Interahamwe and the Hutu. Whereas one could believe in 1997 that the source of Rwanda's problems was the armed refugee camps across the border with Zaïre, it would be more accurate to say today that the source of Congo's problems lies across the border with Rwanda. With the benefit of hindsight, it would seem that, just as Uganda exported its internal crisis to Rwanda in 1990, Rwanda exported its internal crisis to Congo in 1997.

This brings me to the last and third focus of this article: Congo.

Kivu and Congo

The Banyarwanda in Kivu divide into three distinct groups: the Banyarutshuru and the Banyamasisi in North Kivu, and the Banyamulenge in South Kivu. Of these, the Banyarutshuru, though they were part of the Rwandan kingdom before colonialism, have been considered indigenous to Congo, but the Banyamasisi and the Banyamulenge have not. To understand the enormous difference this makes to ordinary peasants in their day-to-day lives, we need to understand the nature of citizenship in post-colonial Congo.

Citizenship in contemporary Congo, as in contemporary Uganda, has two dimensions: civic and ethnic.[10] When we speak of citizenship, we normally

[10] For a fuller discussion of political identity and citizenship in the Great Lakes region, see Mamdani, W*hen victims become killers*, chs 1 and 8.

tend to speak of only its civic dimension. Civic citizenship refers to individual rights, which are civil and political, and are usually stipulated as such in the constitution. In contrast, ethnic citizenship refers to group rights. These are social and economic, and are normally referred to as 'customary' rights. Ethnic belonging gives one, among other rights, the 'customary' right to land and the right of access to customary courts.

Since the Banyarutshuru were the only Kinyarwanda speakers considered indigenous to Congo, only they had a native authority of their own in colonial Congo. The Banyamasisi had come as migrants in the colonial period. Unlike Banyarwanda migrants to Uganda, this migration was more of an organized transplantation; so for a while, from the late 1930s to 1959, the Banyamasisi were given their own native authority, called Collectivité Gishari. When that Collectivité was abolished at independence and the Banyamasisi were put under the thumb of what were called indigenous chiefs, there followed a popular uprising against these chiefs called La Guerre du Banyarwanda.[11] Since then, the Banyamasisi have been struggling for their own native authority, for without it—without being recognized as indigenous—they lack significant rights, particularly the right to customary land and the right to be governed by their own chiefs.

Whereas the Banyamasisi in North Kivu were mainly Hutu, the Banyamulenge in South Kivu were Tutsi. Like the Banyamasisi, the Banyamulenge too have been struggling to be recognized as indigenous so that they can have their own customary land and customary authority. When the RPF marched beyond the refugee camps at the border in the direction of Kinshasa, they claimed they were doing so to prevent another genocide, this time of the Banyamulenge; but for those with a sense of the history of the region, it is ironic that the Rwandan state should have seen itself as a defender of the rights of the Banyamulenge. For the entire history of the Banyamulenge in Congo has been one of distancing themselves from the state of Rwanda. Historically, some of the Banyamulenge came from aristocratic Tutsi families that ran away from King Rwabugiri's attempt to tax the aristocracy and centralize the kingdom of Rwanda in the late nineteenth century. Others fled when they lost out at the bloody battle of succession upon the death of Rwabugiri, called Rucuncu in Rwandan history. This historical distancing from Rwanda was reinforced after the massacre of Hutu in Burundi in 1972. It is said that the Banyamulenge changed their very name, from Banyarwanda—which emphasized their ancestry, their origin—to Banyamulenge (Banya-mulenge: those who come from the hills of Mulenge)—highlighting their residence over their origin for one reason: to move even further away from the volatile world of Hutu and Tutsi in Burundi and Rwanda.

[11] On Collectivité Gishari and La Guerre du Banyarwanda, see Mararo Bucyalimwe, 'Land conflicts in Masisi, eastern Zaire: the impact and aftermath of Belgian colonial policy (1920–1989)' (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1990).

This third attempt in the Great Lakes region to define identity on the basis of residence rather than ancestry—following on the first by the NRA in Luwero, and the second by Habyarimana in power—like its predecessors, failed. It was sabotaged by Congolese civil society, which appeared more hostile to it than the Mobutist state had been. In Congo, the Mobutu regime had a conflicting attitude to Congolese Banyarwanda. Whereas the 1972 decree by Mobutu had granted citizenship to 1959 refugees, the 1981 law emphasized ancestry over residence. When the Congolese national conference, the gathering of the political and civil opposition to Mobutu, met to consider the citizenship question in 1991, they too passed a law confirming Mobutu's 1981 law emphasizing ancestry over residence as the basis of citizenship. It was no accident that the Banyamulenge constituted a quarter of the Congolese who joined the RPA in its 1997 cross-border invasion—more or less the same proportion as that of the Banyarwanda in the NRA when it entered Kampala in 1986.

The Banyarwanda—and particularly the Tutsi—minority in this region has been the butt of majority prejudice under majority rule, whether after the 1959 revolution in Rwanda, following the 1981–6 guerrilla war in Uganda, or during the 1990–1 sovereign national conference (CNS) in Congo. We need to grasp the significance of this development. In each of these three instances, a democratic majority used the democratic process to disenfranchise a minority. In all cases, a democratic process had an undemocratic outcome. The question of minority rights in a democracy needs great attention. Most writing on the 1994 genocide emphasizes that the genocide was the result of a state-engineered project. It is silent about the perversely popular aspect of the genocide, that the killing was mostly executed through mass participation, so that the role of state institutions was mainly to organize and encourage ordinary Bahutu to kill. We need to ask: What kind of agency was unleashed in the 1994 genocide, and indeed in the CNS in 1991, in the Ugandan parliament in 1990, and indeed the 1959 revolution in Rwanda? My argument is that this agency saw itself as 'native' and its target as 'alien'.

Uganda's choices

If Rwanda claims to be in Congo for security reasons, Uganda cannot decide why it is in Congo, which is the same thing as saying that Uganda is in Congo for more than one reason. Sometimes we hear of the security reason; but then, the further we move away from the border, the more we hear of a different reason to be in Congo. That reason is ideological: that we are there to support revolution. Of all the participants in the Congo conflict, Uganda is in the best position to place the conflict in a broader historical perspective, to weigh its growing cost, and to think through an alternative to conflict, for only Uganda has had the experience of being 'liberated' by a neighbour. I am referring to the 1979 war by which Tanzanian troops removed Idi Amin from power. I am interested in one particular lesson from that experience. Tanzanian troops had

maximum support from the Ugandan people when confronting the dictator they knew, Idi Amin. As they moved from deposing that dictator to imposing a new government, support dwindled. It took a five-year guerrilla struggle for the Ugandan people to deal with the consequences of that misplaced 'good-neighbourliness'; and it took a statesman with the vision and courage of Nyerere to realize that he should withdraw Tanzanian troops from Uganda not partially but fully.

The Congo had not one 'liberator' but many. The regional coalition of states—Uganda, Rwanda, Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia—enjoyed great popular support in Congo, as did the Tanzanians in Uganda. It was, after all, members of that coalition—specifically Uganda, Rwanda and Angola—that put Kabila in power, not any Congolese group. When one section of the coalition got disenchanted with Kabila and tried to replace him with another ruler, the coalition fell apart. The Congo War did not begin as a war between Kabila and an armed internal opposition, but as a war between two factions of the regional coalition. This war between Congo's neighbours, unfortunately, took place on Congolese soil. The Congo War degenerated further as armed soldiers from two member states, Uganda and Rwanda, hitherto belonging to the same faction, began fighting one another in a series of skirmishes now called Kisangani 1, 2 and 3.

This brief background sketch is necessary to highlight a choice we face in our immediate future. The longer Uganda remains involved in regional conflicts, the more that involvement is likely to influence internal developments. Uganda's immediate future is likely to be shaped by which of two competing dynamics wins out: the civic and potentially democratizing trend that has resulted in internal opening up, and the military involvement regionally. The two dynamics are contradictory in their impact. At the heart of the internal dynamic has been the development of the local council system, from one to five, based on the resistance council system created during the guerrilla war. Its impact has been to demilitarize conflict by providing a political way to handle differences. The thrust of the regional dynamic is the reverse: it tends to turn every point of difference into a military conflict. We seem to lack either a leadership or a mechanism by which the region can move from military to political ways of solving differences. Those committed to exporting revolution need to be aware that revolutions cannot be exported by armies crossing borders. Ideas can cross borders; civilians can cross borders; even commodities can cross borders. But the first condition of peaceful coexistence, including the right of every people to make their own revolution, is that states and armies must respect borders. The price of exporting revolution could be very high: we may end up liquidating the reform at home as the final price for this folly.

Today, the internal dynamic is in conflict with the regional dynamic. Uganda's internal opening up is still limited, having occurred mainly at the local and regional levels and remaining weak at the centre. The institutions at the centre—of which Uganda has only two strong ones, the army and the church—

have been placed in quarantine since the new constitution was passed. The NRM is not a single party in disguise. A single party would be committed to using its monopoly to organize, but the NRM to date seems bent on using that monopoly to prevent organization by anyone, including itself. This is why it is best to refer to this state as a no-party rather than a single-party state. In a situation where there are no functioning political organizations at the centre, regional military involvement imposes a high risk: the expanding war may inflate the role and influence of the military so far out of proportion to all other institutions that the consequence will be to militarize civil life in the country, reversing the political reform process.

Here, too, we need to keep in mind lessons from the region. Remember that the break-up of the Somali state followed defeat in the Ogaden War when the vanquished army turned against the domestic opposition before it splintered under competing warlords. Remember that in Rwanda, too, it was looming defeat in the war that started sections of the army looking for scapegoats at home and set the stage for both the genocide of the Tutsi and the massacre of the Hutu opposition. Uganda's current priority would seem to be twofold: one, to withdraw from damaging regional conflicts and instead to devote its energies to demilitarizing the region; and two, to accelerate the opening up at home by lifting the quarantine on political organizations at the centre.

Conclusion

This article has challenged three common-sense propositions. The first concerns the citizenship crisis in the region. This crisis is not about scarce resources, though it is connected to it. It is about defining *access* to resources. Citizenship does not entitle you to resources, but it entitles you to enter the struggle for resources. This is how we should understand the debate over resources around the world. In the United States, children of slaves had to struggle to be recognized as Americans, African Americans. In the United Kingdom, children of immigrants from colonies demand that they be recognized as black British. A different dynamic is afoot in South Africa: the children of privileged immigrants, yesterday's colonizers, now recognize that it is Africans who will be entitled to enter the struggle for resources, and so now demand that they too be considered Africans. Democracy, in this sense, is about expanding citizenship. As we deal with citizenship questions in the region, it is important that we ponder the colonial political legacy and ask ourselves: Who is indigenous? Who is a settler? When do settlers become natives, and how? What should be the basis of rights in a political community? How do we reform the state from one that divides its population into settlers and natives into one that takes the distinction between residents and visitors as key to defining rights?

Second, I have suggested that we problematize, rather than canonize, politically sacred cows like civil society and democracy. Instead of idealizing civil society and democracy, we need to reflect on undemocratic outcomes of

majority-driven processes, such as the Rwandan revolution of 1959, the Ugandan parliament that followed guerrilla victory in Luwero, the national conference in Congo in 1991 and, particularly, the Rwandan genocide in 1994. We may begin with a preliminary question, one that takes for granted, rather than challenges, the state form we inherited from colonialism, and ask: Are there basic rights of minorities—rights without which we will cease to belong to a single political community—that even majorities should not be allowed to trample? We may then ask a deeper question, one that tends institutionally to subvert the colonial state, as did the introduction of resistance committees and councils during the Luwero struggle: If we redefine political identities from natives and settlers to residents and non-residents, do we not move away from defining the rights of existing minorities to changing the very definition of who is a minority?

Finally, I have drawn attention to the war in Congo specifically, and regional armed conflicts generally, by underlining a key lesson in the crisis of states in this region. Both the positive lesson of Mwalimu Nyerere's leadership in Tanzania and the negative lessons of Somalia and Rwanda suggest that, if not checked in time, external military involvements can undermine internal reform and create a national crisis.