

Giorgia Donà (2017) “Situating Bystandership” During and After the Rwandan  
Genocide<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract**

The dominant account of the Rwandan genocide and its aftermath focuses on victims and perpetrators, and *réscapees* and *génocidaires*. Less is known about bystanders, mainly Hutu non—perpetrators, who are held collectively responsible for having witnessed violence without trying to stop the killers or help the victims. This paper challenges the homogenous portrayal of the unresponsive bystander group, and introduces the novel concept of ‘situated bystandership’ to draw attention to the proximal and representational contexts that shape bystanders’ responses, roles and positions in society. First, to be a ‘situated bystander’ means to resist the pressure to participate in genocidal violence and to belong to a moral order that is distinct from that of the extremists: the moral world of the ordinary, good—hearted people. Second, Rwandans who ‘are neither pursuing nor being pursued’ occupy multiple roles at different points in time. Many are bystanders to specific episodes of violence and their ‘acts of non—intervention’ shape the course of history. Given the pressure to participate in the genocidal project, the inaction of bystanders could be considered as passive resistance to the ideology of mass killing. Therefore, in a continuum between victims and perpetrators, bystanders might be positioned closer to the victims than the perpetrators. Third, *gacaca* is a process through which not only is culpability ascertained but individual innocence is also established. This reconfiguration makes it possible to shift the homogenized perception of Hutu non—perpetrators from the position of the morally guilty bystander group towards that of the individual innocent bystander. In contrast to the tendency to essentialize accounts of violence, homogenize groups and reframe controversial stories to fit political strategies, there is value in

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standing back and identifying the contexts that shape bystanders' roles, responses and representations. 'Situating bystandership' is a lens through which this objective can be achieved.

## Introduction

It has been more than two decades since the end of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, yet its legacy is still ever present in society.<sup>1</sup> The Rwandan government, the media and a number of academics have produced and reproduced a prevailing representation of the genocide, in which Hutu extremists murdered almost one million Tutsi between 7 April and 18 July 1994. However, the narrative of victims and perpetrators is limited because it marginalizes and renders invisible the experiences of other social actors.<sup>2</sup> This article offers an alternative perspective on the genocide and its aftermath through an analysis of individuals who do not fit the categories of victim or perpetrator, and who are generally referred to as bystanders. The article introduces the novel concept of 'situated bystandership' to explain their multiple positionalities, give voice to their varied experiences and explain their different roles during and after the conflict.

In the context of sociopolitical, ethnic or genocidal violence, the term *bystander* is used to describe the third social actor in the victim—perpetrator—bystander triad, which makes up the atrocity triangle.<sup>3</sup> In historiography, the introduction of the concept 'bystander' put an end to the dichotomous analysis of violence which focused solely on perpetrators versus victims.<sup>4</sup> The bystander category refers to all those who fall outside the perpetrator or victim category and includes various social actors who are brought together by virtue of their absence rather than their presence, their silence rather than their voice. Drawing from its linguistic components—literally to stand by or to be present—the term describes actors who are present at an event or incident but do not take part.<sup>5</sup> In the context of genocide, to be a bystander means to neither partake in the act of violence nor flee from it. Bystanders are 'members of society who are neither perpetrators nor victims, or outside individuals, organizations and nations' whose 'support, opposition, or indifference largely shapes the course of events'.<sup>6</sup>

There is not one single bystander actor or position. Bystanders can be individuals, groups or organizations, as well as states or international political systems, and their actions and inactions can be assessed at the micro, meso, and macro levels. According to the spatial position they occupy—inside or outside national territories of violence—there can be internal and external bystanders. Bystanders are also classified with reference to the types of actions in which they engage. Hilberg, for instance, distinguishes helpers (those who rescued and assisted the victims), from gainers (those

who benefitted directly or indirectly from the despoliation of victims), and onlookers (those who watched).<sup>7</sup> Bystanders' roles and positions are not fixed and it is possible for individuals to be perpetrators at one moment, bystanders at another time, and even rescuers. Boundaries between bystanders and perpetrators or between bystanders and victims are often unclear and blurred and can change over time and across space. While certain identities may become characterized by their bystanding behaviours, it is important to note that bystanding is a behaviour and not a fixed identity, and thus one's status as a bystander may change depending on personal circumstances or volitions.<sup>8</sup> Bystanders face two ways—towards perpetrators and towards victims. Spencer writes: 'one choice is whether or not to aid the perpetrators or to avoid becoming one. The other fundamental choice is the inverse of the first—to aid victims or to avoid the danger of becoming one too. This can involve different kinds of action or inaction—to speak up or not, to act overtly or covertly or to remain passive'.<sup>9</sup> The argument that the action or inaction of bystanders is decisive is not merely rhetorical.<sup>10</sup>

The term bystander is usually linked to non—intervention and the understanding of conditions and reasons for lack of action, especially towards the victims. Staub, however, distinguishes 'passive' bystanders, who do not act, from 'active' bystanders, who choose to assist the victims as rescuers, protectors or helpers.<sup>11</sup> Classic studies of rescuers have focused on the dispositional characteristics of altruistic individuals, who share universalistic values, a commitment to democracy and toleration, and a belief in social justice. Their actions also need to be located in political, historical and proximal contexts of genocide, including the scale and speed of the genocide, the proximity of safe places, social and political local networks, and even available economic resources.<sup>12</sup>

The examination of the role of bystanders—and even the definition of the term itself—has been relatively neglected in genocide research.<sup>13</sup> Our limited knowledge of bystanders to genocide draws mostly from research on the Holocaust, where the term bystander is used in two ways. The first refers to external or international bystanders—witnesses in a nonliteral sense because of their distance from the actual events. They range from the Allied governments and neutral countries to religious institutions and Jewish organizations. The second refers to bystanders within societies close to and often physically present at the events, in this case to German and European populations close

to the actual events. They are often defined by what they are *not*: a group that is passive or indifferent.<sup>14</sup> In the context of Rwanda, most scholarly work on bystanders focuses on external institutions, leaving a gap in our understanding of the roles and actions of internal bystanders.<sup>15</sup> The next section examines the limited, existing research on bystanders to the genocide in Rwanda.

### **Bystanders to the Rwandan genocide**

In the aftermath of the genocide, the role of external bystanders such as the United Nations, foreign governments and the international community was subjected to scrutiny. The role of the bystander, especially at the macro—level, is crucial to preventing or stopping violence. Article 1 of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide states that genocide, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, is a crime under international law that states undertake to prevent and to punish; the Convention carries an obligation to intervene to prevent genocide from occurring. While no one factor seems to explain fully the decision to intervene or not, some trends can be identified. Ignorance, indifference and self—interest are the main reasons behind non—intervention. Intervention happens when it is believed that something can be done at an acceptable cost, in terms of money, lives and standing in the international community. The bureaucratic culture shapes individuals as members of bureaucracies and produces rules that signal when to intervene or not; UN non—intervention in Rwanda is attributed to relative ignorance of events on the ground until it was too late and states’ constraints that made effective action nearly unthinkable.<sup>16</sup> In the aftermath of the genocide, external actors were criticized for not intervening when they had the power to halt violence, and public apologies followed.<sup>17</sup>

The analysis of the role of internal bystanders is less prominent in the context of Rwanda. Inside the country, the Twa—the ethnic minority group that was neither the direct target nor perpetrator of violence—is occasionally referred to as a bystander group but the roles and experiences of its members are marginalized and rendered invisible in the dominant account of the genocide’s victims and perpetrators.<sup>18</sup> Members of the Hutu majority tend to be homogenously viewed as passive bystanders whose unresponsiveness to victims’ cries for help resulted in collective guilt and shame.<sup>19</sup> In contrast to the ‘myth of innocence’ of civilian populations under Nazi occupation, the

reverse phenomenon is at play in Rwanda: moral culpability. As the genocide was perpetuated in public, the majority of the population witnessed violence and they did not intervene to stop it, resulting in collective guilt. The relevance of the culpability assumption was evident in post—genocide Rwanda when, at the launch of the *Ndi Umunyarwanda* (I am Rwandan) campaign almost two decades after the end of genocide, the Rwandan President Kagame asked all Hutu to apologise for the crime committed in their name. He said ‘for a people to co—exist one group has to own up the wrongs committed on the other on behalf of those who committed them.’<sup>20</sup> Since its launch, the programme of ‘Hutu apology’ has attracted intense debate, with some people cautioning that it could bring back ethnic divisions in a population that was beginning to see itself as Rwandan and not Hutu, Tutsi or Twa.

While representations of the genocide in Rwanda focus on victims and perpetrators, a closer examination of the estimated number of losses and killers portrays a different picture. At the time of the genocide, the Rwandan population was estimated to be 7,157,551 of which eighty—five percent were Hutu, twelve to thirteen percent were Tutsi and between one and two percent were Twa. Population loss during the genocide was estimated to be about one million. While there is no agreement on the exact number of Hutus who actively participated in the genocide, Straus estimates that the number of *génocidaires* (genocide perpetrators) ranged between 175,000 and 210,000, of which ninety percent would have been non—hardcore civilian perpetrators. This assessment converges with information on the number of individuals, around 130,000, arrested and placed in prison with accusations of genocide in the years following the end of violence. At a closing ceremony in 2012, the *National Service of the Gacaca Courts* (SNJG), the overseeing government body of *gacaca*<sup>21</sup> set up to process at grassroot level individuals accused of genocide involvement, announced that 1,003,227 people stood trial. As an individual could be linked to multiple cases, it remains unclear how many were actually convicted and how many were counted multiple times, but estimates put the number of convicted suspects close to one million.<sup>22</sup> A summary of the estimates presented above indicates that one million people died and around one million suspects were found guilty out of a population of approximately seven million people. This means that about five million Rwandans do not fit the categorization of genocide perpetrator nor victim. These individuals constitute the majority of the Rwandan population—the bystander in the atrocity triangle—and yet their presence is

invisible and their stories are marginalized in accounts of the genocide.<sup>23</sup>

Kayumba and Kimonyo write that ‘so far, there has not been any systematic study of internal bystanders to the Rwandan genocide; although states, NGOs, the UN and OAU are discussed in this light. ... Nothing, in all these studies thus far expounds the conflict from the bystander perspective.’<sup>24</sup> They note that there is a need to study internal bystanders to the Rwandan genocide, not only agencies but also individual bystanders, as such analysis might challenge some of the ways in which the bystander literature has conceived of bystanders. In the continuum between victims and perpetrators, bystanders might be positioned closer to the victims than the perpetrators. The complex character of genocidal violence in Rwanda, and its public and collective nature, has prompted some scholars to argue that it is problematic to use the concept of bystander to explain the roles and actions of Rwandans inside the country. Criticisms revolve around the definitional, classificatory, and situational nature of bystandership. First, according to the definition, a bystander is an outsider. However, Rwandans living in the country do not appear to fit the criteria of the uninvolved bystander because of existing connections among victims, perpetrators, and the population at large, and the public nature of violence. Second, classifying social actors during genocide can be problematic because categories are not fixed and the distinction between perpetrators, victims, bystanders and rescuers is blurred. Third, the use of the bystander concept is criticized on the basis that behaviours are situationally driven, and thus the same individual can respond differently during genocide, thus enacting bystanding, violent or helping behaviour depending on the proximal context.<sup>25</sup>

Contrary to these criticisms, this article argues that there is scope for using the term ‘bystander’ but also the need to draw attention to the discursive, political and personal contexts in which it is used. To this purpose, I introduce the concept ‘situated bystandership’. Borrowing from the feminist literature on intersectionality and positionality, which problematizes the homogeneous construction of categories such as ethnicity, class and gender and considers the intersectionality of categories and the situated positionalities of individuals, the concept ‘situated bystandership’ offers a lens through which bystandership can be examined in multiple contexts.<sup>26</sup> A key context is the political one. In Rwanda, the government has promoted a national narrative of the genocide that ‘situates’ different ethnic groups differently along the victim—

perpetrator—spectrum: the Tutsi are the victims and the Hutus are the perpetrators or the ‘bystander’ group. In this environment, ‘bystander’ is a proxy term for ‘Hutu non—perpetrators’ (other minority groups, such as the Twa and Muslims, also fit the definition), who witnessed the unfolding of violence but did not stop it, and are consequently held morally accountable for the genocide.

The adjective ‘situated’ is a qualifier that draws attention to the political, national and personal contexts in which bystandership occurred. I use the phrase ‘situated bystander’ in quotation marks to acknowledge that the term does not neatly match the complex reality of genocide responses, but can act as a transitional phrase to account for the ‘not yet spoken’ experiences of a sector of the population. The overall aim of the article is to unpack the representation of the guilty bystander group by examining the position of its members in relation to political, moral, personal, and legal domains. The remaining part of the article presents the methodology and findings. They are organised in three main sections. The first examines representations of bystanders at official and unofficial levels, and situates bystanders’ moral values and personal qualities in relation to the perpetrators. The second describes the micro—dynamics of genocide, unpacks bystanders’ inaction towards perpetrators and victims, and ‘situates’ acts of non—intervention in temporal, spatial and social contexts. Drawing connections between the genocide and post—genocide periods, the third section explores the legacy of genocide on bystanders’ representations in the *gacaca* process, and the reconfiguration of their situated positionality in relation to transitional justice, and collective and personal responsibility.

## **Methodology**

The analysis presented in this article is based on long—term engagement with Rwandans inside the country and in the diaspora. I lived in the country between 1996 and 2000, where I worked as a researcher, trainer and policy adviser on child protection and welfare. I managed a team researching the psychosocial needs of unaccompanied children (1996—1997); I worked as a technical expert on child protection for a governmental organization (1998—1999); and was a research consultant for Unicef (1996, 1997 and 2000). I returned to Rwanda to conduct fieldwork between January



and June 2009 and again in July 2010, and I continue to interact with Rwandans in the diaspora. The findings presented in the article draw from two focus—group discussions that were conducted to understand emic categorisations of social actors beyond those of victims and perpetrators, and fifty—six interviews that were carried out with Rwandans in the country and the diaspora about their life before, during and after the genocide, which included information on bystandership.

Memory plays a role in how people talk about the past. People may forget some details, misremember others, rearrange chronologies and give greater weight to certain events. They also develop consensus versions of events as a function of the external environment and current political conditions, which endorse or promote certain accounts of the past over others. As a result some stories are openly spoken about, others are silenced and some remain unspeakable.<sup>27</sup> When I returned to Rwanda fifteen years after the genocide, I observed that accounts of violence were less detailed than ones I heard when I lived in the country. In contrast, accounts of the impact of *gacaca* and other aspects of the recent past were more relevant to participants and were narrated in greater detail. I also noticed that stories of the genocidal past followed a more standardised format than those I had heard in the years immediately after the genocide. To capture the detail and diversity of accounts, I included published testimonies (by and about bystanders) collected closer to the time of violence. I had heard similar accounts soon after the genocide but in the absence of personal written records I used nine testimonies published by Human Rights Watch, African Rights and Jean Hatzfeld.<sup>28</sup>

### **‘Ordinary’ Rwandans: The moral order of good—hearted people**

During focus group discussions, Rwandans distinguished victims and perpetrators from another group they referred to as ‘those who were not involved’. They identified three main categories: ‘ordinary Rwandans’, ‘those who were not pursuing nor being sought after’ and ‘those who are not implicated in *gacaca*’. They distinguished members of the dominant ethnic group who ‘were not involved’ from those who ‘were involved’, and specified that ‘the majority were not involved’. To stand back from the pressure of participating in genocidal violence means to belong to a moral order that is different from that of the extremists: the moral world of ordinary, good—hearted people.

In the literature, perpetrators are described as ‘ordinary’ people who become involved in violence, not necessarily because of ideology or ethnic hatred but rather due to intra—group dynamics and pressure. In the context of the Holocaust, Browning explains that for the ‘ordinary’ men of the reserve police battalion 101 in Poland, neither antisemitism nor firmly held Nazi beliefs were necessary to motivate them to march Jewish civilians into the woods and shoot them in the neck. Rather, what made them commit mass murder was a feeling of obligation to one another and a desire not to leave such an unpleasant duty to their peers. In Rwanda, Fujii writes that joiners, low ranking implementers of the genocide, were ‘ordinary people, farmers, with no previous police or military training, married men with children’ who do not fit the category of ‘loose molecules’, professional thugs or violence specialists, but whose actions are better explained through the power of local ties.<sup>29</sup>

While perpetrators may be ordinary individuals in terms of socio—demographic characteristics or motivations, participants in the research clearly position aggressors and their actions in a different moral order to that of the ordinary majority for a number of reasons. After the end of the genocide, the majority Hutu population were perceived to be either accomplices or supporters of the perpetrators, or ‘passive’ bystanders who did not intervene to halt violence or help the victims. The government’s request for a ‘Hutu apology’ exemplifies the view that Hutus are a homogenous group, collectively situated closer to the actions of the perpetrators than to the predicament of the victims. They are portrayed as passive bystanders who went along with the actions of the perpetrators, and did not resist violence or help the victims. They are made to carry collectively the ‘moral’ guilt and shame of non—intervention.

In response to the top—down situated representation of the ‘morally guilty bystander’ in the national imagination, participants in the study break down the homogenous view of the Hutu and reconfigure the moral space by situating the perpetrators in the realm of extremism and immorality, while placing the ‘bystander’ majority in the space of ordinariness and morality. This repositioning occurs through the ‘act of distancing’. To separate and distinguish the majority from the extremists is of paramount importance for ‘ordinary’ Rwandans, as Rose, a refugee living in Belgium, explains: ‘Nowadays it is a shame to be Hutu ... Hutu is likened to killer, bastard, heartless, bad, and everything else you can think of.’ Rose continues her story by

connecting her 'nightmare' during the conflict, when people wanted to kill her, with her 'frustration' after it ended, when she realized that 'to be Hutu is a crime these days! Everybody associates you to the killers, did you know they call us *Interahamwe* abroad!<sup>30</sup> How would you feel to carry the name of your enemy, the name of a killer of innocents, the name of somebody who is wanted by the international justice system, of a bad person who has tortured you?'

The 'act of distancing' is made possible by drawing upon the existence of a moral order of good and evil. Contrary to scholarly representations of popular 'participation' in the genocide and of the normalization of 'evil', participants place the extremists and their actions in a separate amoral and abnormal space from the moral and normal one inhabited by the 'ordinary' majority, the 'non—involved' bystanders.<sup>31</sup> Extremists saw 'evil in the form of good', they became like 'wild animals who were blinded by ferocity' or were 'hooked by the madness'. While the extremists are described as 'bad—hearted people, the killers, the bad ones, criminals and *génocidaires*',<sup>32</sup> the 'ordinary' majority are the 'good—hearted', honest people who hold onto religious values and believe in the moral good. As Damas explains, the actions of the killers are incomprehensible to them because they belong to a different moral order: 'As a Christian and honest man, my altruism does not allow me to understand how somebody can kill their neighbour with whom he shared everything.' Those 'who were not involved' distance themselves from the extremists and even warned and confronted them. The wife of the *génocidaire* Alphonse challenged him by saying: 'everything you are doing will have accursed consequences because it is not normal and passes all humanity. So much blood provokes a fate beyond our lives. We are going towards damnation.' Alphonse's wife fits the category of the 'situated bystander' because she is knowledgeable about her husband's deeds but does not intervene to stop his violence. Yet she is not an accomplice or supporter; rather she is a disapproving witness of her husband's actions. She admonishes him about the abnormality that 'passes all humanity' and draws upon religious images of curses and damnation to speak of the impact of violence. She places herself in a different moral order from that of her husband, while also being aware that the consequences—ensuing moral disorder and damnation—affect all.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, Isidore confronted the *Interahamwe* who were armed with machetes by saying: 'You, young men, are evildoers. Turn on your heels and go. Your blades point the way towards a dreadful misfortune for us all. Do not stir up disputes too dangerous for us all.' In his

warning, there is a clear separation between ‘you’, the evildoers, and ‘us’, who are the subjects of misfortune and danger.<sup>34</sup> Within this religious cosmic order of good and bad, there are divine rewards and punishments, as Antoine, a Hutu man whose Tutsi wife was killed with their two girls while he was outside looking for food, explains: ‘My neighbour took advantage of my absence to commit killings in my house. Unfortunately my neighbour died in Congo with all his family. One harvests what one sows. I will never sow hate and vengeance. God rewards the selected ones’.

In this context, ‘ordinary’ Rwandans are mainly Hutu non—perpetrators who did not participate in violence, were not in a position to actively stop it but did not approve of it. The ‘act of distancing’ places non—involved members of the bystander group closer to genocide resisters than genocide supporters. Soon after the genocide, the term ‘moderate’ was used to refer to those Hutu who resisted the call to violence. Pruniér wrote that the term moderate Hutu appeared to indicate ‘Hutu who actively resisted at a *visible*, political level the violence perpetrated (and planned) by the CDR constellation’ but he adds that ‘If “Hutu moderate” signifies only *visible* actors at political level, why is there no collective term for the “ordinary” Hutu who resisted the genocide?’<sup>35</sup> The implication that ‘moderates’ were all killed led to the assumption that Hutus alive in post—genocide Rwanda were accomplices, supporters or morally culpable bystanders, who did not intervene to stop the violence.

In national representations, the majority was also ‘morally guilty’ because its members did not respond to the victims’ cries for help. Participants break down this homogenous representation of the passive bystander group by highlighting that many ‘ordinary’ Rwandans were active bystanders, who helped when they could. The term ‘ordinary’ extends to ‘the countless *non—visible* Hutus who saved Tutsi once the genocide began. Not only did Hutus risk death by protecting Tutsi, but there are also many instances of Hutus who died to protect Tutsi.<sup>36</sup> While genocide statistics focus on estimates of the dead, a census conducted by the Rwandan National Institute for Statistics in collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government puts the number of genocide survivors at 309,368 out of the approximately 800,000 Tutsi living in the country at the time of the genocide, while Human Rights Watch estimates that only one quarter of Rwanda’s Tutsi population survived the genocide.<sup>37</sup> While available data are debatable, we know that a minority of Tutsi survived, and that survivors owe their lives

to the actions of friends, neighbours and strangers who helped.<sup>38</sup> Throughout the country, 'ordinary Hutu people concealed Tutsis in their houses and farms, often with great ingenuity. They knew that the price of being discovered was probably death, and many did indeed pay with their lives for their humanity... in less conspicuous ways, the resistance of ordinary people was crucial to the survival of those Tutsi who are still alive in much of Rwanda.'<sup>39</sup>

Contrary to the government's emphasis upon heroic rescuers, who are heralded as the 'exception' to the norm, participants describe small acts of kindness, rescue and protection by the 'ordinary'.<sup>40</sup> Emmanuel used the term 'commonsense' to explain the help he gave to his neighbours. Damas Gisimba recounts his protection of almost 400 individuals at the Gisimba orphanage in Kigali through the language of the ordinary good-hearted person when he says: 'I am a man of peace, I am not a man of violence nor a man of politics' and after the genocide 'my neighbours thanked me profoundly for all I did for them because I hid them during war, and so they consider me a good-hearted man'. Paul Rusesabagina, the manager of the hotel Milles Collines and active bystander whose story of protection of Tutsi became an international acclaimed film titled *Hotel Rwanda*, chose to title his autobiography *An Ordinary Man*.<sup>41</sup>

This section has examined the representation and 'situated' positionality of bystanders in national and personal accounts of violence. The post-genocide government's national narrative 'situates' all Hutu, including non-perpetrators, in close association with the killers by ethnic affiliation, through the frame of the 'morally guilty bystander' group. Without denying that some individuals may feel guilt and shame for what happened during the genocide, their experience is not necessarily a homogenous or totalizing one. Participants break down the homogenous group representation and 'situate' the majority in a different moral space to that of the perpetrators. Hutu non-perpetrators are 'bystanders' because they witness violence without being able to intervene to stop it but that does not mean that they approved of it or that members of the 'bystander' group did not attempt to help victims when they could. The adjective 'situated' draws attention to contexts. 'Situating bystandership' describes the political context in which the label 'bystander' is used rather than the term 'non-perpetrator', and problematizes the positioning of all Hutus in the same realm as that of the perpetrators regarding moral responsibility for the genocide. Participants draw a

distinction between Hutu perpetrators and the bystander group, the 'extremist' and 'ordinary' Rwandans. 'Situating bystandership' also describes the position of bystanders as being between the perpetrators and victims. In the realm of morality, where the guilty perpetrators are on one side and the innocent victims on the other side, the bystanders or 'ordinary' non—perpetrator Hutus are situated away from the actions of the perpetrators. This analysis challenges the representation of the morally guilty bystander group and shows that the term 'ordinary' captures the position of non—perpetrator Hutus as not—guilty bystanders. From the analysis of the representation of the majority bystander group, I now proceed to examine the micro—level dynamics of violence and bystanders' roles and responses towards both perpetrators and victims. I place non—intervention in temporal, spatial and social contexts to unravel the complex interactions that exist between roles, behaviours and circumstances.

### **The 'hunt'**

Focus group participants used the metaphor of the 'hunt' to describe the dynamic unfolding of the genocide, in which there were not only those pursuing and those being pursued but also those who 'were neither pursuing nor being pursued'. As violence erupted, Damas Gisimba recounts, 'everyone living in the neighbourhood escaped to the orphanage, both Hutus and Tutsi, but a short time afterwards the Hutu went back to their homes because they soon found out that they were *not sought after* to be killed, they were not in danger like the Tutsi neighbours.' The hunt metaphor conveys the dynamism of the hide and seek, the pace of daily patrols and the sustained efforts to survive, resist, witness and protect. Detailed accounts of the unfolding of violence show that those who were 'neither pursuing nor being pursued' were aware that lists of targets were being compiled and heard the names of the wanted on the radio. They witnessed house—by—house searches, saw people being taken away, witnessed people undergoing identity checks at road blocks, and heard the stories of people running for their lives, hiding in people's houses or empty buildings, moving to the marshes or fields, and trying to reach safe areas. While at the beginning of the genocide, 'ordinary' Rwandans set up joint patrols, protected one another and pushed away aggressors, their resistance slowly faded as they continued to engage in private acts of kindness or retreated to the role of onlookers.<sup>42</sup>

Scholars of the genocide have written about the difficulty of separating perpetrators, victims and bystanders, as roles overlapped and were fluid. Resisters at the onset of the genocide became killers or fled, *génocidaires* also rescued victims, and bystanders also helped victims to hide. Individuals hold multiple identities and roles—bystander, perpetrator and victim—at the macro and micro levels, and these may overlap and change over time. To better understand the situated positionality of bystanders during genocide, it is useful to distinguish genocide as a singular occurrence at the macro level, constituted by many singular violent episodes at the micro level. This distinction helps to ‘situate’ individuals in the role of bystander in specific situations and also in conjunction with other roles.<sup>43</sup> While the general macro—level account of the ‘hunt’ was one in which Hutu extremists were going after the Tutsi, at a the micro level, on a daily basis everybody was afraid, including bystanders. As Pierre explains: ‘during the genocide, I was in school. I did not know what was going on. ... there were Tutsi refugees who came to the church inside the school compound fleeing the Hutu militias ... in a space of a week, the military launched grenades on the group. They all died the same day. We were afraid. We had to remain in the school and to be calm, when you started to be afraid, people said that you were a Tutsi and could kill you.’ The line separating bystanders from victims was a thin one, and other categorical boundaries are similarly porous.

Just as bystanders could change roles or negotiate coexisting ones, so victims and perpetrators could become ‘situated bystanders’ to specific genocide events. Tutsi targets could themselves be simultaneously victims of the genocide (as a whole) and bystanders to specific genocide events (singular episodes). Annunciate, a Tutsi widow who had been married to a Hutu man, recounts: ‘As my husband, who was no longer alive, was Hutu, I had the idea of going to my in—laws. They welcomed me and looked after me during the tragedy ... What I did not see with my own eyes I heard from the criminals. But, as I was privileged to be able to move around, I saw a lot with my own eyes...’ While Annunciate fits the category of genocide victim (as a singular occurrence), under protection she becomes a witness, a ‘situated bystander’, to specific episodes of violence towards other Tutsi.<sup>44</sup> *Génocidaires*, perpetrators of singular occurrences of genocide, at times became ‘situated bystanders’ during specific episodes of genocidal violence. Pio, who was accused of genocide involvement, recounts that ‘advancing as a team, we would run into a scramble of fugitives hiding in the papyrus and the muck, so it

was not easy to recognize neighbours. If by misfortune I caught sight of an acquaintance, like a soccer comrade for example, a pang pinched my heart and I left him to a nearby colleague. But I had to do this quietly, I could not reveal my good heart.' Among *génocidaires*, standing back was a risky decision to be taken in secret, which was attributed to good—heartedness.<sup>45</sup> The metaphor of the hunt helps us to disaggregate 'situated bystandership' as it relates to genocide as a whole and to specific episodes of violence (genocidal events). The examples above show that Hutu perpetrators, Tutsi targets and Hutu non—perpetrators could be 'bystanders' to specific episodes of violence, when they are present but unable or unwilling to intervene to stop violence or to save the victims. To better understand the unfolding of the 'hunt', it is useful to examine bystanders' responses, especially non—intervention, to specific episodes of violence and their contexts. The adjective 'situated' draws attention to the spatial, temporal and social contexts in which bystanders' non—intervention occurred.

#### ***'Acts of non—intervention' in context***

In his analysis of research priorities for the study of the Rwandan genocide, Longman calls for a greater analysis of genocide at the micro level. So far, explanations of the micro—level dynamics of the unfolding of violence have focused on the actions and motivations of the perpetrators. Straus, for instance, identifies three key factors behind widespread popular participation: anger, fear and uncertainty caused by the renewed civil war; opportunism linked to local power struggles; and social pressure and coercion derived from intra—group dynamics, state authority, communal obligations and social surveillance. Fujii argues that social ties and immediate social contexts explain the participation in violence for joiners, low—level participants whose involvement was not random or all—inclusive but structured by pre—existing networks. Both authors challenge ethnicity—based approaches to genocide that cannot explain the different pathways that lead to mass violence over time and place, and emphasize the micro—level, situational and social dynamics that lead some people to participate while others evade, resist, refuse or defy orders to participate.

Straus explains that dynamic pathways led different communities, which shared the same initial standpoint of resistance to violence, to shift positions. There appears to



have been a tipping point when the balance of power shifted from ambivalence or anti—violence to pro—violence.<sup>46</sup> In the analysis of complex patterns of behaviours that are dynamic, Fujii suggests that we take into account ‘acts’ rather than categories such as perpetrators or rescuers. Comparing ‘acts’ of killing and ‘acts’ of rescue, Fujii shows that they do not always fall into the same category. During the Rwandan genocide, ‘acts’ of rescue for instance were not confined to rescuers but were also carried out by killers. These acts were highly context dependent (regarding the immediate context and who else was physically present) and based, in part, on the existence of prior ties to the Tutsi person in question.<sup>47</sup> So far, the micro—level dynamics of violence have focused on perpetrators and their actions and motivations. Less is known about bystanding ‘acts of non—intervention’. They too are not the sole domains of the bystander category, as we have seen in the section above. The witnessing of episodes of violence, without being able or willing to intervene, was carried out by bystanders and other social actors. Such ‘acts of non intervention’ are best understood in contexts, both national and proximal, and in relation to both perpetrators and victims.<sup>48</sup>

At the time of the genocide, there was widespread pressure to participate in violence. The ‘extremists aimed to create two categories of people in Rwanda: killers and the killed’, and there was punishment for non—participation, as Ignace explains: the extremists ‘boarded up the homes of the reluctant ones. They threatened them with fines. They herded them towards Kigungo and gave big lectures. Those who tried to zigzag found themselves overtaken and set back on the right track.’ In this context, all adult Hutu men were asked to participate in or support the violent project. Amidst the expectation that all Hutus would be accomplices and supporters, the ‘act of non—intervention’ meant to actively carve out an identity as a bystander or non—perpetrator, rather than that of potential killer or accomplice of the killers, and to step back from the genocide project.<sup>49</sup> To situate oneself in the role of witness carried penalties, punishment and even risked one’s life. As open resistance started to die out, acts of ‘non—participation’ were situated closer to passive resistance than passive support for violence. Societal expectations about gendered roles meant that it was most difficult for Hutu men to remain bystanders because there was an expectation of participation, and many ‘households decided to supply the labour of one person per household to the genocidal effort’, with perpetrator households often being represented by a single male perpetrator (usually the father or the son).<sup>50</sup> It was easier for women

and children within families to remain bystanders, although both women and men were expected to report victims and not to hide them.<sup>51</sup>

In relation to perpetrators, acts of ‘non—participation’ could take the form of paying to avoid going on patrol, hiding and disobeying orders. Nykitegeka for instance explains how his brother stood back from the killing project: ‘Our parents died before the genocide started but in spite of this we did not grow up with a wild spirit. This is one of the reasons that pushed my older brother to desert the army because he was given the order to participate in the killings’.<sup>52</sup> Given the public nature of the killings, to carve out an identity as a bystander meant finding strategies to avoid participation, which included hiding in the same way as the victims. One night Innocent encountered three strangers who told him that they were Pentecostals and the ‘Holy Scripture forbade them to kill men whom the Good Lord had created in His image. And since the authorities forbade them to leave the area, they had gone into the forest.’<sup>53</sup> Individuals stood back from violence by hiding, retreating and witnessing. Rose opted for a strategy of passive non—intervention once she determined that action against the genocide was not possible, as even those in positions of power could not stop it: ‘It was impossible for mayors etc. to stop the killings, there were lots of FPR in the population, it’s unjust that those mayors etc. are now being imprisoned for not having stopped the killings, that’s not facing the truth about how things were. Everyone was just trying to save themselves.’

In addition to the non—intervention of bystanders in relation to perpetrators, there is evidence of non—intervention when ‘ordinary’ people were unwilling or unable to help, hide or protect victims. Innocent, for instance, recalls that a friend explained his refusal to hide his child by saying, ‘Innocent you are little brother to me. You saved your life and I rejoice in that. But if the situation returned, I would do the same. With such a fate, I had no choice’. For those with limited choices, sometimes non—intervention was the ‘least bad’ choice. Marie—Chantal says that ‘for a woman it was unthinkable to hide an acquaintance, even if you had been close to her since childhood, even if she gave you small sums of money. When the news got around of a concealed survivor, you had to give her up without delay to your neighbours. You might even be forced to kill her with your own hands. So it did not save her, beside lasting a few days longer for nothing, and it obliged you to do the most sickening work of the men.’<sup>54</sup> Even active bystanders who

chose to protect could be forced to withdraw their help as circumstances changed, as the survivor Sedata explains: 'I hid at Isa's home for three days. The family treated me very well. But then news went around that houses would be searched to unearth *ibyitso* [accomplices] who were hiding. Every Hutu was right to be scared.'<sup>55</sup>

Reasons for non—intervention were also different, depending on contexts and in relation to perpetrators and victims. According to Nykitegeka, family socialization and values accounted for non—participation in violence, while for Pentecostals religious values, in particular the belief in the sanctity of humanity, motivated them to hide to avoid becoming perpetrators. Rose explained that lack of resistance was the outcome of an appraisal of the situation, perceived lack of power, and feelings of danger and insecurity. Lack of help towards victims was attributed to perceptions of absent or limited choices and power. Fear was an important factor. There was fear of perpetrators, fear of disobeying orders, fear of punishment and of becoming targets. This fear was compounded by fear of the enemy, the invading Rwandan Patriotic Army, and of the 'accomplices' inside the country. There was also generalized fear due to uncertainty and chaos all around. Contrary to the tendency to place dispositional, relational and situational explanations in opposition to one another, the analysis indicates that they coexist when explaining situated bystanders' actions. Dispositional attributes such as values, beliefs and emotions influence bystanders' responses, as do relational processes and situationally driven decisions based on available, perceived and limited choices and power. However, it is worth noting that reasons for non—intervention are different in relation to perpetrators and victims. Dispositional traits such as personal traits and moral values are drawn upon to explain non—involvement in violence (towards perpetrators) while situational reasons such as lack of power, restricted choices and fear are used to explain lack of intervention (help towards victims).

In conclusion, the analysis of the 'hunt' unpacked the dynamics of genocidal violence by showing that at the micro level, Rwandans could be 'bystanders' to specific genocide episodes. These findings place the analysis of 'acts of non—intervention' at the centre of the understanding of violence, together with acts of killing, rescue and resistance. Such acts shaped the patterns of violence and it is possible that they contributed to the survival of a minority of victims or to their deaths. These acts of non—intervention are highly context dependent and the concept of 'situated

bystandership' draws attention to spatial, temporal and social contexts. Drawing connections between the genocide and post—genocide periods, the next section explores another dimension of 'situated bystandership', namely the legacy of genocide on bystanders' roles in post—genocide times and the reconfiguration of their situated positionality in relation to transitional justice.

### **'Not implicated' in *gacaca*: Collective and individual responsibility**

In the years following the end of the genocide, the dominant narrative of victims and perpetrators was replaced with that of *rescapés* and *génocidaires*, continuing the marginalization of bystanders. This was evident in the post—genocide period during which *gacaca*, a type of grassroots transitional justice process, was implemented and continued to shape Rwandan social life for more than a decade. Thus, it is not surprising that participants used the phrase 'those who were not implicated in *gacaca*' to articulate the situated positionality of bystanders, beyond that of *rescapé* and *génocidaire*. *Gacaca* trials saw *rescapés* and *génocidaires* confronting each other in public as the community witnessed, testified and sat through the proceedings. The courts reproduced the official victim—perpetrator story by focusing on the testimonies of *rescapés* and the defence of the *génocidaires*. Rwandans were cast into the following pre—scripted roles: prisoners who confessed to acts of genocide, prisoners who did not confess, survivors, citizen spectators, witnesses and judges.<sup>56</sup>

There is a connection between an individual's positionality during the genocide and that occupied in post—genocide *gacaca*. In this last context, 'situated bystandership' has two different meanings. First, it describes the population at large, mainly Hutu non—perpetrators, who did not take part in *gacaca* because they were not accused of genocide involvement. Damas says: 'I was born from a Hutu father and Tutsi mother but I have always been completely against this ideology of massacres especially given that *in my family, nobody was implicated*' (italics added). Second, 'situated bystandership' describes those individuals who went through the trials and were acquitted, the *innocenté* (exonerated, declared innocent). As the new post—genocide categories of *rescapé* and *génocidaire* emerged in Rwanda in the years following the end of violence, these became inscribed in the justice system during *gacaca*. In the process, the new

proxy categories of the 'not implicated' and the *innocenté* were coined. They captured the new positionality of the 'bystander' group in the transitional justice process. This reconfiguration was made possible by attributing culpability and innocence at a personal level, thus separating the guilty perpetrators from the innocent non—perpetrators, those who were present but might not have been able to intervene to save victims or to openly resist the pressure to participate in violence.

*Gacaca* courts prosecuted individuals for acts such as killing, raping and spoiling, but it did not prosecute certain punishable acts and omissions relating to non—intervention. This was done in the interests of reconciliation and to acknowledge the circumstances under which such acts were committed, the intention of those who committed them, and the conditions of the country at the time. Failure to assist those in danger was one such type of non—intervention. The national service of *gacaca* courts stipulated that it would be unjust to punish an 'ordinary' citizen for not daring to step forward, under risk of death, and attempt to stop acts that were planned and put into action by the government. Other non—punishable acts included presence without participation in violence. Presence at roadblocks was not considered a crime, as a person who had obeyed the order to be at a roadblock could not be convicted merely for presence at a roadblock where no crimes were committed. Attendance at meetings advocating the extermination of the Tutsi was also exonerated, as it was mandatory for each person (excluding the targets) to attend. Refusal to participate was regarded as civil disobedience at best, or treason at worst. Participation in night patrols during the genocide was not in itself a crime punishable by law. The national service of *gacaca* courts recognized that contexts, both national and proximal, influenced the range of permissible bystander responses. To be present without intervening was not sufficient grounds for culpability during genocide.<sup>57</sup>

*Gacaca* tribunals convicted a little under one—third of the Hutu adult population (mostly adult men) of various forms of participation (from sexual violence to killing, assault and petty theft).<sup>58</sup> The phrase 'the majority were not involved' applies to the remaining two thirds of the population. Those who did not participate feel a need to distinguish the guilty from the innocent, as Damascene explains: 'I think that there should be justice to establish who did what during the Rwandan tragedy. We need a true justice and judicial system in Rwanda. People who got involved in the atrocities should

be punished and those who are found innocent should be rehabilitated'. Kalisha uses the phrase 'the crime is personal' to distinguish collective and personal crimes, adding that 'nobody should be accused of crimes committed by others'. While the *gacaca* courts' main aim was to prosecute the perpetrators and bring justice to the victims, an indirect outcome was to reconfigure the collective space of culpability by separating the culpable perpetrators from the non—culpable 'bystanders'. In these ways, *gacaca* becomes a process through which not only is culpability ascertained but innocence is also established: to not be accused of genocide or to be acquitted means to shift from the position of suspect or guilty perpetrator to that of the non—culpable bystander. As Kalisha indicates: 'In my opinion, all those who participated in the genocide should be punished, but those who did good deeds deserve to be rewarded in front of all to show the world that not all Hutus are bad people, and thus, this will facilitate the process of unity and reconciliation'. By attributing personal responsibility to the perpetrators and by clearing the 'ordinary' majority, *gacaca* courts reconfigure legally, socially, and morally the position of bystanders. The shift from collective to individual responsibility means that the collective 'guilty bystander group' is reconfigured to become the individual 'innocent bystander'.

## **Conclusion**

The dominant account of the Rwandan genocide and its aftermath has focussed on victims and perpetrators, *rescapés* and *génocidaires*. Less is known about bystanders and the existing information revolves around a specific representation of the ethnic bystander group: Hutus residing in the country during the genocide are morally responsible for having witnessed violence without trying to stop the killers or helping the victims. Seemingly neutral categories such as perpetrator, victim and bystander are proxy references for ethnicity and political positions. If Tutsi are the genocide victims and Hutus are the genocide perpetrators, it follows that bystanders are mainly Hutu non—perpetrators. It is important to include this under—researched group in order to better understand the genocide in the country and begin to think normatively about peaceful futures. Similarly, unpacking the meaning of 'non—involvement' in the genocide is central to comprehending violence at the micro level and minimizing its effects.

This article has problematized the homogenized portrayal of the unresponsive (Hutu) 'bystander group' by reconfiguring Hutu non—perpetrators as 'ordinary' individuals. They might have been unwilling or unable to stop violence, but this fact does not mean that they all supported or morally justified it. Contexts, both real and representational, matter in explaining violence and bystandership. The use of the adjective 'situated' alongside the noun 'bystander' draws attention to the discursive, analytical and proximal contexts, which shape not only bystanding responses but also the position of bystanders in society during and after conflict. In Rwanda, given the pressure to comply with violent actions rather than being an unresponsive onlooker, the inaction of bystanders could be considered passive resistance to the ideology of mass killing. In a continuum between victims and perpetrators, not only active bystanders but also passive ones might be positioned closer to the victims than the perpetrators. The distinction between collective and personal responsibility in transitional justice makes it possible to shift the homogenous perception of Hutu non—perpetrators from the role of the morally guilty bystander towards that of the individual innocent bystander. This article has focused on the main bystander group in the Rwandan genocide, the Hutu non—perpetrators. Other groups can be examined through the lens of 'situated bystandership', such as the Twa, Muslims or the Tutsi in the diaspora. Similarly, in the context of wars that preceded, coexisted and followed the genocide, other social actors can be seen as 'situated bystanders' to specific episodes of violence. Against the tendency to essentialize accounts of violence, homogenize groups and reframe controversial stories to fit political strategies, there is added value in standing back and identifying the contexts that shape the roles, responses and representations of bystanders. 'Situated bystandership' offers a conceptual lens through which this political and theoretical project may begin.

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## Disclosure statement

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## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> On the legacy of the genocide on society, reconciliation, and national identity, see Filip Reyntjens, "(Re—) Imagining a Reluctant Post—Genocide Society: The Rwandan Patriotic Front's Ideology and Practice," *Journal of Genocide Research* 18, no. 1 (2016): 61—81; Caroline Williamson, "Genocide, Masculinity and Posttraumatic Growth in Rwanda: Reconstructing Male Identity through *Ndi Umunyarwanda*," *Journal of Genocide Research* 18, no. 1 (2016): 41—59; and Eugenia Zorbas, "What does Reconciliation after Genocide Mean? Public Transcripts and Hidden Transcripts in Post—Genocide Rwanda," *Journal of Genocide Research* 11, no. 1 (2009): 127—147.

<sup>2</sup> For testimonies of perpetrators, see Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season: The Killers in Rwanda Speak* (London: Macmillan, 2005); Charles Mironko, "Igitero: Means and Motive in the Rwandan Genocide," *Journal of Genocide Research* 6, no. 1 (2004): 47—60; Scott Straus, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power and War in Rwanda* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006); James E. Waller, *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). Examples of survivors' testimonies can be found in Jean Hatzfeld, *Into the Quick of Life: The Rwandan Genocide: The Survivors Speak* (London: Serpent's Tail, 2008).

<sup>3</sup> Raul Hilberg, *Perpetrators, Bystanders, Victims: The Jewish Catastrophe 1933—1945* (New York: Aaron Asher Books, 1992); Ervin Staub, *The Roots of Evil: The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

<sup>4</sup> Stanley Cohen, *States of Denial: Knowing about Atrocities and Suffering* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001).



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<sup>5</sup> Victoria Barnett, *Bystanders: Conscience and Complicity during the Holocaust* (London: Greenwood Press, 1999).

<sup>6</sup> Staub, *The Roots of Evil*, 20.

<sup>7</sup> Hilberg, *Perpetrators, Bystanders, Victims*.

<sup>8</sup> An example of micro, meso and macro level analysis can be found in Frederik Grünfeld and Anke Huijboom, *The Failure to Prevent Genocide in Rwanda: The Role of Bystanders* (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2007); for an analysis of internal and external bystanders, see Christopher Kayumba and Jean—Paul Kimonyo, *Bystanders to the Rwandan Conflict and Genocide: Current State of Research* (Stockholm: The Living History, 2008); for fluid roles see Staub, *The Roots of Evil*; and Ernesto Verdeja, “Moral Bystanders and Mass Violence,” in *New Directions in Genocide Research*, ed. Adam Jones (New York: Routledge, 2012), 153–168.

<sup>9</sup> Philip Spencer, *Genocide since 1945* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), 51.

<sup>10</sup> Barnett, *Bystanders*, xiii—xiv.

<sup>11</sup> Ervin Staub, *Overcoming Evil: Genocide, Violent Conflict, and Terrorism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

<sup>12</sup> David Cesarani and Paul A. Levine, *Bystanders to the Holocaust: A Re—evaluation* (London: Routledge, 2014); Eva Fogelman, *Conscience and Courage: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust*, (New York: Anchor Books, 1995); Kristen Renwick Monroe, “Cracking the Code of Genocide: The Moral Psychology of Rescuers, and Nazis during the Holocaust,” *Political Psychology* 29, no. 5 (2008): 699—736; Lars Waldorf, “Revisiting Hotel Rwanda: Genocide Ideology, Reconciliation, and Rescuers,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 11, no. 1 (2009): 101—125.

<sup>13</sup> Robert M. Ehrenreich and Tim Cole, “The Perpetrator—Victim Constellation: Rethinking Genocidal Relationships,” *Human Organisation* 63, no. 3 (2005): 213—224.

<sup>14</sup> Cesarani and Levine, *Bystanders to the Holocaust*; and Fogelman, *Conscience and Courage*.

<sup>15</sup> Kayumba and Kimonyo, *Bystanders to the Rwandan Conflict and Genocide*.

<sup>16</sup> Michael Barnett, *Eyewitness to a Genocide: The UN in Rwanda* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 2003).

<sup>17</sup> For reasons behind intervention and non—intervention see Barnett, *Eyewitness to a*

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*Genocide*; Grünfeld and Huijboom, *The Failure to Prevent Genocide in Rwanda*; Dean J. White, *The Ignorant Bystander? Britain and the Rwandan Genocide of 1994* (Manchester:

Manchester University Press, 2015).

<sup>18</sup> For information on the Twa as a bystander group, see Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You that Tomorrow We Will be Killed with Our Families* (New York: Picador, 1998); and Susan Thomson, “Ethnic Twa and Rwandan National Unity and Reconciliation Policy,” *Peace Review* 21, no. 3 (2009): 313—320.

<sup>19</sup> For information about Hutus’ collective guilt, see Nigel Eltringham, *Accounting for Horror: Post—Genocide Debates in Rwanda* (London: Pluto Press, 2004).

<sup>20</sup> Robert Mbaraga, “State Pushes Campaign That Critics Say It Is Ethnically Divisive,” *The East African*, November 16, 2013, <http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/Rwanda/News/Mixed-reactions-to--Ndi-Umunyarwanda-initiative-/1433218-2075366-xwl5f6z/index.html>.

<sup>21</sup> *Gacaca* is a transitional system of local courts, based on a traditional grassroots justice system, which was launched in 2001 and functioned for more than a decade until its closure on 18 June 2012.

<sup>22</sup> For estimates of the Rwandan population at the time of genocide see Government of Rwanda, National Institute of Statistics, *1991 Population Census*, 1991; for estimates of losses, see Center for Conflict Management, University of Rwanda, *Evaluation of Gacaca Process: Achieved Results per Objective* (Kigali: National Service of Gacaca Courts, 2012); for numbers of genocide perpetrators, see Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, 94—95; for number of people in prison see Waller *Becoming Evil*; and Hollie Nyseth Brehm, Christopher Uggen and Jean Damascène Gasanabo, “Genocide, Justice and Rwanda’s *Gacaca* Courts,” *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice* 30, no. 3 (2014): 333—352; for numbers of prisoners accused of genocide see Filip Reyntjens *Political Governance in Post—genocide Rwanda* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

<sup>23</sup> Giorgia Donà, “Interconnected Modernities, Ethnic Relations and Violence,” *Current Sociology* 61, no. 2 (2013): 226—243.

<sup>24</sup> Kayumba and Kimonyo, *Bystanders to the Rwandan Conflict and Genocide*, 17.

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<sup>25</sup> For criticisms of the term bystander, see Lee Ann Fujii, *Killing Neighbours: Webs of Violence in Rwanda* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2011); Lee Ann Fujii, “Rescuers and Killer—Rescuers during the Rwanda Genocide: Rethinking Standard Categories of Analysis,” in *Resisting Genocide: The Multiple Forms of Rescue*, eds. Jacques Sémelin, Claire Andrieu, and Sarah Gensburger (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 145—157; Aliza Luft, “Toward a Dynamic Theory of Action at the Micro Level of Genocide Killing, Desistance, and Saving in 1994 Rwanda,” *Sociological Theory* 33, no. 2 (2015): 148—172.

<sup>26</sup> Ann Denis, and Devorah Kalekin—Fishman (eds), *The ISA Handbook of Contemporary Sociology: Conflict, Competition, Cooperation* (London: Sage, 2009).

<sup>27</sup> For the role of memory and politics in data collection, see Lee Ann Fujii “The Power of Local Ties: Popular Participation in the Rwandan Genocide,” *Security Studies* 17, no. 3 (2008): 568—597; and Giorgia Doná, “Researching Children and Violence in Evolving Socio—political Contexts,” in *Caught in the Crossfire: Ethical and Methodological Challenges to Researching Violence in Africa*, eds. Johan Pottier, Laura Hammond, and Christopher Cramer (Leiden: Brill Publishers, 2011): 39—59.

<sup>28</sup> Human Rights Watch, *Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda* (New York: Human Rights Watch 1999); African Rights, *Rwanda: Death, Despair, Defiance* (London: African Rights, 1994); Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*; and Hatzfeld, *Into the Quick of Life*.

<sup>29</sup> For role and motivations of perpetrators as ‘ordinary’ citizens, see Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: Harper Collins, 1992); and Fujii, “The Power of Local Ties”, 585.

<sup>30</sup> The *Interahamwe* was a Hutu militia group formed by young people from the ruling political party whose members played a central role in the genocide. The name *Interahamwe* can be translated as “those who work together” or loosely as “those who fight together”.

<sup>31</sup> For normalization of evil, see Kayumba and Kimonyo *Bystanders to the Rwandan Conflict and Genocide*.

<sup>32</sup> Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 216, 229 and 81, respectively.

<sup>33</sup> Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 102—103.

<sup>34</sup> Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 106.

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<sup>35</sup> Gerard Pruniér, *The Rwandan Crisis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 182.

<sup>36</sup> Pruniér, *The Rwandan Crisis*, 97.

<sup>37</sup> Human Rights Watch Rwanda, “Justice after Genocide, Twenty Years On,” news release, March 28, 2014, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2014/03/28/rwanda-justice-after-genocide-20-years>.

<sup>38</sup> Statistics about survivors can be found in Government of Rwanda, Ministry of Local Government and National Institute of Statistics, *Recensement des Rescapés du Genocide de 1994*, 2007.

<sup>39</sup> African Rights, *Rwanda*, xii.

<sup>40</sup> Valérie Rosoux “The Figure of the Righteous Individual in Rwanda,” *International Social Science Journal* 58, no. 189 (2006): 491—499.

<sup>41</sup> Paul Rusasabagina with Tom Zoellner, *An Ordinary Man: The True Story behind ‘Hotel Rwanda’* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2006).

<sup>42</sup> African Rights, *Rwanda*; Human Rights Watch, *Leave None to Tell the Story*.

<sup>43</sup> Giorgia Doná and Helen Taylor, “The ‘Peaks and Troughs’ of Societal Violence: Revisiting the Actions of the Turkish and Kurdish Shopkeepers During the 2011 London Riots,” *Sociological Research Online* 20, no. 1 (2015) <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/20/1/4.html>

<sup>44</sup> African Rights, *Rwanda*, 38—39.

<sup>45</sup> Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 111.

<sup>46</sup> Scott Straus, “From ‘Rescue’ to Violence: Overcoming Local Opposition to Genocide in Rwanda,” in *Resisting Genocide: The Multiple Forms of Rescue*, eds. Jacques Sémelin, Claire Andrieu, and Sarah Gensburger (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 331—344.

<sup>47</sup> Fujii, “Rescuers and Killer—Rescuers During the Rwanda Genocide”.

<sup>48</sup> On the need for micro-level analysis of violence see Timothy Longman, “Placing Genocide in Context: Research Priorities for the Rwandan Genocide,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 6, no. 1 (2004): 29—45; for micro—level analyses of perpetrators’ actions, see Luke Fletcher “Turning *Interahamwe*: Individual and Community Choices in the Rwandan Genocide,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 9, no. 1 (2007): 25—48; Fujii, *Killing*

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*Neighbours*; and Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*. For explanations of popular participation, see Straus, *The Order of Genocide*; and Fujii, “The Power of Local Ties”, 568—597.

<sup>49</sup> African Rights, *Rwanda*, 1006; Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 65.

<sup>50</sup> Philip Verwimp, “An Economic Profile of Peasant Perpetrators of Genocide: Micro-level Evidence from Rwanda,” *Journal of Development Economics* 77, no. 2 (2005): 308—309.

<sup>51</sup> For an analysis of gender roles during the genocide, see Adam Jones, “Gender and Genocide in Rwanda,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 4, no. 1 (2002): 65—94; and Verwimp, “An Economic Profile of Peasant Perpetrators of Genocide”.

<sup>52</sup> Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*; Human Rights Watch, *Leave None to Tell the Story*.

<sup>53</sup> Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 108.

<sup>54</sup> Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 115.

<sup>55</sup> Human Rights Watch, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 599; and Spencer, *Genocide since 1945*.

<sup>56</sup> Anne—Marie de Brouwer and Etienne Ruvebana, “The Legacy of the Gacaca Courts in Rwanda: Survivors’ Views,” *International Criminal Law Review* 13, no. 5 (2013): 937—976; Hollie Nyseth Brehm, Christopher Uggen, and Jean Damascène Gasanabo, “Genocide, Justice and Rwanda’s *Gacaca* Courts,” *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice* 30, no. 3 (2014): 333—352; and National Unity and Reconciliation Commission, *Opinion Survey on Participation in Gacaca and National Reconciliation* (Kigali: NURC, 2003).

<sup>57</sup> National Service of Gacaca Courts, *Gacaca Courts in Rwanda*.

<sup>58</sup> Anuradha Chakravarty, “Navigating the Middle Ground: The Political Values of Ordinary Hutu in Post—Genocide Rwanda,” *African Affairs* 113, no. 451 (2014): 232—253.