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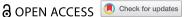
Women's overlooked contribution to Rwanda's state-building conversations

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ABSTRACT

This paper does not directly engage the state-formation, political settlement and state-building debates in Africa but it foregrounds the notion of *conversation* as the lens through which to examine Rwanda's state-building history. In particular, it explores an over-looked perspective from Rwanda's state-building trajectory by focusing on a particular class of actors – women – whose voices also contributed to inter-elite and elite-society state-building from pre-colonial times. The paper examines how and why *conversible spaces* have been created in post-genocide Rwanda that are locally conceived yet given form by Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) elites. It shows that these spaces are progressions of a long history of state-building conversations in Rwanda that pre-date colonialism. The paper asks how and why have conversible spaces for peace and state-building evolved over time? To what extent do their contemporary form have the potential for being genuinely transformative? What do these processes mean for future peace and state building in Rwanda? In addressing these questions, this paper foregrounds women's agency and contributions to state-building in Rwanda over time. It shows that while there is evidence that women's agency has evolved from covert to overt spaces, limitations to women's influence of peace-building and state-building conversations still exist particularly for those whose visions of society diverge from that of the ruling party Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF).

Introduction

The debate surrounding the relationship between peace-building and state-building remains a live one in Africa not least because of the diversity of experiences and approaches to the pursuit of peace after war. Some conflicts (as seen in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, Burundi and South Sudan), have encountered large-scale external intervention through negotiated settlements with a focus on forging liberal state institutions. Others, such as Rwanda and Ethiopia, achieved initial settlement through victory for one side and defeat for the other(s) on the battle field. There is, however, a lingering question as to whether negotiated settlements that lead to the creation of liberal democratic instititions produce peaceful states or whether societies that end their conflicts decisively through victory for one party and defeat for the other(s) have

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the potential to deliver more peaceful and stable states. Whatever the form of settlement pursued or achieved, there is an inevitable (even if complex) linkage between peace-building and state-building because the settlement invariably occurs within a governed social order.

The nature of the governed social order that results from a settlement is one of the central questions in the peace-building and state-building debate. The association of large-scale armed conflict in Africa with state weakness both in terms of the inability to maintain coercive functions such as the successful monopoly of the means of violence for the maintenance of law and order; and the capacity to provide social goods and services largely justify the choice of liberal peace-building by external interveners.[1] However, societies that do not experience direct external intervention in their armed conflict arguably have an opportunity to explore alternative state-building approaches and pathways to peace even if such approaches do not guarantee stable peace. Ethiopia, for example, did not encounter peace-building interventions and so did not have to adopt a liberal state-building template. But as argued by Tadesse et al. in this volume, Ethiopia's civil war produced an exclusionary victory, which led it back towards the path of violent conversation.[2] The evidence of the past three decades in Africa suggests that neither the liberal peace-building that results from negotiated settlement nor the victory-based alternative guarantees durable peace.

Olonisakin et al. argue for a reframing of the state-building and peace-building problematique by re-centring the notion of *conversation* in the processes of building peace and state. They note that liberal peace-building 'ignores the path, time, sequences of events and processes (which are path dependent) that led to the emergence of liberal states'.[3] They also suggest that the dogged pursuit of liberal peace-building in Africa ignores that 'the historically evolving inter-elite, elite-society, and elite-outsiders *conversation* invariably involved in such [state-building] processes lend themselves to a segmented and fragmented, reinforcing and contradicting set of institutions with all their complexity'.[4] Centring inter-elite and elite-society conversation in the course of building sustainable and peaceful states compels the problematising of the conventional assumptions linking peace-building and state-building. As such, the authors propose a shifting of the debate 'from a focus on which institutions, liberal or otherwise, and/or which policies are most effective for peace, to how inter-elite and society-elite conversation gives rise to or fails to bring about particular ensembles of institutions and policy outcomes'.[5] They propose that state-building must be seen as a continuum in which multiple layers of conversation are taking place in society, of which peace-building is an integral part.

This paper is not primarily concerned with the core of the peace and state-building debate, but takes as its point of departure the conceptualisation of peace-building as an integral part of the conversation occurring in the state-building continuum. We see value in exploring the depth of *conversation* about the identity of a state or governed social order and the multiple perspectives in a society over time, about the terms on which people would live together with or without recourse to violence. Thus, while this paper does not directly engage the state-formation, political settlement and state-building debates, it foregrounds the notion of *conversation* as the lens through which to examine Rwanda's state-building history. In particular, it explores an overlooked perspective from Rwanda's state-building trajectory.

The notion of conversation, as outlined in this volume by Olonisakin et al, offers some scope to examine aspects of the state-building conversation in Rwanda that have not gained prominence in the literature. Conversation 'involves individuals, groups, entities engaging in "talking" and "talking back" about a thing or an issue through a range of [communicative] actions and inactions, producing a recognisable or distinct narrative'.[6] Coversation might therefore occur in varied forms from music, artefacts, theatre, protests, as well as violence and silence. Conversation can be multilayered and inclusive of inter-elite, elite-society, and elite-outsiders. Some conversation forms are no doubt more favourable to lasting peace than others. So, if conversation is about talking and talking back through these different conversational forms it raises questions as to who the central actors are in conversation; whose voices are privileged and seen as critical to the state-building conversations shaping the destiny of societies that are emerging from violent conflict; and the degree to which the recorded state-building conversations in post-conflict societies are inclusive.

The four factors that enhance society-wide conversations in state-building, discussed by Olonisakin et al., find resonance in this paper. The first has to do with the issues around which of the energies of people are convened. This might entail difficult questions of identity, power and access to resources. The second concerns the 'conversible spaces' or the sites where state-building conversations are occurring. Beyond formal structures and elite influenced spaces, conversible spaces might include 'the arts, which depict the mood and social realities; theatre and music, which talk back to societal and state leaders alike; the streets, where mass protests or other popular action might occur in response to elite-driven policy; and religious houses where the paths of elite and ordinary citizens sometimes cross'. The third factor has to do with actors who are in conversation across conversible spaces and who are talking and talking back in a variety of ways in both mainstream and non-mainstream spaces. Such actors might include official and non-official actors such as politicians, musicians, actors, sports personalities, religious leaders, leaders of armed groups, women and youth leaders among others. Fourth and last are the voices [and narratives] that convene and unite a cross-section of people towards a more coherent state-building conversation that does not prioritise violent pursuit of conflict. Broadening such voices beyond the narrow participation of religious or traditional leaders means inclusion of leaders in other conversible spaces such as labour unions, sports, music, youth and women's movements. This paper thus focuses on a particular class of actors (women), whose voices also contributed to inter-elite and elite-society state-building conversations in select conversible spaces over Rwanda's history.[7]

Across historical epochs and into the contemporary era, *conversations* on state-building and peace-building in Rwanda have been problematic in the extreme. They have been characterised by strategic elite interests, manipulation by foreign actors, and brutal violence. A more thorough examination reveals intrigues and complexities within such conversations and the *conversible spaces* within which they occurred and continue to occur. We see a powerful female agency in which local Rwandans were central to driving dominant discourse and narratives; and some kind of logical procession towards – whilst certainly messy and intensely violent along the way – a peace and state-building process potentially edging towards stability. We also see a leadership story. Influence has been asserted by actors utilising a range of social bases of power within restricted elite enclaves of political intrigue in order to shape the peace and state-building trajectories of

the Rwandan state, often in ways detrimental to the excluded citizens. Domestic, regional and international forces have all, at different times, displayed Conger's 'dark side' of leadership, whereby 'behaviors that distinguish leaders from managers also have the potential to produce problematic or even disastrous outcomes'.[8]

This paper examines how and why *conversible spaces* have been created in post-genocide Rwanda that are locally conceived yet given form by Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) elites. It shows that these spaces of 'generic and non-generic [conversation] forms' in which individuals and groups engage in 'talking' and 'talking back'[9] are progressions of a long history of state-building conversations in Rwanda that pre-date colonialism. The paper asks, how and why have conversible spaces for peace and state-building evolved over time? To what extent do their contemporary form have the potential for being genuinely transformative? And what do these processes mean for future peace and state building in Rwanda? In addressing these questions, this paper foregrounds women's agency and contributions to state-building in Rwanda over time. It shows that while there is evidence that women's agency has evolved from covert to overt spaces, limitations to women's influence of peace-building and state-building conversations still exist particularly for those whose visions of society contradict or diverge from that of the ruling party Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF).

A leadership analysis uncovers potential *moments of transformation* that 'opens up the possibility of finding lasting solutions to conflict, from within the wider society'.[10] During a transformative moment it becomes possible that 'everybody contributes to, and in fact cocreates, the world we live in, whether conscious of their agency or not'.[11] This paper explains how and why the opportunities presented during such moments were grasped or not grasped in Rwanda. Radically altered societies shifted into new directions and underwent processes that exposed the dark underbelly of those holding formal and informal position-based power. As will be shown, a peace agreement, for example, 'is often an important moment of opportunity' to build meaningful peace within a society, but 'once this opportunity is missed it becomes difficult to bring citizens back to the attention of elites that are fixated on sharing the spoils of office'.[12]

The paper use the long durée approach to examine inter-elite, elite-society and elite-outsider conversations in Rwanda. We first trace *inter-elite conversations* and show how they have shaped conflicts in Rwanda's history. Secondly, we examine overlooked actors in Rwanda's history, particularly women, who amassed power and asserted influence on state-building conversations. Third, the paper analyses how elite-outsider conversations impacted women actors in both colonial and post-colonial periods, both overtly and covertly. Finally, we explore new conversible spaces that include a re-modelling of older spaces that foster selective elite-society conversations. While conversations in these spaces have transformed women's agency in influencing state-building and peace-building from covert to overt, other conversations on sensitive yet crucial aspects of state-building have been silenced.

We provide tentative predictive conclusions on whether these contemporary initiatives finally give Rwandans a genuinely transformative moment in their history of peace and statebuilding, and the likelihood of that moment being grasped. We argue that it is only through analysis of the history of Rwanda's state-building conversations that the nature and implications of the newly conceived elite-society conversible spaces can be properly understood. In this regard, contemporary, locally conceived elite-society

conversible spaces (*Umushyicyirano*-annual National dialogue; and -parliament) are important spaces that allow Rwandans the opportunity to discuss the peace and state-building processes.

This article relies on grey literature as well as secondary and primary sources from interviews conducted in Rwanda with different kinds of actors who have been involved in creating, setting agenda for, or participating in these elite-society conversations. The paper's main contribution is three-fold. The analysis of Rwanda's trajectory reveals that there are no real accidents in the history of state-building in Rwanda: the origins and bases of power of influential actors has, fundamentally, not shifted even if the specific actors may look different. Second, the gender policies we see today were not only born out of pragmatism following the genocide (as is sometimes assumed), but there is a long history of female agency in Rwandan state-building: the influence of women in shaping various conversible spaces and conversations in pre-colonial and post-colonial Rwanda is striking. And third, analysis of Rwanda's context shows that these gender conversations have not always been overt, but they have nevertheless influenced and shaped relationships amongst actors in Rwandan conversations on state-building in significant ways.

Contentious internal and and elite-outsider conversations in post-genocide debates

Debates and polorizations within the scholarship on Rwandan state-buildling mimics somewhat the inter-elite conversations in Rwanda, with competing visions and understandings of state-building and peace-building in a post-genocide and post-civil war society. One set of scholars focuses on the evolution of, and tensions between, the Rwandan Patriotic Front government's relationships with its outsider sponsors.[13] There is a stark divide between scholars who perceive Rwanda's economic development as a key driver of state-building and peace-building in this post-genocide and post-civil war context, and those who suggest that economic development is prioritised at the expense of human rights .[14]

In one of the few edited volumes examining post-genocide state-building published in 2009, Phil Clark and Zachary Kaufman's volume has essays that bring together practititoners and scholars to examine the causes of the 1994 genocide from RPF's perspective and post-genocide era.[15] It gives an overall positive forcast for the future of peace and ignores some nuances on certain criticisms levelled against Rwanda's post-genocide messy processes. On an opposing side, in Straus and Waldorf's 2011 volume[16] almost every paper has a negative evaluation of the RPF's state-building project and its right to assert its own agency after violence.[17] RPF's approach and understanding of state-building is largely dismissed, and held to be a model that pushes the possibilities of peace further away due to its lack of western-style liberal democratic ideals amongst many other reasons. Other more recent publications on state-building and peace-building attempt to provide a more nuanced analysis of the messy process of state-building. While still arguing that Rwanda's recovery has been a success, Kimonyo's examination of internal struggles within the RPF, for example, reveals the imperfections of building a state after mass violence and the difficult conversations that unfolded right after the genocide.[18] A special issue, *Rwanda:'L' État depuis le génocide'* by the influential forum *Politique Africaine*,[19] equally questions the

assumption found elsewhere that the post-genocide state is an overwhelmingly powerful entity in full control of every aspect of Rwandan lives. It points to pockets of resistance or the limits of the RPF elite control with illustrative examples of local authorities exercising their own power.[20]

Other tensions in existing literature are between state- and peace-building processes[21] as well as the contradictions in this hybrid model of locally driven policies but externally funded reconstruction process.[22] Locally conceived initiatives have been criticised as being part of the consolidation of power by political and military elites to manipulate Rwandan citizens into accepting the RPF's rule and policies.[23] However, literature that explores the complex history of RPF elites and what informs their approach to state-building and peace-building conversations[24] is evolving but remains limited in number, especially those published by Rwandans and African authors. The debates have mostly been between academic elites, international journalists and (mostly Western) human rights advocates, who are against Rwanda's political elites who seem to understand the power of crafting an official narrative of state-building through public relations and social media. These debates are also about how the Rwandan state-building and peace-building process shapes the lives of peasants, but they are silenced and estranged from the conversations about their past, present and future.[25]

By shifting focus away from the RPF and post-genocide inter-elite state-building debates and instead engaging with the conversation that has shaped state-building in Rwanda across generations, and social divides we might make better sense of today's peace and state-building conversation. This paper seeks to broaden that understanding by bringing in overlooked voices, actors (particularly women) and conversible spaces that contributed to Rwanda's state-building trajectory. There is a dearth of literature on the nature of conversations linked to the varied experiences with Rwanda's state-building process, of overlooked and/or relatively silent actors. In more recent times, this includes the youth, whose thinking about the future, is unfolding in part through creative spaces online that bring together opposing ideas from inside Rwanda and the diaspora. There are also conversible spaces that are overlooked in scholarship, some of which are explored in this paper, such as National Dialogue Arguably, they have convening power and are crucial conversible spaces where state and peace-building conversations are held between elites and society albeit with some limitations.

These conversible spaces are created within a context of other locally conceived institutions that have been debated in literature on post-genocide Rwanda. These include spaces such as *Ingando*: re-education or solidarity camps for former soldiers returning from rebel groups in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), students and other youth. They are spaces where unity is politicised in public, with the genuine purpose of and processes within them remaining highly ambiguous. One study concludes that Ingando mostly serves RPF political elites as a space to disseminate their ideology and historical narrative.[26] Similar divergences of views occur in assessing the conversations that occurred in Gacaca Courts, a transition mechanism that sought to deal with the large case load of genocide perpetrators and provide justice to survivors.[27] Other locally conceived spaces also include grassroots and national conversible spaces such as memorials, community spaces and others where commemoration of the genocide are held every April.[28]

Yet limited debates exist on certain actors including women and their enagegement in these processes.[29] The existing literature and debates on state-building and peace-building lack an engagement with a long history of Rwandan women's agency in Rwanda's politics of state-buidling and peace-building and underlying conversations therein. This article builds on an evolving literature on Rwandan women agency to locate how certain elite women have influenced Rwandan society both overtly and covertly at crucial moments of transitions, utilising several bases of power. As the next section shows, Rwandan women have played multiple roles in state-building, security and peace throughout history albeit covertly in some instances.

Historicising neglected actors and their covert influence on conversible spaces

Throughout sequential historical eras, those in positions of authority have held great influence over Rwanda's peoples and its history. Peter Northouse's discussion of French and Raven's five bases of social power recognised how these powers of influence reside in someone as an individual, or from someone's position of authority. 'Referent power' (an individual's likeability), and 'expert power' (the talent and possession of specialist knowledge) are person-based as they can be enjoyed by individuals whether they are afforded formal institutionalised leadership roles or not. Whereas 'legitimate power' (an accepted obligation/requirement to defer to someone in an established position of authority), 'reward power' (the means to provide material goods to people), and its antithesis 'coercive power' (the means to threaten or deliver the use of force), depend on someone's formalised position.[30] One's capacity to influence individuals and groups depends on one's position and person-based sources of social power. In Rwanda, these sources of influence have shifted over time as internal and external actors have challenged one another – both overtly and covertly – to assert influence over the dominant peace and state-building narratives and related trajectories. And we have seen, in certain eras, a pre-occupation with gaining position-based power that has prioritised individual and group interests.

In this long durée perspective, we explore the historical background, trajectories and lineages of the post-colonial elites that enjoyed position-based power in Rwanda. We trace two conversible spaces as the point of departure, as the unique conversations within them intersected with transformative moments in Rwandan history and played an important role in influencing post-genocide state-building politics: conversible spaces that facilitated the agency of royal elite women within political shifts in Rwanda; and the spaces allowing conversations of resistance amongst military elites in the North prior to colonialisation. These are often overlooked actors in literature despite them having played a crucially important role in shaping state-building conversations through subsequent generations.

Internal actors in covert roles: queen mothers' influence on Rwanda's politics

Firstly, the life narratives of two queen mothers, Nyiramongi in nineteenth century and Kanjogera who lived into the twentieth century,[31] showcase their agency in re-shaping monarchy politics in central-court and within the royal family.[32] Through their writings,

records of poetry from the court, and the works of Alexis Kagame, Jan Vansina Catherine Newbury, David Newbury, Allison Des Forges and more recently Sarah Wakins and Erin Jesee, we can see how these two queens emerged into positions of authority and asserted influence to cement the status of their family lineage and, ultimately, dramatically changed Rwanda's state-building conversations.

The *Umugabekazi* or queen mother enjoyed a degree of legitimate power as they were co-rulers with their sons. In reality, however, their influence over the royal court conversible space – in terms of keeping clan politics in check, for example – varied greatly. Nyiramongi was a queen mother who made history for her family and lineage. She resisted marrying men with no power and strategically chose to become one of the wives to Gahindiro, who ruled during the 19th century, thereby ensuring she became queen mother for the next King Rwogera.[33] Nyiramongi (who became known as Nyiramavugo II)[34] used her legitimate power as queen mother to covertly compete for greater influence within the royal court and was able to gain power and assert influence over the King, the royal court, and on Rwandan peace and state-building conversations in three notable ways:

Firstly, she positioned her *Abakagara* lineage (meaning family line, which was part of the Abega clan), as the most important oral historians.[35] They subsequently determined what is remembered of inter-elite conversations and power consolidation in this early pre-colonial period through poetry, songs and heroism narratives, thereby shaping the dominant narratives on Rwanda's history that have greatly informed contemporary conversations on state-building and official reflections on Rwanda's past.[36] Secondly, Nyiramongi amassed significant wealth through owning cattle that helped increase her coercive power in the royal court, allowing her to form alliances and punish those who fell out of favour with her. She manoeuvred her brother Rwakagara to become a wealthy and important elite in royal court (even though their father was not recorded as being a noble man), and ensured her family became influential across future generations in Rwanda's politics. The next extremely powerful queen mother, Kanjogera, also came from this powerful *Abakagara* lineage. Kanjogera married Rwabugiri around 19th century, one of the most powerful, controversial kings in Rwanda who invaded many countries in the region and introduced tough taxation regimes. But she then instigated a bloody coup d'État against her husband, known as 'Rucunshu',[37] to instal her young son Musinga as King long before it was his time. This legitimised and secured her powerful position as queen mother; and like her ancestor Nyiramongi, she disrupted customs and strengthened her family lineage in collaboration with her brother Kabare.[38]

Thirdly, through these two powerful queen mothers, the family lineage of *Rwakagara* gained influence over the central court and Rwandan politics in general. Descendants of Rwakagara reshaped how politics and the pursuit of influence in leading Rwanda were organised in this small kingdom. Rather than following the rituals and traditions that had been rehearsed over hundreds of years, they positioned their brothers, cousins and other military elites who were loyal to them[39] to gain considerable influence, and thereby shape conversations on Rwanda's identity, history, peace and security.

To some extent these women's covert agency could be argued to be transformational leadership, meaning when leaders elevate the interests of followers and stir them to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group. They elevated their lineage to prominence and power that had rammifications for generations beyond Nyiramongi and

Kanjogera, whether that was intended or not. These include the current President of Rwanda and leader of the RPF, Paul Kagame, who traces his roots to these two queen mothers; and is their direct descendant. However, their rule could also be seen as transactional, whereby leaders influence followers by offering them rewards in exchange for certain behaviours[40] especially for their clients and networks of servants who benefited from their rule. Unquestionably, however, it created transformative outcomes: she created a legacy for the lineage and entire clan[41] to amass influence. The question arises as to whether this direct history of powerful women in Kagame's family influenced some aspects of his vision, military strategy and gender policies that he subsequently oversaw in Rwanda's post-genocide state-building and peace-building, which is discussed later?

External actors and transformation in Rwanda's conversible spaces and women-led state-building conversation

The arrival of Germans into Rwanda marked a new shift in conversible spaces and the kinds of conversations that were allowed. Europeans found an organised society with a court system and standing army that arguably resembled that of a modern state (Rwanda had been one of the few African states, or proto-states, to actively protect its population from the slave trade).[42] Reflecting on moments of transformation, we can perhaps imagine a counter-factual history where the arrival of white Europeans deep into sub-Saharan Africa marked a moment of mutual learning and progressive development between different – but at core strikingly similar – state-building agenda's that enabled both Africa and Europe's progressive socio-economic transformation. Of course, this was far from what transpired. Prior to the white Europeans, external actors who influenced Rwandan politics of state-building were the surrounding regional Kingdoms, through limited violent interactions and diplomacy (the known writings on such interactions take the colonial perspective and focus on elite relations, meaning how ordinary Rwandans viewed or experienced these regional engagements and the arrival of Europeans is missing from the academic canon).

We know that the powerful Kanjogera, with her young son King Musinga, warmly welcomed Germans into Rwandan politics,[43] presumably viewing their potential as collaborators and/or traders in further consolidating the position-power they exercised across Rwanda. Although Musinga is praised as a King who resisted colonialism in Rwanda's official post-genocide history, he only resisted colonial rulers for certain periods and when it was in royal elites' interests. Kanjogera as queen mother often took decisions, or influenced Musinga or court agents to take decisions, to consolidate their power and influence.[44] She used coercion and violence to protect the court, and diplomacy with Germans to conquer the North which had resisted being controlled by the central royal court. She was able to maintain influence and control over the conversible spaces, the actors in the conversations, and the nature of the conversations that influenced politics in this period. Kanjogera faced strong resistance, however, from another queen mother Muhumusa who had fled to the North prior to the German arrival.

The Belgians' initial relationship with the ruling royal family following World War 1 and the divvying up of German spheres of influence was far more hostile for several decades, however, and their influence ultimately transformed Rwandan society in two profound ways of relevance to this paper: politicisation of identity and shifting gender

values. In pre-colonial Rwanda, the terms *Tutsi, Hutu* and *Twa* represented socio-economic classes, affording people identities linked to their role and status in society.[45] They were not the ethnic terms that would grow to dominate Rwandan life in the colonial and post-colonial periods. Tutsi denoted those with wealth (10 per cent of the society), Hutu were those who worked for the wealthy Tutsi (86 per cent of the population) and Twa (1 per cent) despite being the first inhabitants of Rwanda, are those at the lowest ebb of the social strata.[46] Social mobility was fluid as one could change from being Hutu and Twa to become Tutsi when one's wealth increased (through the number of cattle owned), or if favoured by the King and given a Tutsi bride. This change in status was called *kwihutura* literally meaning one has become a Tutsi. Conversely, the term *Kwitutsura* explains downward mobility; a term used when one lost cattle or married into and became part of a poor Hutu family.

Given the Kingdom's complex structure, the European (Belgian) colonialists resorted to dividing the society into different races and ethnic identities, giving preferential treatment to one category against another in order to control the land and its population.[47] As has been well-documented elsewhere, Rwanda's social fabric was completely destroyed by the Belgians, using racial pseudo-scientific arguments that prevailed in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe and the United States, and assigned physical traits to the Hutu and Tutsi social classifications, which established them as ethnic identities (ignoring the fact that these traits were due to the better living standards of the wealthier Tutsi). Crucially, the colonial system was expected to enjoy '*regular support of the Watusi*' because of their '*innate skills as far as taking command*' from the King was concerned.[48] White Christian missionaries in Rwanda also had a hostile relationship, through their intension to destroy and alienate Rwandans indigenous belief systems. King Musinga and court agents despised white fathers, until a more consensual relationship (and Musinga's eventual controversial Catholic conversion). When the Belgians had appointed a new major De Clerk who was the first resident in Kigali and had over two decades of experience in Congo.[49]

The second major shift was to distance women from power in Rwandan affairs. Colonial administrators were mostly men who sought to divide and rule societies, usually choosing to work with Rwandan men. The legitimate power, and associated reward and coercive power, that had been established by the powerful queen mothers discussed above was ignored by the colonial administration's choice of chiefs. This – similar to the racialised socialisation categories – was undertaken through a Victorian-era gendered lens that defied and denied the socio-cultural context in which it was applied. In social and religious life, outside of elite politics, preference was also given to men over women. Nuns or wives of male missionaries taught women how to sew and make beautiful artefacts that were of European standard. This was despite pre-colonial Rwanda having a strong culture of art, which had been produced by both men and women. In this setting, the Rwandan society was redefined even in terms of profession. The gendered lenses of Europeans restricted Rwandan women to schools called *foyers sociaux* that taught them domestic-related work.[50] These promoted attitudes and programmes that suggested to Rwandan society that females were not capable of understanding the kind of learning that was taking place in the colonial modelled formal classrooms that would become dominant.[51] This, combined with the weakening of Kanjogera and other queen mothers,

meant that the most overt and formal influential conversible spaces became male dominated and conversations on society and the nature of state-building in the colonial period became male-centric.

Missionaries also removed young girls (and boys) from their homes to teach them in mission schools, at times against their parents' will, by putting a great deal of pressure on parents/community leaders for female missionaries to teach their daughters, imparting European values in every aspect of their lives. This in turn perhaps weakened mothers' influence in the home and thus further undermined Rwandan women's authority. Not only were they experiencing a colonial education but they witnessed their parents' authority become undermined by a new power.[52]

Colonial rule therefore transformed Rwanda from a society with a common identity comprising diverse social categories to a nation stratified along politicised ethnic lines, and religious and cultural categories. Inter-elite conversations between these three actors – elites from colonial administration, court agents and religious elites – ultimately had disastrous effects on the court: the monarchy was greatly weakened and the most influential conversible space moved away from the central royal court and over to the centre of the colonial administration and religious entities. Kigali was set up as the capital, which continues to this day, far away from the Southern part of Rwanda where the central court had been based for hundreds of years and in part to be closer to the problematic North. It would become a pivotally important conversible space for future politics and matters of state.

The failure of post-colonial state-building: covert internal conversations leading to overt external conversible spaces of a failing peace

Prior to the near total collapse of the state, peace and security infrastructures in 1994 with the culmination of genocide, two parallel conversible spaces competed for legitimate power in deciding the future of Rwanda. As elites continually failed to deliver appropriate rewards to their constituents (both elite and societal), they reverted to coercive power to maintain their increasingly fragile grip on the positions of influence within formal state and informal authority structures. One was the covert Rwandan 'Akazu' space that included powerful actors from the North, and who were supported indirectly by influential French political elites. The second were the Arusha peace talks: an overt formal space that included a variety of external regional and foreign actors, which – this paper argues – fundamentally misinterpreted the historical processes and leadership dynamics unfurling in Rwanda, and which led to their inevitably doomed failure and disastrous, violent outcome.

Covert internal and external elite spaces: 'Akazu' and French allies

A woman who defied the colonial, dominant patriarchal shift within Rwandan society that largely excluded women from formal, position-based influence was Agathe Kanziga Habyarima, an important actor who is often overlooked in Rwanda's history of state-building. Having been placed under a Trusteeship following World War II, but in effect remaining under Belgian rule, Rwandan independence in 1959 presented a new opportunity for Rwandans to re-imagine and re-orient ideas on ethnic identities. Instead, the

influence of Belgian priests and administrators remained: the new administrators favoured 'majority rule', which in effect meant Hutu power. The first Republic of Kayibanda (1962–1973) produced identity knowledge that encouraged division and hatred against the Tutsis, in a reversal of (and as revenge for) the colonial method of favouring rule through the racialised Tutsi group. The ethnic identities created by the Belgians were now fixed into independent Rwanda's politics, culture and psyche; but with an acrid twist whereby Tutsi were no longer the superior, intelligent, justified natural rulers of Rwanda but instead seen as sneaky, untrustworthy, power-hungry subjugators.

Conversible spaces and conversations in this First Republic were influenced by men from both colonial elites and Rwandan Hutus who overthrew the monarchy.[53] It continued to close out women: elite men dominated the conversation and conversible spaces. Juvenal Habyarimana came to power in a 1973 coup d'Etat, having been Kayibanda's chief of staff and head of the army, and becoming disgruntled with the division of elite-power within the Kigali administration that had limited Northern influence. He continued the ethnicised politics of Rwanda, with his wife Agathe Kanziga Habyarimana at his side. Agathe Kanziga's roots were in the Northern part of Rwanda that had always had an alternative history and dominant conversations, with distinct cultural norms, belief and practices. The North had resisted efforts for the central court to influence its politics for hundreds of years. This 1973 Second Republic changed Rwanda by shifting the most influential actors as being from the South to the more radical in the North. Although the capital city remained in Kigali, there was an important shift to the North becoming the centre of the political economy of power. Habyarimana oversaw an ambitious development plan that was pro-rural population and that centred a history that celebrated Hutus as liberators of all Rwandans from the hands of colonialism and the Tutsi monarchy collaborators.

The Akazu were a group of advisors led by Agathe Kanziga that included her brothers and other Hutu Northern elites from the couple's hometown sub-region of the North West. These were the managers of mainstream conversation allowed in public on identity, politics, economic development, military, law, parliament, society, art and religion. These Hutu elites practiced a Hutu identity that afforded them power, wealth and associated reward and coercive power. Ethnic identity remained key, but regional identity continued to be important and was associated with the learned racial distinctions. Agathe Kanziga, much like the queen mothers Nyiramongi and Kanjogera, monopolised power and used her access to the presidency to punish her enemies whilst also creating a powerful network of followers that would eventually execute the genocide. Unlike large swathes of Rwandan society, women featured prominently in this circle of influencers.[54] This Akazu 'clan of madame' muddied the distinction between overt and covert influence: although not any kind of formal legitimate authority or political institution, it was 'hidden in plain sight'.[55] Its 'outer rings' of wider societal linkages meant that 'no part of society was free from its sinister influence'. Opening any kind of business in Rwanda, for example, would entail some kind of pay off to this elite extended family circle.[56]

The regime's Western allies ignored any issues they may have felt regarding this exclusive, racialised system of governance. Elite cooperation between internal and external actors was a striking feature of this period. France brought President Habyarimana a new plane and signed a military pact; King Baudouin of Belgium and his wife were

committed family friends; there were several highly paid high profile European-paid presidential advisors; and the World Bank and IMF were outspoken supporters of their 'Switzerland of Africa'.[57]

Overt conversible external space: Arusha process in full glare of public diplomacy

The pre-genocide political atmosphere of the late 1980s and early 1990s amplified the question of Tutsi refugees who had fled to neighbouring countries. The outbreak of civil war in 1990 occurred when the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) – armed wing of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) – based in Uganda invaded Rwanda from the northern regions in October 1990.[58] The reward power of the incumbent rulers had diminished significantly, meaning their grip on authority was diminishing: shrinking revenue from agriculture and mining – a major source of enrichment for the elite - led to fierce internal power struggles as competition for the declining resources intensified. Government reaction to criticism was heavy-handed with repression of opposition groups and the press.[59] Combined with the crisis of citizenship and indigeneity of refugees in Uganda, RPF deemed the time ripe to launch their invasion.[60] As RPF gained ground on the battlefield, the government promised political reforms and attempted to negotiate a settlement by establishing a refugee repatriation programme, and ceded to international pressure by opening up tokenistic political reforms.[61] The opening up of the press, however, simply led to increasingly overt and widespread genocidal 'Hutu Power' language in the media; and increasingly fragmented and hostile inter-elite relations as extremists began resenting the concessions granted and opening of political space that was occurring, no matter how piecemeal or insincere.

Initiatives to end the conflict in Rwanda began after RPF's invasion, with external attempts by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), Belgium, France, US and countries like Tanzania and Uganda to bring together Habyarimana's government and RPF.[62] The Arusha negotiations began in August 1992, but were inevitably doomed to failure. In African and global policy spaces, leadership is invariably seen as 'something relating to the individual (usually political) leader ... policy actors see leadership as part of the function of particular institutional and organizational frameworks'.[63] External actors held an inherent assumption that a peace agreement that formalised a more balanced ethnic diversity within state and military institutions would engender peace.[64] Meanwhile, all antagonists ultimately believed in a position-based conception of leadership whereby the maintenance, or capture, of state power was the sole prerequisite of achieving their ultimate goals. It was mostly male government and RPF elites, with their external regional and foreign counterparts, involved in discussions.[65] The focus on the most pressing political issues – return of refugees, allocation of political positions, and make-up of the military – ignored the intensely complex history of peace and state-building process that had occurred in the previous centuries and beyond. Rwanda's history having been shifted and re-shaped by dark, self-interested forces, meant that a genuinely transformative moment was needed that would re-make socio-political processes anew. Tinkering and divvying up of spoils would not suffice.

Negotiations focused on ending the violence rather than the broader vision of unity of the country. The RPF was present in most of the meetings they were invited to. Such opportunities were used by RPF to show their goodwill, but ceasefires also gave a chance

for RPA troops to rest and train.[66] RPF progress in the talks was largely determined by their battlefield victories but the concessions realised did not materialise.[67] The RPF was slowly but steadily aiming for and getting closer to victory; whilst extremists within President Habyarimana's dominant party, the Movement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement, and the Coalition for the Defence of the Republic (CDR) (originally a faction extreme faction within MRND that became a separate party) plotted with their increasingly well-armed youth militia. Often there were calls 'for a return to earlier and better days' by those resisting such transformation.[68] Their bastardised mis-reading and presentation of Rwandan history by the ruling (now-racialised) Hutu elite saw them harping back to halcyon days of them being liberators and providers of social progress. Yet this was a viewpoint and argument that had become entirely unsustainable in the face of their economically and politically dire circumstances.

The Arusha Accord that was eventually signed attempted to broadly recognise issues of systematic exclusion of the Tutsi community at a national level within politics and the military, but was less clear on the modalities of implementation.[69] Even more importantly, the Rwanda government, regional and international actors paid far less attention to other ongoing forms of exclusion at societal level, and systematic forms of violence, in essence, violent conversations that had begun to emerge during the civil war.[70] The Akazu had also remained present in the shadows and extremely influential throughout negotiations, further dampening whatever supposed prospects such peace discussions had ever enjoyed. The Akazu also disagreed with the President himself, and during subsequent post-genocide court cases of Agathe she admitted the couple were about to divorce.[71] At one point, Bagosora – one of the army chiefs in Akazu network who was later convicted of Genocide by the ICTR – left Arusha talks visibly angry and claimed he was going to 'prepare the apocalypse'.[72] The disagreements between the office of the president and the Akazu network shows that there were two competing powers weakening the state and eventually overseeing a genocide.

Peace agreements are often important moments of opportunity for intervenors to alter the perspectives of the key protagonists in order to build a common, inclusive future for their citizens.[73] This conversible space's failure in its attempts at a settlement in the early 1990s, however, was inevitable: no such genuine transformation was sought or desired from the interested parties.[74] It was a settlement that focused largely on the elite, key protagonists and their position-based conception of leadership. The immediate settlement was eventually achieved through RPF victory on the battlefield. It now remains to be seen, what conversations have been central to the rebuilding of a stable and peaceful Rwandan state and the extent to which there has been a return to the conversations that predated genocide.

Overt elite-society conversible spaces and limitation of conversations in post-genocide Rwanda

Post-genocide conversations in Rwanda have centred on various state-building efforts aimed towards restoration of peace and security after the genocide. Interviews and focus group discussions held in Rwanda in 2016 confirmed that such conversations have included diverse areas including: the management of land; the restoration and consolidation of national identity and unity; the settlement of returning refugees; and the revival of

the country's economy, amongst many others. The new elites decided to also draw inspiration from the pre-colonial period including creation of security, role of the military, and acknowledging women's agency. They also repurposed Habyarimana's rural forums like *Umuganda* as important spaces for elite-society conversations. Two important conversible spaces explored below, the national dialogue and official state spaces such as Parliament, allow for an examination of women's agency

Post-genocide state-building conversible space: the national dialogue

The victorious RPF did not have a clear blue print of how they wanted to move forward after the genocide, or of the precise institutions and governance structures that needed to be put in place. But its leaders decided that the process of post-genocide state building had to be participatory, and seen as participatory, by a populace who had borne a huge brunt of the conflict. In July 1994 during RPF's early negotiations with different groups (pre-genocide political parties, civil society groups) in Rwanda, the RPF leaders felt they were the only ones with a clear ideology of how to solve the causes of dis-unity among the Rwandan people.[75] A fundamental, transformative shift was potentially occurring: the winner-takes-all position-based conceptualisation of leadership that had dominated Rwanda's recent history would potentially give way to a more process-based approach that recognised the value and importance of followers (in this case the whole of society) in creating and achieving shared visions.[76]

Overtly, a national dialogue was initiated, convened at weekends, where leaders met with various stakeholders to discuss issues of national unity, governance, security, and justice. This dialogue lasted for approximately 1 year.[77] Early on in the state-building process, during its nation-wide tours, the RPF was told that 'you people from Kigali' have been the same through different eras. Central government was seen as never delivering on promises made to the local population or involving them in national processes. RPF intended to change that perception.[78] Women leaders both from government, political parties and civil society featured prominently from the start along with members of the RPF elite. An interviewee who was part of the leadership of the RPF told us:

> We realized not everybody thought the same way as us, so after defeating the government the first thing was to bring the political parties together. For unity to happen, allocation needed to be done equally so we made a broad-based government based on power sharing in the transitional government [. . . .] within the transitional government making decisions was difficult. It required a longer process as we needed to bargain, tolerate difference of opinion, we had to listen to others. But it was worth doing as the eventual decision you take is better.[79]

The Arusha agreements also influenced their thinking to be more inclusive. The 'national dialogue' forums have remained a key feature of Rwanda's subsequent state-building project. In effect, this facilitated citizen participation.[80]

More covert, largely inter-elite conversible spaces remained important, and equally had talks that focused on state-building politics in the early years of 1998 with gender-related topics always featuring prominently. Some of these conversible spaces included *Urugwiro* village (President's office) where talks were held amongst old elites and new RPF elites, as well as the secluded but equally influencial Kicucyiro Assembly talks of the

RPF's central committee.[81] The most significant negative outcome of divisions and disagreements that occured behind closed doors were seen publicly when the then-president Pasteur Bizimungu and other prominent Hutu RPF members resigned, and prominent political elites went into exile or were imprisoned.[82]

But they were also positive in pushing an agenda to make women part of the conversations, allowing them to play overt roles. The RPF elite took a deliberate strategic decision to revive the prominence of women within society that had been lost in the intervening colonial and post-colonial period. This was for both pragmatic reasons (the male population had been decimated by the genocide) and ideological reasons (women had always played a role in the RPF agenda). Kimonyo argues:

> This cultural revival, led primarily by women, was the work of a second generation of refugees who were born in or grew up in exile. Reaching adulthood, these young men and women, concerned by a feeling of imminent identity loss, dedicated themselves to a mission of cultural revival using elite ancient Rwandan culture.[83]

Pre-colonial practices influenced RPF's agenda on security, revamping home-grown initiative to rebuild Rwandan society including the role of women and especially that of queen mothers discussed above. This was evidenced by the pre-colonial histories as well as the key roles women played in supporting the RPA in 1990s when they first suffered set backs. These influential women leaders who emerged in 1990s within the RPF included: Inymba Aloys,[84] who oversaw fundraising in the RPF movement and later occupied powerful ministerial positions in government and parliament; and Major Rose Kabuye, who would rise to become an important Chief of Staff to President Kagame. There were also prominent female artists such as Kayirebwa Cécile, Angelic Garuka, Immaculée Mukandori and many others, as well as women dancing groups mostly in the diaspora,[85] who played a vital role in mobilising diapora support for the RPA and growing of the RPF profile amongst Rwandans even after the genocide. Some continued to shape the conversations on the RPF vision for post-genocide Rwanda and the public discources on the official narrative of the RPF as liberators of Rwandans. Their music played an important role in most of these earlier forums before, during and after sensitive debates that occurred in these conversible spaces by replacing the mostly male dominated national lyrics.[86]

These informal cultural tools became synonymous with elite-society conversations on state-building and peace-building amongst Rwandans taking place within national dialogues and a range of other initiatives, such as *Gacaca, Itorero* and many other home-grown forums. These spaces provided the possibility for a transformative moment within Rwandan history to occur, through the creation of sincere elite-society social contacts that held national unity and collective development as paramount.[87] Some of those transformations and women agendas were also potentially realised in Parliament albeit with some limitations.

Official government positions and parliament as an important overt space for women agency and power

As a key pillar within the hardware of Rwanda's leadership infrastructure (which includes tangible aspects of the hardware, such as buildings, laws that confer power to institutions and personnel)[88] the post-genocide government has sought to use parliament to forge

mutuality with women and shape elite-society conversations. The number of women Members of Parliament has become one of the most well-known success stories of Rwanda's state-building, internally as well as in public and online forums. It is the first country in the world where over 60 per cent of seats are occupied by women[89] and has had a consistently high international ranking for almost two decades. They include those who formerly identified both with Hutu and Tutsi given the life histories of women parlimenterians (genocide Tutsi survivors MPs, and those whose family roots are known).[90] Despite these high numbers, scholars have questioned their influence over parliamentary agendas, or general effiency of a parliament in a political system that is controlled by a single party and lacks credentials for liberal democracy.[91] While such concerns certainly have merit, the post-genocide parliaments have been an important conversible space where women's agency has been exercised overtly. As one study found, they have shaped policy agenda on previously overlooked issues like property rights or HIV/AIDs.[92] Rwandan women's presence in these spaces has certainly led to transformation of certain political agendas that shape the state-buidling and peace-building processes.

It is not just in parliament but also in other official roles of power. Women leaders have emerged to transform Rwandan lives and shape elite–society relations, because of personal attributes but also an enabling environment. In high political leadership, women's role in government positions of power is visible. Dr Louise Mushikiwabo was for many years one of the most influential Ministers of Foreign Affiars, being involved in defending the state's interests regionally and internationally. She was often one of the only women sitting and representing Rwanda in many moments of crisis, including around Rwanda's turbulent relationship with its neighbours DRC, Burundi and Uganda. She was also instrumental in debates that unfolded between Rwanda and France on the latter's fragile relationship with the post-genocide government elites. She used her expert power – eloquence and multilingual skills – to defend Rwanda's policies including criticising other Rwandan women opposition leaders like Diane Rwigara in local, regional and international forums.

Other prominent post-genocide women leaders include the late Inyumba Aloys former RPF cadre, minister of gender and family affairs and senator, and Dr Monique Nsanzabaganwa, who has risen from high-profile leadership roles in Rwanda to becoming the current vice chair person of the African Union. There are many other women in high-profile positions such as ambassadors and representatives of regional and international organizations enabled by the RPFs vision of promoting female leadership. In addition, the first lady, Jeannette Kagame, is unique amongst these women actors as she has emerged to exercise power both overtly and covertly. Watkins and Jessee have argued that she asserted influence over her powerful husband in similar fashion to the former queen mother Kanjogera or Agathe Habyarimana,[93] as women who are despised and suspected of covertly influencing their sons or husbands while in power. Yet through her Imbuto Foundation, she has overseen transformation of agendas that promote women rights, genocide widows and children's rights. As the chairperson of the political club for all elites, Unity Club, where both leaders with Hutu and Tutsi heritage converge to discuss sensitive politics of statebuilding, she has risen to amass power and shape relationships between actors overlty.

Limitations of transformation narrative

Importantly, there remain limits to the level of genuine transformation that has occurred within gendered relations in Rwanda. To be sure, women's influence in state-building conversations in pre-colonial times was largely visible in the inter-elite conversations. In the post-genocide period, there has been a greater possibility for a more diverse group of people – including women and youth – to contribute to state-building conversations even if in restrictive ways. Most women remain poor,[94] and still exist in a mostly violent patriarchal state: GBV remains high even though centres for reporting it and avenues to seek justice are much more efficient than in most other African states. Further, a number of women have suffered for attempting to question the RPF or its vision of state-building and peace overtly. If narratives of women rising and changing Rwandan post-genocide society has been publicised, those who disagree and push for counter-narratives have equally emerged as leaders of banned opposition political parties. Ingabire Victoire, for example, an opposition figure from the diaspora in the Netherlands, was imprisoned for questioning official genocide memory narrative. This prison sentence prevented her from running for the presidency. Then came Diana Rwigara, a genocide survivor who was imprisoned for many years following her attempt to run for president after her father was killed in what her family suspected was political assassination. Her mother, Adeline Rwigara, was accused of promoting hatred amongst Rwandans while protesting the lack of justice for her husband. More recently youtubers Agenès Uwimana Nkusi and Yvonne Indamage have all faced the wrath of the law for expressing counter narratives of the RPF's transformation of Rwanda story, and arrested for expressing their agency in unlawful means.[95] These women are ostracised because they tackle topics that are off limits in public conversations such as questioning the reconciliation barometer, contesting memory politics, and questioning the prosperity narrative amongst many others.

Conclusion: where is transformation likely to occur on other silenced topics?

Transformative moments require a radical approach, 'of going to the roots of the issues, challenging fundamental assumptions, and proposing and embodying alternative futures'.[96] Across Rwandan history, several potentialy transformative moments of opportunity have been twisted to become dark, pseodo-transformational uprootings of societal values that have created untold suffering. The arrival of Europeans, post-colonial era, Second Republic, and Arusha Accords have all been such moments, as discussed above. The post-genoicde era has become another of these potentially transformative moments, but the long-term outcomes of the peace and state-building process that have been underway and ongoing since 1994 remain uncertain although hopeful. The role of women within these historical eras serves as a 'case within a case study' of transformed societal relationships, and the nature of leadership and power within Rwandan politics and wider society.

A long durée approach allows us to see actors who have been and are the covert power 'behind the power', meaning those asserting influence outside of formal position-based authority; and those who have emerged overtly both historically, and now within post-genocide contexts to assert influence within seemingly legitimate (albeit contested) state structures. These new spaces do, indeed, have potential for transformation given they

have been used to foster progressive debates on state-building. For instance, they are spaces where conversations on gender have become overt, having moved from a history (colonial and post-colonial) that distanced women's agency and their conversations to the periphery. There is evidence and well-founded hope that the use of these spaces to foster progressive gender politics in state-building might also enable the potential for transformation in other contentious political issues. However, the challenges to genuine far-reaching transformation of women's roles outside of the elite-level leadership structures within Rwandan politics and society, and the continued reluctance – from both elites and societal actors – of opening discussion of other contentious issues, makes this presently unclear. A polarising conclusion on whether present-day Rwanda is undergoing, or is capable of undergoing, a transformative state-building process is not possible at this time. We consider an analysis of women's agency within Rwanda's state-building trajectory an appropriate starting point for considering these wider issues, and welcome additional long duree perspectives on other issues or sectors of society within Rwanda's history of state-building.

Notes

1. Olonisakin et al., 'Shifting ideas of sustainable peace', 9.
2. Tadesse et al., 'Evolving state building conversations', 3.
3. Olonisakin et al., 'Shifting ideas of sustainable peace', 10.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., 16.
7. Ibid., 27–28.
8. Conger, 'The dark side of leadership', 44.
9. Olonisakin, et al., 'Shifting ideas of sustainable peace'.
10. Olonisakin, 'Towards reconceptualizing leadership'.
11. Montuori et al., 'Transformative leadership'.
12. Olonisakin, 'Reconceptualizing leadership'.
13. Wilen, *A Hybrid Peace.*
14. Beswick, *Aiding state building.*
15. Clark and Kaufman, *After genocide.*
16. Straus and Waldrof, *Remaking Rwanda.*
17. Ibid.
18. Kimonyo, *Transforming Rwanda.*
19. Rwanda L'État depuis le génocide Politique africaine 2020/4 (n°).
20. Aymar Nyenyezi Bisoka Dans Politique africaine 2020/4 (n° 160), pages 63 à 85.
21. Kamatali, *Following Orders in Rwanda*; Beswick, *Aiding statebuilding*; Straus and Waldrof, *Remaking Rwanda.*
22. Wilen, *A Hybrid Peace.*
23. Purdekova et al., 'Militirization of governance', 158–174; Ingelarae, 'What's on a peasants mind?', 214–230; Purdekova, 2015, *Making Ubumwe.*
24. Chemuoni and Mugiraneza, 'Ideology and Interests, 115–140.
25. Rutazibwa, 'Studying Agaciro'.
26. Mgbako, Ingando solidarity camps, 201.
27. Harell, Rwanda's Gamble; Gasanabo, Peace in Rwanda, 173–191; Clark, The Gacaca Courts; Longman, An Assessment, 304; See also Palmer, *Courts in Conflict.*
28. Mwambari, David. 'Music and the politics of the past'.

29. Okech, 'Gender and Statebuilding', 1–15; Burnt, Rwanda: Women's political representation; Watkins and Jessee, Legacies of Kanjogera, 84–102.
30. Peter, *Leadership*; French et.al, 'The bases of social power', 312–320.
31. Watkins, 'Tomorrow she will Reign', 124–140.
32. Mathys, Questioning territories and identities, 507.
33. See lineage lines in Rennie, *The precolonial kingdom in Rwanda*, 46.
34. Vansina, Jan. Antecedentes to modern Rwanda: the Nyiginya Kingdom. University of Wisconsin Press, 2005. PP150-166.
35. Watkins, 'Tomorroow she will Reign', 133.
36. Watkins and Jessee, Legacies of Kanjogera, 84–102.
37. Amiable, « Coup d'État de Rucunshu », 44.
38. Watkins and Jessee, Legacies of kanjogera, 84–102.
39. Newbury, Ethnicity and Politics, 23; See also Newbury, *The Land beyond the mists*.
40. Bass, From transactional to Transformational leadership, 19–31.
41. Nsanzabera Jean de Dieu. This narrative goes: Kagame ka Rutagambwa rwa Kampayana ya Cyigenza cya Rwakagara. See Igihe on the most powerful elite families that originate from Rwagara lineage that has occupied important political positions from the time of queen mother Kanjogera. 15 December 2019 on IGIHE.com. Accessed 01.02.2021: https://igihe.com/umuco/amateka/article/imiryango-yahamije-ubuhangange-mu-mateka-y-u-rwanda-igicumbi-cy-uwa-rwakagara.
42. Maquet, Le système des relations social dans le Rwanda ancien.
43. Des Forges, *Defeat is the only bad news.*
44. Ibid.
45. Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression.*
46. Ibid., 11. These statistics were advanced by colonialists although these numbers can be disputed by the fact that in post-independence Rwanda there are many inter-marriages.
47. Mamdani, *When Victims become killers*, pp. 87–102.
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49. Ibid.
50. Hunt, Domesticity and Colonialism in Belgian Africa, 447–474; Bascaglia and Randell, Legacy of Colonialism in Empowerment of women, 69–85.
51. Newbury, *Op.Cit., Precolonial Burundi and Rwanda.*
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54. This included those who have been discussed in various works on women perpetrators of genocide. Agathe who is said to have spearheaded the Akazu network with her brothers has had numerous court cases but has never been tried formally. One of her influential brothers Protais Zigiranyirazo was charged in 2001 at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and acquitted in 2009. Zed as he was known had been expelled from his studies in Canada in 1989 for threatening two Tutsi students during his studies there. He was also accused of killing the famous environment reseacher Diana Fossey.
55. Rutazwibwa, Hidden in plain sight, 221–42.
56. Wallis, Rwanda's Forgotten Years, 40–59.
57. See Wallis, 2020.
58. Paul Rutayisire, Privat Rutazibwa & Augustin Gatera, Rwanda: la Renaissance d'une Nation. 2014, 149.
59. Prunier, The Rwandan Crisis, 84–92.
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62. For a detailed account see Jones, 'The Arusha Peace Process', 132–6.
63. Olonisakin, Towards re-conceptualising leadership for sustainable peace.

64. Beloff, Jonathan R., and Samantha Lakin. 'Peace and compromise, idealism and constraint: The case of the Arusha Peace Accords in Rwanda and Burundi.'

65. These conversations often reference the genocide memory or the genocide is used as a point of departure for explaning the story of the new Rwanda. See: Mwambari, 'Emergence of Post-Genocide Collective Memory in Rwanda's International Relations', 2020:119.

66. Interview with MP, 2016.

67. Ibid.

68. Montuori, Alfonso, and Gabrielle Donnelly. 'Transformative leadership.' Handbook of personal and organizational transformation (2017): 1–33., p. 8.

69. See Jones, *Arusha peace process*, 141–142.

70. Anacleti, 'The Regional Response to the Rwandan Emergency',303–311. Widespread atrocities were perpetuated by both the RPF and FAR. For a summary of this offensive see Prunier. *Op.Cit.*, 173–19.

71. Ndahiro, *Hyabirimana planned to divorce says report.*

72. Nyakairu, *Rwanda's Bagosora sentenced to life for genocide.*

73. Olonisakin, Re-conceptualising Leadership for effective peacemaking and human security in Africa, p.130.

74. Bruce, Civil war, the peace process, and genocide in Rwanda.

75. Interview with Senator Tito Rutaramara.

76. Olonisakin, Re-conceptualising Leadership for effective peacemaking and human security in Africa.

77. The weekend national dialogues were discussed during other field work interviews.

78. Interview with Senator Tito Rutaramara.

79. Interview SM, 2016.

80. Ibid.

81. Kimonyo, Transforming Rwanda.

82. Sabarenzi, God Sleeps in Rwanda.

83. Transoforming Rwanda 2019, p.85.

84. Mwambari, 2017 Emergence of Women Leaders in Rwanda.

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86. Ibid.

87. Although hierarchy has always shaped relationship between elite-society amongst Rwandans, see: Lemarchand, René. 'Power and Stratification in Rwanda: A reconsideration.' 1966: 592.

88. See Olonisakin, 'Funmi and Linganaden Murday (2021), 'Leadership in a multipolar world: Why COVID has demonstrated the need to rethink global and national leadership infrastructure', *Global Build Better Report*, School of Global Affairs, King's College London, May. See also Olonisakin interview with Githongo, The Covid-19 pandemic will make leaders and breath others in Africa at: https://www.theelephant.info/videos/2020/04/25/prof-funmi-the-covid-19-pandemic-will-make-leaders-and-break-others-in-africa/ 8:20 mins.

89. http://archive.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm.

90. For the Twa it is difficult to tell as the use of ethnic lebeling is now prohibited and no Twa women have risen to prominence in the post-genocide parliament.

91. Burnet, 'Gender balance and the meanings of women in governance in post-genocide Rwanda', 361–86.

92. Devlin, and Elgie. 'The effect of increased women's representation in parliament', 237–54.

93. Watkins and Jessee, Legacies of kanjogera p. 93.

94. Wallace, Haerpfer, and Abbott, 'Women in Rwandan politics and society', 111–125.

95. https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/03/30/rwanda-arrests-prosecutions-over-youtube-posts.

96. Montouri and Donnelly, Transformative leadership, 9.

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