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Making African Civil Society Work: Assessing Conditions for Democratic State-Society Relations in Rwanda

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MAKING AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY WORK:

ASSESSING CONDITIONS FOR DEMOCRATIC STATE-SOCIETY RELATIONS IN

RWANDA

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To: Dean John F. Stack, Jr.
        Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs

This dissertation, written by Fiacre Bienvenu, and entitled Making African Civil Society Work: Assessing Conditions for Democratic State-Society Relations in Rwanda, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this dissertation and recommend that it be approved.

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Florida International University, 2018

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated in the memory of my Mother, Thérèse Mukaruziga, whose last words to me included the plea that I continue to study hard and learn much. Her love, her strength, the sacrifices and sufferings she endured every day, and the love for school she inculcated in us, can never truly be honored enough.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

MAKING AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY WORK: ASSESSING CONDITIONS FOR

DEMOCORATIC STATE-SOCIETY RELATIONS IN RWANDA

by

Fiacre Bienvenu

Florida International University, 2018

Miami, Florida

Professor John F. Clark, Major Professor

This dissertation offers a single case in-depth analysis of factors precluding civil society from democratizing African polities. Synthesizing existing literature on Rwanda, I first undertake an historical search to trace the origins and qualities of civil society in the colonial era. This effort shows, however, that the central authority—commencing before the inception of the Republic in 1962—consistently organized civil society to buttress its activities, not to challenge them. Next, using ethnographic research, I challenge conventional economic and institutional accounts of civil society's role in democratization. I show that institutional change and the economic clout of organized groups are marginal and transient in effect, and hence possess considerable limitations to democratize state and non-state-groups relations. I argue that the Genocide and its historical materials, social and economic precariousness, and neo-patrimonial power configurations have erected a prevailing political culture that still conditions how Rwanda's state-society relations are imagined, realized, and challenged. Conversely, just as that political culture has lengthened the reach of the state into society, limiting the potential autonomy of civil

society, it has also been the basis for rebuilding the society, restoring the state's authority, and enacting major state-building oriented reforms. Consequently, for CSOs to induce a liberal democratic order in domestic politics, subsequent activism will require long-term strategic and organic investment of actors into the dispersed, parochial strands of democracy first, not into ongoing confrontational, yet fruitless, political warfare that hinders social capital formation and that civil society is not yet equipped to win.

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ACRONYMS

AADS-SA	African and African Diaspora Studies Graduate Student Association
ACORD	(Agence de Coopération et de Recherche pour le Développement) Cooperation and Search Agency for Development
ADL	(Association Rwandaise pour la Défense des Droits de la Personne et Libertés Publiques) Rwandan Association for the Defense of Human Rights and Public Liberties
AERG	(Association des Étudiants Rescapés du Génocide) Association of Students Survivors of the Genocide
ARCT Ruhuka	Rwandan Association of Trauma Counselors (ARCT)
ARDO	(Association Rwandaise pour la Défense de Droits de l'Homme) Association for the Defense of Human Rights
ASSOFERWA	(Association des Femmes Rwandaises) Rwanda Women's Solidarity Association
AUCA	Adventist University of Central Africa (AUCA)
AVEGA Agahozo	(Association des Veuves du Génocide) Association of Genocide Widowers – Solace
BED	(Bureau Épiscopal de Développement) Episcopal Bureau for Development
CAURWA	(Communauté des Autochtones Rwandais) Community of Indigenous Rwanda
CCOAIB	(Conseil de Concertation des Organisations d'Appui aux Initatives de Base) Consultative Council of Organizations Supporting Grassroots Initiatives
CER	(Caisse d' Épargne du Rwanda (CER)) Rwanda Pension Retirement Scheme
CHUR	Christian University of Rwanda
CLADHO	(Collectif des Ligues et Associations de Défense des Droits de l'Homme au Rwanda) Federation of Leagues and Associations for the Defense of Human Rights
COPAURWA	(Communauté des Autochtones au Rwanda) Community of Indigenous Peoples of Rwanda
CORAR	(Compagnie Rwandaise d'Assurance et de Réassurance)

	Rwandan Insurance and Re-insurance Company
CPI	Corruption Perception Index
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CUR	Catholic University of Rwanda (CUR)
DFID	United Kingdom's Development Agency for International Development
DGG	Decentralization and Good Governance
DHS	Demographic Health Survey
EDPRS	Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy
EU	European Union
FAR	(Forces Armés Rwandaises) Rwandan Armed Forces
FARG	(Fond d'Assistance aux Rescapés du Génocide) Funds to Assist Genocide Survivors
FBOs	Faith Based Organizations
FFRP	(Forum des Femmes Rwandaises Parlementaires) Forum of Rwanda Women Parliamentarians
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
GoR	Government of Rwanda
GPSC	Graduate & Professional Student Committee
GTZ	Germany Technical Cooperation
HAGURUKA	Humana Rights Organization focusing on provision of legal aid to vulnerable
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IBUKA	Association of Genocide Survivors
ICT	Information, Communication, and Technology
ICTR	United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
INADES	(Institut Africain pour le développement économique et social – Centre Africain de Formation) African Institute for Economic and social development – African Training Center
JADF	Joint Action Development Forum

JAES	Joint Africa-EU Strategy
KP	Kibogora Polytechnic (KP)
LC	Lower Chamber (of the Parliament)
LIPRODHOR	(Ligue pour la Promotion et la Défense des Droits de l'Homme au Rwanda) Rwandan League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights
MIGEPROF	(Ministère du Genre et Promotion de la Famille) Ministry of Gender (equality) and Family Promotion
MINAFFET	(Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et de la Cooperation) Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, and East African Community
MINAGRI	Ministry of Agriculture
MINALOC	(Ministère de l'Administration Locale) Ministry of Local Governance
MINECOFIN	(Ministère de l'Économie et des Finances) Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
MINEDUC	Ministry of Education
MINIJUST	Ministry of Justice
MININFRA	Ministry of Infrastructure
MRND	(Mouvement Révolutionaire National pour le Développement) National Revolutionary Movement for Development
NCC	National Children Council
NFPO	National Consultative Forum of Political Organizations
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NISR	National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda
NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
NURC	National Unity and Reconciliation Commission
NWC	National Women Council
OECD	The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PARMEHUTU	(Partie pour l'Émancipation Hutu) Party for Emancipation of Hutu
PIASS	Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences (PIASS)
PROFEMMES	(Promotion des Femmes (au Rwanda)) Promotion of Women
PSD	Parti Social Démocrate

PSF	Private Sector Federation
RCA	Rwanda Cooperative Agency
RDB	Rwanda Development Board
RDF	Rwanda Defense Force
REMA	Rwanda Environmental Management Authority
RFI	(Radio France Internationale) Radio France International
RGB	Rwanda Governance Board
RIM	(Reseau Inter-diocesain de Microfinance) Inter-Diocese Microfinance Network
RNP	Rwanda National Police
RoR	Republic of Rwanda
RPA	Rwanda Patriotic Army
RRA	Rwanda Revenue Authority
RTS	(Télévision Suisse Romande) Romand Swiss Television
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
STIR	(Société de Transport International au Rwanda) International Transportation Company in Rwanda
TI	Transparency International
TIG	(Travaux d'Intérêt Général) Work that is in the General Interest of the Community
TIGR	The Investment Guides in Rwanda
TRAFIPRO	(Travail, Fidelité, Progrès) Work, Fidelity, Progress
UBPR	(Union des Banques Populaires du Rwanda) Union of Community Banks of Rwanda
UC	Upper Chamber (of the Parliament / Senate)
UNHRFOR	United Nations Human Rights Field Operation in Rwanda
UNILAK	University of Lay Adventists of Kigali (UNILAK)
URAMA	(Urunana rw'Abanyarwandakazi mu Majyambere) Female Coalition in Development
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

CHAPTER I

TOWARDS THE STUDY OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRATIZATION

Background

This research began with a basic paradox: the "no democracy without a vibrant civil society" dictum common in the West confronted a reality of "a large civil society without democracy" in Africa. Since the late 1980s, the hope was high that a magic bullet to the problem of authoritarian rule in African states had at last been found. That is, enabling the rise of organized social forces represented the most peaceful and enduring antidote to the old, undemocratic governance typical of African states at that time. Western social science was convinced that popular democratic rule would not come about unless there was a civil society to spur and support it. The Cold War had just ended, East European states were becoming democracies and reigning democratic powers were not going to continue to support these states unless they opened up politically. The conditions for democratization seemed ripe. The wide view within academia and world policy institutes was that Africa, too, could democratize. Indeed, more than a whiff of a democratic revolution was detectable within many African states. New African democracies soon began to model themselves after their Western counterparts. African leaders, scholars, and opposition elites, all believed it. As Omar Bongo, the former president of Gabon, memorably put it: "the wind from the East [was] shaking the coconut trees."[1] But three decades later, civil society has not transformed the overall democratic outlook of the continent, where "electoral autocracy" is now the norm. The preached and

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[1] Cited in Thompson, Alex. 2016. *An Introduction to African Politics.* Routledge, p. 246; and also in Wiseman, John A. 1996. *The New Struggle for Democracy in Africa.* Aldershot: Avebury, p.70.

mentored democracy has not yet come into being, despite the hard work that civil society has continued to do. Major institutions that rate democratic performance around the world agree on one thing: Africa remains the least democratic region of the world, despite the continuing expansion of civil society across the continent.

Research Problem Statement and the Significance

Using a single case (Rwanda) analysis, this research examines the origins of the inability of civil society to undergird democratization in African states. The central question is, why has the impressive development of civil society in Rwanda not produced the democratic outcome that the political science convention had predicted in the 1990s? This is an important question because the philosophy guiding the effort to democratize African states by the West, through development of a robust civil society, still presents a puzzle. And this puzzle exists on three levels. The first one is theoretical; and that is, while civil society is not a singular variable in the ways in which democratic culture takes root across societies, its universalized incidence on democratic outcome is either overestimated or misunderstood. Rwanda's case, for example, negates that logic. Rwanda's political reality does not align with the established philosophy that "the more vibrant civil society, the more democratic the state". The second implication is empirical. If the consequences of civil society on democratization have so far been marginal or almost nil, then this suggests that we do not yet have a full understanding of the true nature of the civil society forces that we have often connected to democratization. There is a need to begin to take interest in the constitutive forces of that civil society, beyond the numerical and *prima facie* characteristics it presents in that region of the world, so as to understand the kind of forces from it that give impetus to democracy. There is an urge to investigate civil society not

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just as a plethora of organized groups—with an assumed harmony and shared aims that seek to challenge the state—but also as a vast spectrum of groups whose goals may not primarily be about addressing the state at all. It also means that we need to disaggregate civil society groups in their infinite horizontal variety, and examine which categories of them that have a natural vocation to democratize the structures of the state. The third implication is policy oriented. Namely, if Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have always been developed by the aid community with the ultimate aim in mind that they will challenge the state, but only opposite the outcome is happening, then a fresh look at their actual practices can inform policy-makers on how they might practically support liberalization or development.

Problem in Current Debate

As I embarked on this research project and began to read what non-Rwandan students of Rwanda (Reyntjens 2009; 2011; 3013; Strauss 2011; Strauss 2013; Newbury 1992a; 1992b) had written about the conflict, political violence, the Genocide, the history, governance, civil society, different regimes, and much more, I was surprised by many things, but one thing stuck out. I struggled to understand how all of the thematic components in Rwanda's political system came together. Scholarship had addressed those issues as if they came from different and unrelated countries. I knew that all these events were inextricably tied to each other and that one overarching force crosscut all major events that have happened in Rwanda's political trajectory. And as the aim for my research became even clearer—explaining how the re-vitalization of civil society failed to provoke real democratization—I became even more puzzled. There was no theoretical framework to guide my understanding of the various analyses of Rwanda's events and its non-

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democratic trajectory. Meanwhile, I became aware of the history of civil society and of where it had been successfully a source of democratic performance (Putnam 1993; de Tocqueville 2003; Fukuyama 1995; 2001; 2004). I was trying to see if there existed some common thread in making civil society work in those other places. I was looking for a single undercurrent that could underpin the discussion on Rwanda's political events in pre-, during, and the post-multi-party eras.

As a Rwandan, I naturally gravitated towards the inward explanations about Rwanda's "pseudo-democracy". Some scholars of Rwanda had written exhaustively about these issues, while others had inaccurately linked facts and explanations, but an extended inward phenomenological analysis of democratization, aimed at general readers, was nowhere to be found. In the literature, it seemed as though political events in Rwanda had always occurred outside the comparative realm of history, culture, geography, and time. The ontology of Rwanda's civil society was ignored in the broad comparative political discourse. Most writings exuded the commonly made mistake in writing about Africa that Reid (2011, 136, 155; see also Clark 2003) alludes to as "presentism," or the reductionist and foreshortening compressing of events to what is relevant only now. There seemed to be a missing link in the literature on Rwanda about what apparently made civil society irrelevant to the possibilities for democratic political reform. Reflections on civil society in Rwanda treated it as a static category rather than a process. Yet, there appeared to be in Rwanda a powerful but unknown force that had allowed the occurrence of some very momentous events (e.g., the Genocide) and altered their course, but had been unable to change the public's political behavior. I suspected that nameless and unvoiced forces were the missing link in our understanding of the workings of Rwanda's democratic experiment.

I eventually concluded that the force behind the unchanging democratic outcome lay somewhere in cultural explanations.

A New Approach to the Problem of Civil Society and Democratization

My task was made all the more complicated when I decided to explore Rwanda's political culture as the central explanatory variable to my central question. I lacked a strong theoretical base from which to begin my new research. The theorizing available with a discussion on political culture in Africa—such as the work of Harrison and Huntington and their colleagues (2000, 2-13, 14-28, 29-43, 44-54, 65-77, 80-97, 98-111, 126-140, 178-188, 268-281, 282-296)—was helpful but offered only limited framing power. Harrison and Huntington treat culture as the root of authoritarianism and underdevelopment in African states. This, however, is a Euro-American centric view. Actually, Harrison (2000) elsewhere claims that underdevelopment (even though he was talking about Latin America) is a state of mind, reinforcing the view that culture is split into a dual category of *good* and *bad*. I therefore ran into another conceptual difficulty. Positing that culture was the missing link in dysfunctional relationship between civil society and the state, this view would imply that Rwanda's culture was inimical to liberal democratic practices. But I wanted to test a different reading of it. That is, I suspected that a reading of Rwanda's culture from the inside would reveal a more complex role for it in conditioning state-society relations.

Accordingly, I turned to the alternative framework of *state in society* as proffered by Migdal (2001). That is, a framework that examines the state not as just a domination, but as both and integrated and dispersed domination. It is a framework that explores the state beyond the Weberian construction as an invulnerable organization whose behavioral

choices are disconnected from societal influence. This framework allows us to see that leaders behave oddly not because they are naturally meant to be so, but because the state is a realm that functions in the broad constraints stemming from the same state power structures but also from the societal realities. This framework treats both the state and the society as two organized entities engaged in implicit alliances that transform each other and their behavior continuously. From there, I looked at the organic composition of Rwanda's civil society by analyzing its horizontal diversity first. I wanted to look closely to have an inward understanding of how Rwanda's civil society is actually composed, without reference to dominant Western concepts of it. I disaggregate it to examine the components that made it up, in order to determine whether such elements aligned well with the mission of democratization. Then, I came up with a three-type category to describe Rwanda's civil society: *Balloon*, *Mushroom,* and *Minion* groups. I observed that civil society was not and has never been a group of interests whose goals somehow converged around addressing the state. Rather, it is a pluralistic realm in which many CSOs have no explicit intention to challenge the state. Following Migdal, I describe the state's and civil society leaders as culturally integrated actors. I use the terms CSOs, NGOs, Balloons/Minions interchangeably. In each of such instances, I meant the organizations that are not grassroots or rural (that I otherwise refer to as *Mushrooms*).

Methods and Structure of the Inquiry

This research work developed from a set of eclectic methodological techniques, essentially combining theory analysis and a "thick description," a technique used in political anthropology to describe origins and the workings of phenomena. Between Spring 2012 and Summer 2015, I conducted approximately sixty semi-structured interviews with

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several professionals and key informants working in various civil society organizations. In Summer 2015, I spent twelve weeks in Rwanda and conducted eight Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with members of a wide array of grassroots associations across all the four provinces of Rwanda and the City of Kigali. I also interviewed members of the government including the Ministry of Local Governance (MINALOC), the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC), Rwanda Governance Board (RGB), and the Rwanda Development Board (RDB). I interviewed three members of the parliament and attended three parliamentary hearing sessions open to the public. Members of the Rwanda civil society platform, the private sector, media, and other local parastatal agencies offered invaluable discussions to this inquiry. I gathered copious archival materials from head offices of the organizations I visited in Kigali, and also available on their websites, and on the Internet. I interviewed acquaintances, friends, and former college professors and professional colleagues in Kigali who referred me to others most of the time. Over Skype and several email exchanges that went on over some years, I continuously received assistance remotely from a network of a people from Rwanda. I was thus able to complete missing information, update my previous reporting, and receive additional publication reports.

On the grassroots level, my interviews consisted in knowing the origins and the philosophy undergirding *Mushrooms.* I asked members and leaders what factors had led to their creation, what kind of activities they conducted, the benefits members gained from joining the organizations, the regime that administratively governed them, their involvement in the communities, the influence they were subjected to, and their vision for members and their communities. On the second upper level (*Balloons* and *Minions*), I

wanted to decipher whether there existed a state-oriented democratization mission and the modus operandi and also the daily philosophy within their CSO bureaucracy. I looked at their mission statement, vision, and periodic activity reports. Through interviews with leaders of such CSOs and also key informants in the realm of civil society, I sought to determine the degree to which organizations were drawn into the mission of channeling popular demands and hence addressing the state in any way and whether there existed some concrete achievements from such experience. But most crucially, the unstructured set of interviews with this group of informants were geared towards helping me gauge the links and disconnects between individual constraints in Rwanda (social, political, and economic) and the principles of democratization in the realm of civil society activism.

By interviewing members of the international community too, including the European Union mission representation in Kigali, the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), USAID and the U.S. Embassy, the Swiss Cooperation, and the Germany Technical Cooperation (GTZ), I sought to understand whether the ways in which their enforcement of policies and programs aimed to develop civil society and hence democratization were actually helping or hampering the prospects of liberalizing Rwanda's political system. Therefore, I asked stakeholders in this category of informants what their philosophy for supporting civil society was, since when had such been happening, the results and examples of change thus far realized, how they selected objectives, how they selected CSO partners, how they mitigated constraints stemming from the history of Rwanda, their strategies (ground or top-down), how they worked with the government and what kind of relationship they two have had, etc. All that added to the wealth of my methods and of this phenomenological study of the Rwandan civil society.

I collected only a limited amount of quantitative data. These came from my field gathered evidence that I organized in an empirical format (see chapters four and six). More quantitative data came from government statistics such as the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) published between 2005 and 2016, the Demographic Health Survey of 2015, the National Unity and Reconciliation Barometer, the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) of 2016, the Civil Society Platform Mapping Report (2011), publications from civil society organizations, as well as other quantitative information on Rwanda available in the United States. This select set of data provided hard evidence on the Rwanda's civil society – democratization phenomenon; they shed light on the problematic disconnect that exists between the democratization project (that started in the 1990s) and the actual domestic realities of civil society organizations. They were invaluable to prove the limitations of programs that are still underway in creating a new democratic course in Rwanda. The method used in this inquiry is therefore both deductive and inductive at the same time. It is deductive in the sense that it sought to test existing theories about civil society and democratization in Africa. But it is also inductive to the extent that it aimed to acquire information for new theories by asking my respondents to describe their social relations in their own terms, rather than in the terms proffered by a dominant social science paradigm.

This dissertation is divided into five main chapters in addition to the introductory chapter and the conclusions. Its structure is dictated by the contexts for state-society relations that I believe to be most relevant. Chapter two reviews the literature on the concept of civil society, democratization, and state building. It focuses on the missing theoretical connections between the processes of democratization and civil society. It also

presents conceptual gaps, by pointing especially to the problematic approach of describing civil society as a static category, instead of, a process. That is, I argue that one cannot evaluate the role of civil society in Africa outside domestic forces that have created it and continue to shape it. This chapter provides a new framework for assessing the association between civil society and the state; it insists that we must understand the horizontal composition of civil society, and its cultural origins, as well as its vertical relationship with the state.

Chapter three offers a historical review of civil society in Rwanda. It traces the first civil society movement in Rwanda back to its origins in colonial times. It then shows not just the various historical challenges that this civil society has always encountered, but also its origins and the historical forces that shaped its rise. I divide events into three major historical epochs: a) the indigenous and pre-modern civil society era, which begins sometime back in time before the first day of Rwanda as an independent Republic; b) the period of 1990-1994, or the democratization era, i.e., corresponding to the period of political liberalization, as well as the crescendo in rise of civil society groups, political parties, and media in Rwanda. It was during this period that the democratic experiment took place and failed. And finally, c) the renaissance of civil society era (1994-2017), or the post-democratization and post-Genocide period, corresponding to the Third Republic. That is the period when we see a resurgence of civil society after the failure of the effort to establish state-society relations on a democratic basis. In this last period, civil society was again re-invented, though there were elements of historical continuity rooted in the persistence of key elements of Rwandan political culture.

Chapter four examines economic accounts of the relationship that exists between civil society and the state. It tests the extent to which civil society's activism for democratization is predicated on its own economic power (financial self-reliance), and also that of the larger economic environment of Rwanda. It addresses the economic factors (and their connection to civil society's battle to democratize the state) at three levels: individual, group, and national. The first level directs our attention to the question of whether members of civil society are joining groups primarily because they seek to challenge the state, or because they essentially see a group as a channel through which to better their material lives. At the second level, I examine CSOs and their democratic engagement (and the results that has produced) in relation to their "economic capacity," a metric I created to assess the financial autonomy and sustainability of a group. Lastly, I examine civil society in the wider context of the national economic environment, i.e., the environment in which the state is the major economic operator, making both policies and unstoppable interventions in the economy. I examine the extent to which such conditions are hampering or helping civil society to be autonomous and to challenge the state.

Chapter five examines an institutional explanation of why civil society in Rwanda evolved as it did through the three periods. I explore institutions from a mainly legalistic perspective, because dealing with institutions is to deal with the law. My examination reveals that the law has always reflected extended forces of Rwanda's political culture throughout Rwanda's post-independence history. It hence demonstrates the institutional challenges that civil society faces in the societal question for democratization when legal and institutional instruments are congenially designed in its disfavor.

Chapter six, core to the central argument in this research, analyzes Rwanda's political culture. It tackles the phenomenon from three analytical windows. First, it examines Rwandans' "deference to the state," and how the general characteristics of Rwandans' political behavior have always characterized how civil society behaves as a collective. Second, I examine trust, seeking to determine the degree to which both interpersonal trust and institutional trust affect the ability of members of civil society to act together or share goals in their overall struggles to address the state. Last, I examine political culture through the sub-category of "risk aversion." I describe ways in which the behavior of civil society is significantly influenced by memories of the experiences of the past, when civil society was free but the outcome became violence. Risk aversion is a rational and calculated response to a perceived threat, which undermines the outcome that would otherwise result from challenging the state officials without existence of such risks.

The last chapter provides general conclusions and nuanced reflections on the major findings of this dissertation. I particularly problematize the traditional ways Western social science has conceptualized and developed the concept of civil society for Africa. I review the limitations of such an approach when the cultural environment continues to resist it, and also offer recommendations on the future study of democratization in such domestic conditions.

Limitations of the Inquiry

While my arguments are certainly a critique of the previous work on Rwanda's political development, in no way do I pretend that this work is a definitive or final account of Rwandan civil society. The impetus for this research project stems from my previous work in the NGO world in Rwanda for over ten years, where I was personally implicated

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in the work of developing civil society. That experience heightened the intellectual intrigue I experienced as I reviewed the main literature on the subject throughout my years of post-graduate study. There seemed to be a profound disconnect between the lessons about civil society that I had learned through experience, and the academic side of studying the concept on the other. My primary aim for this research was to provoke a new conversation about the role we believe that civil society plays in democratic transition-consolidation process, and also about the hard work that goes into building democratization forces. My central argument challenges the dominant normative approach that tends to overlook—and often look down on—the local forces that participate in the processes of state building. The role of these local forces must be more fully integrated into our analyses.

Although I have done my best to be objective, I acknowledge the possible limitations of my study. First, my own Rwanda-centric views may have clouded neutrality in its ideal form. Yet, throughout my study, I did as much as I could to build arguments that reconcile both domestic and the international considerations. I strove to recognize the multiple contexts in which Rwandan state-society relations have evolved. The reason for doing that comes from the question I have always struggled to answer: how do theoretical models and real life inform one another? I have always been leery of ideas whose processes appear as too self-important than the desire to imagine routes for bringing about good social change. Intellectuals like Joseph Nau (2017, 1-29) say that everything we posit about the social world is primarily anchored in some kind of individual perspective. He argues that we all begin with a distinctive social perspective, but we use the laws of social inquiry called *methods* to make ourselves falsifiable or otherwise, but that objectivity as a matter of absolutism is impossible to attain. Rather, what objectivity is about lies in being honest

and transparent about your facts and claims and then in being open about it by inviting others to criticize it. Based on my experience and reading, I thought that political culture was probably at the root of the dysfunctional relationship between civil society and democratization in Rwanda from the beginning. Nonetheless, I have tried to examine alternative points of view as honestly as I could. My study shows that both the institutional and economic contexts are important for understanding state-society relations. Yet both are subordinate to, and subsumed by, the more over-riding politico-cultural context.

I concede that my methods are more those of a political anthropologist than of a conventional comparativist political scientist. I relied on purposefully selected set of interviews, and the groups I chose to interview do not reflect a sophisticated methodological sampling. The reason I chose to do so is because I sought to organize such interviews in a manner that was suitable to garner not just optimal, but also a new brand of information. That is the way I thought was possible to give me pertinent data on the hidden logic and workings of civil society and its role in Rwanda's democratic trajectory. Even though existing datasets as well as other statistics-oriented techniques (such as structured interviews and surveys) are useful, they have considerable limitations in this type of phenomenological study. In Rwanda for example, just as in many other societies in Africa, one can be flawless on methods and yet fall short on the quality (and hence validity) of their findings. Asking a question systematically does not necessarily make the inquiry truly rigorous or even invulnerable considering the subtlety and imperceptible social political realities that still govern life in Rwanda. It is one thing to analyze what people express in Rwanda, but fathoming what they mean or think is another. On the challenges stemming from studying democracy in other cultures, see for example the work of Schaffer

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(2000). Therefore, ethnographic research, which is a technique used in 'political anthropology' but of course limited as all others, provided the advantage of using a different type of data as well as that of dispensing with contextual complexities and sensibilities. As an African (and a Rwandan) Africanist, in addition to my domestic linguistic, cultural, and other social aptitudes, I enjoy certain advantages as a sort of political anthropologist compared to my non-Rwandan researchers.

In addition, with one single case analysis and its limited scope of data, I do not pretend to reach conclusions applicable to the totality of the African continent, as the title of this work might suggest. However, the problem that I discuss is largely viewed in the literature as an African syndrome. Since we cannot study every country to understand how its civil society functions, this findings stemming from this single-case research suggests that we must re-examine the role of civil society in Africa's democratic trajectories. They also suggest the need to re-conceptualize the workings of the democratic paradigm in African states as well as the processes and policies thus far believed to lead to democratization. This research has therefore focused on Rwanda with the hope that its significance will be relevant to other cases in Africa.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholarship has connected the rise of associational movements to political liberalization. However, the causal mechanisms that link the two are underspecified, meaning that the current literature cannot explain why this relationship does not hold in Africa. This chapter offers a critical review and assesses the gaps in the common Western assumptions about the impact that civil society development has on democratization. As I critique the existing conceptualization of the workings of civil society and democracy, I show the limits of the mainstream framework in both studying and developing civil society in Africa.

Problem Statement and Research Question

Why has the development of civil society not led to political liberalization in Rwanda as conventional Political Science wisdom expected? Differently put, when talking about the failures of democracy in Rwanda—just as elsewhere in Africa—what accounts for the discrepancies between the *theoretical* civil society, on the one hand, and the *actual* civil society, on the other? Why have we not yet seen change in state's behavior as a result of civil society growth and activism in Rwanda? And what is it that continues to preclude civil society from democratizing the Rwandan polity? That is the question central to this research. It seeks to explore, understand and explain the failures of civil society to liberalize political life in Rwanda. While that question has been (differently) asked in the past (Longman 1999; Monga 1996; Ndegwa 1996; Bratton 1989), it remains very relevant, primarily because the debate it pertains to has become a dead end. There are still many

unknowns and unanswered question on what truly enables civil society to democratize the state and its behavior. In the context of Rwanda, in the study of African politics at large, as well as in the wider field of Political Science, this is a relevant line of inquiry since we do not know why "the third wave" of democratization of the 1990s has been a failure in many parts of Africa, including Rwanda.

It all began in the late 1980s. Both scholars and world policy practitioners had a much more confident view of civil society organizations than it turned out to be justified. There was an almost universal optimism that the rise of many independent voluntary organizations would help end the phenomenon of political *Afro-pessimism*. The anticipation was that an increase of associational life would save Africa from her embarrassing label of 'the except for continent.'[2] Scholars of democratization linked the vibrancy of an organized civil society to deepening of democracy, expecting to see the same relationship in Africa that had emerged in Southern Europe in the 1970s and Eastern Europe in late 1990s (Bernhard 1993; Keane 1988), in East Asia in the 1990s (Pye 1999; Kim 1997; Kim 2000), and in South America in the 1980s (Przeworski 1991; Linz and Stepan 1996).

Students of Africa likewise expected that civil society would create some type of revolutionary state of affairs for political reforms in Africa (Harbeson, *et al.* 1994; Bratton

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[2] Africa is all too often referred to as "the pessimists' paradise," other times as "the except-for continent" (see Weisner, Thomas S., Candice Bradley, and Philip Leroy Kilbride. 1997. *African families and the crisis of social change*. Westport, Conn: Bergin & Garvey. Pp. xix-xxxi; see also Collier's *The Bottom Billion*, 2008: 64-75). For a detailed and critic review on 'afro-pessimism,' see Part one and Part two in Enwezor et al. (2006). In addition to family and ethnic crises (in connection with the fact that it has some 2,000 different ethnic identities, and that there are some 750 different languages spoken throughout the continent), Africa is also confronted with a series of economic plights. It is estimated that real income in all sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is less than a third of that in South Asia (see chapter 9 on sub-Sahara's economic and development environment in Joseph Nau's *Perspectives of International Relations*, 2014: 413-424). The total SSA's income is slightly more than that of Belgium alone. The median income is equal to the output of a town of 6,000 people in West, while 48% of people in SSA live below the poverty line ($1.25 per day).

and van de Walle 1992: 27-55; Baker 2002; Osaghae 1994; Osaghae 2005). They portrayed the unleashing of civil society groups as a catalyst of a "global democratic revolution of the 21st century" (Huntington 1991: 33) and as a *political renaissance* in Africa (Harbeson, et al. 1994; Bratton 1989) that would bring authoritarianism under siege forever. They expected newly-flourishing civil societies to establish an organic democratic link between populations and ruling elites (Rothchild and Lawson 1994; Holm and Molutsi 1992: 75-95; Tripp 1997). Exponents of this perspective expected these "intermediary institutions" to help end the syndrome of a one-party rule culture and other traditions inimical to inclusive governance, including neopatrimonialism, military rule, personal autocracy, oligarchy, and repression of civil and political rights (Bratton 1994; 1997; Osaghae 1994). The prevailing theory had it that an increase in the plurality and autonomy of social forces would redefine the rules of the political game in Africa (Rothchild and Lawson 1994; Monga 1996; Tripp 1997). This view suggested that an expansive associational life was a vehicle to political transitions (Fatton 1991; Woods 1992; Bratton 1994; 1997), and also to 'economic change' (Callaghy and Ravenhill 1994; Diamond and Plattner 1995) in the continent. In a sense, developing civil society was the most credible way to bring Africa to democratic standards existing in the West.[3]

In ordinary conditions, we would have observed a different out of civil society and political outcomes in Africa throughout the years. The newly-robust civil society groups would by now have deepened democratization in Rwanda and elsewhere in Africa. They would have connected the society more closely to the state, channeling people's demands

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[3] Michael Bratton justified the crucial role of civil society in transforming African politics in the sense that "it embodies a core of universal beliefs and practices about the legitimation of, and limits to, state power.' See "Civil Society and Political Transition in Africa," Harbeson, Rochild, and Chazan, 1994, p. 52.

to the authorities. Throughout the continent, they would have filled the vacuum where the state had failed or was weak. More vibrant civil society organizations would have led more transitional democracies to have become consolidated democracies. They would also have been a key development player in domestic economies. In the greater perspective of things, a revitalized civil society would have tilted the balance of power in state-society relations, by legitimizing it as a credible and insurmountable voice in the governing processes.

Yet, that has not occurred yet. Despite the increasing number and sophistication of such civic groups, an organized civil society is still far off those goals. Despite the fact that millions of Africans have continued to join new associations (Chazan 1999: 75-102; Uvin 1998), there is no association to be made between civil society and the current status of democracy in Africa. Throughout the post-1989 era of liberalization, support to associational movements in Africa by Western groups has not ceased to increase with an uninterrupted flow of funding and technical backstops (Ottaway & Carothers 2000; Bonnel et al., 2013; McNeil and Melena 2010). but too little can be assessed with respect to its association to democratization. Civil society has not channeled people's demands to the state, and has often served as a vehicle of state interests (Devarajan et al., 2014; Monga 1999, 48-62; Wiredu 1998). It has not filled the vacuum where the state failed or was weak (Devarajan et al., 2014; Herbst 2000; Herbst, et al., 2003; Young 1999). Most of the continent's democratic model is not palatable to that of the West (Levitsky et al., 2010; Joseph 1999; Herbst 2000; Herbst et al., 2003). African states, including Rwanda, still rank behind those of other continents in several areas where a robust civil society was

expected to have an impact.[4] Most of the new civil society groups have remained deferential to the state, which goes against their most elemental characteristics of civil society, i.e., autonomy (Ottaway 1997).

Furthermore, the wars and other ethnic conflicts did not decrease as a result of civil society activism either, e.g., in Rwanda (Longman 2010). Even where transition occurred, such structures did not lead to democratic consolidation (Bauer 1999: 429-448). Civil society as a collective has failed to self-impose as one credible, rich, robust, complex, imaginative, and legitimate force who addresses and can confront the state in the process of ordering the society including on sensitive issues such as encroachments on civil rights. Many other groups have instead been co-opted by the state (Saine 2009). There is thus a legitimate case to be made that contrary to expectations, civil society has not aided the democratization project in many African states.[5] Such has been the case not just in Rwanda, but also throughout the continent. In the nutshell, civil society has not reinforced democratic transitions and has not delivered as the world had hoped.

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[4] See the Freedom House Index: while their assessment of democracy focuses on select indicators of democratic freedom such as election, press liberties, and only partial components of civil society, Rwanda has consistently ranked between 'not free' and 'partial free' sinr
Ce 2011. For additional similar assessments, see also Global Integrity Index since 2009. See also Straus and Waldorf, *Remaking Rwanda* (2011), concluding that Rwanda's post-atrocities model of democracy is a 'transformative authoritarianism.'

[5] To be fair, we should also mention that there is no consensus on the failure of civil society to drive political change in Africa among Africanists. Some political scientists do believe that certain African countries (e.g., Kenya and Zambia) liberalized or democratized as a function of the 'nature' of their civil society (VonDoepp 1996; Barkan, *et al. 1991*; Fatton 1991; Harbeson, *et al.* 1994). But even those advocates of civil society as a democratizing force in certain African states have yet to determine what it is exactly about civil society movement that has led to political reforms. That a civil society is strong in a certain political context does not necessarily credit such groups the merit of political change. We do not yet know what particular dynamics and contextual attributes of civil society has led to political reforms in Zambia or Kenya, as VonDoepp claims, for example. In addition, the role of civil society has always been a contested terrain since the beginning. While some were critical of the very project of 'democratizing Africa' (Ake 1991), others were simply defiant on even the deployment of the concept and saw it as an ideological conspiracy being transplanted in Africa (Abrahamsen 2000).

This observation then brings us back to the initial question. What went wrong, not just with the failures of civil society to influence the democratic trajectory, but also with how Political Science scholarship could not settle the debate? Is there anything about civil society that research has overlooked, avoided, underrated or overrated in Africa? And if so, in what ways? In addition, does the way the question of civil society and its failure to liberalize politics in Rwanda and Africa has been treated enable us to have a greater understanding of factors at work? We do not yet know why an organized civil society has not prompted the state (and the political class) to liberalize politics in Africa. Nor do we yet know the nature of forces impeding civil society to create a permanent dynamic for an inclusive and open governance system. More specific to this research, we have yet to understand why civil society groups have failed at creating effective strategies for interacting with the state in instituting liberal democratic mores in the Rwandan political life. Scholarship has yet to provide us with a practical framework for understanding the factors and patterns precluding civil society from being a democratically transformative entity in Rwanda. It remains to be explained why civil society has failed to address the state and put it on a trajectory of progressive political liberalization. There is no convincing argument to the question of "what is it that has consistently precluded civil society from altering political behavior in Rwanda, and by extension in Africa?"

A Conceptual Gap in the Study of Civil Society and Democracy in African States

To answer the research question, we need to extend the inquiry beyond civil society itself. It is equally important to look at how scholarship has addressed this question in the past. There are multiple shortcomings with the ways in which we in the scholarly community have looked at this question. Conceptually, academia has treated civil society

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predominantly from its normative characteristics. Scholarship has consistently employed the concept of civil society in Africa in the manner that unequivocally leads us to think of it as a fixed structure without a beginning, rather than a result of a process. The forces shaping and rounding civil society are more assumed than understood. The ways in which the problem of failures of civil society is approached dismiss the phenomenological dimension to the workings of civil society. The ontology of civil society as a phenomenon is ignored or avoided. The evolutionary and cultural ingredients of the Western prototype of civil society do almost not matter in Africa. To the extent that there is a deficit between the theoretical civil society (conditions) and the actual civil society (outcome) in Rwanda, it behooves us to draw that contrast first so as to answer the right question.

There is a need to clarify how previous conceptualizations have approached the problem of failure of civil society and democratization in Rwanda, and Africa by extension, or we risk running into three major problems. First, it prevents us from knowing whether scholarship has been asking the right question. In a way, it is as though we have been explaining the failures of civil society based on an assumption of a phenomenon which may not have been hardwired to survive in that environment. That is, we may have been ignoring the organic conditions which create civil society, as a theoretical phenomenon, and not just the norms that enable a transplanted model of civil society to work.[6] We must ask whether the conditions that organically create a liberal democratic civil society existed or were enabled in Rwanda before the revitalization of civil society became a norm in the

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[6] In ideal circumstances, conditions for an organic civil society are preferable and ought to be in place first in order for a democratically transformative civil society to do its job, just as the history of the most successful civil society tells us. That is what de Tocqueville alluded to as "a culture congenial to democracy" having driven the success of the American political system; or Putnam's observation that democracy worked well only in those North Italian areas where civil society ideals had first been made a tradition (1993). Yet, in Rwanda, just as most of the rest of Africa, an organized civil society of the 1990s rose out of that developmental logic of it.

first place. We then need to consider what effects that had on the evolution of civil society there. Tracing genetic conditions or the ecology for civil society in the Rwandan democratic trajectory is crucial to understanding its failures to be a politically liberalizing force.

Second, a flawed conception of the phenomenon we seek to understand keeps us from answering adequate questions. That is, understanding the failures of civil society and democracy depends on whether the type of civil society we find in Rwanda had a natural propensity to drive political liberalization first, or whether it was meant to generate something else. It is after understanding the logics and forces having created and dominated the life of civil society in Rwanda that we can begin to assess why it has produced the unexpected political outcomes. Understanding the logics out of which the current Rwandan civil society emerged—an ontological conception—is the only objective way to understand its contemporary character. Otherwise, just like previous scholarship, the analysis of it is based on an incomplete assessment and is at best partially satisfying.

This research describes the problems of civil society in Rwanda from the logics of deep-seated cultural realities first, not essentially as a failure of structural norms. It explores the roots—not the fruits—from which the failures of civil society to effect democracy came. It analyzes the problem of civil society in Rwanda first as a phenomenon, not as a norm; as a process, not a conclusive outcome; and finally, as society-centered, not essentially state-centered. It is a phenomenological analysis of the dynamics of civil society's failure to liberalize politics in Rwanda. More specifically, this research conceptualizes the failures of civil society in Rwanda primarily as a deep-seated phenomenon originating from endogenous logics, not merely from the forces exterior to

the socio-cultural, political and economic environment in which it exists. The major premise here is that civil society's failures do not exclusively originate from the logics embedded in the state or international forces. As an ontological paradigm at the center of this inquiry, it makes the most sense to see whether the mechanisms that would have allowed civil society to make way for democracy and to serve as a permissive condition of democracy in the West were present in Rwanda first.

A third major conceptual mistake that this research seeks to avoid is that scholarship has predominantly led us to visualize civil society as if it were a unified body. Scholarship has consistently given us an assumed view of a congruous and congenial civil society with respect to its theoretically assumed incidence on democracy. The discourse on the utilitarian value of civil society in democratization carries in it a general tendency to portray it as if it were a harmonious set of groups seeking to challenge the state's moral order to impose one of their own that is democratic. Such a portrayal of civil society leaves students of politics to think of it as though the groups and members it represents (economic, political, social, religion) all have shared values and aims. Western analysts often take the plurality and diversity of civil society for granted. Yet, just like society, civil society is an amalgamation of a myriad of entities with different identities and purposes, sometimes who are even in competition with one another. Civil society is an umbrella of diverse ideas and forces, each with some unique identity characteristics individually and permanently vying for some form of social control (Migdal 2001, 44-56). In it is a conglomerate of broad and dispersed entities of mores, aims, and interests. That then raises a subsequent question of whether all civil society groups in Rwanda share values and aims, or whether *they*—as a collective—are hardwired to address the state on the fundamental question of democracy.

This research addresses the question of multiplicity of civil society groups in the way they can be usefully categorized in order to make proper association to the failures of democracy. All the groups that civil society represents cannot be lumped into one single basket, as though democratic liberalization equated with uniformization of group capacities. To better assess any possible linkage between them and the processes of democratization, we need to catalog civil society groups based on their political values, aims, and strength. Characterizing such groups based on their genetic fabric lays a meaningful ground for us to establish their link to the liberal democratic culture. It will also enable us to understand why they operate in a certain way whenever they are in interaction with the state on the wider range of democratic issues. Scholarship has all too often employed a broadly constructed concept of civil society without making proper distinction on this level. And without delineating civil society groups by their political identity logics, then any deduction we may make in relation to democratization becomes parsimonious. This conception makes it difficult to determine whether the conditions for a transformative civil society exist or can be fairly assessed in a society like Rwanda.

Analytical Gaps in the Study of Civil Society and Democracy in African States

Academia has taken a predominantly state-centered approach to the failures of civil society to lead to democratization. The discourse has looked at the problem essentially as a vertical dynamic in which the state's omnipotence inevitably subverts civil society's posture and survival.[7] While the state's superlative power and its ubiquitous penetrative

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[7] As example, when Monga diagnoses that there are eight problems precluding civil society in Africa to do its (theoretically) democratizing job (weak opposition parties, rulers' manipulation of elections, a narrow political field, lack of political ideas and vision, constrained press freedom, and international support for dictators), it is clear that he is blaming it all on the state. He does not seem to problematize civil society groups themselves. Similarly, Longman (1992: 246-251), posits that the civil society failed democratization

abilities in Rwanda are plausibly undeniable—just as in several other states—such an argument is often misapplied or even overrated when explaining the failures of civil society.[8] This research explains the failures of civil society from the constraints that social forces impose not just upon civil society but also on the state altogether.

Another problem with analyzing democratic failures by capitalizing on the state's eminent role is that such a view obscures the importance of looking at the phenomenon not exclusively from the *mechanical* (activities) but also the *organic* (constitutive elements) workings of civil society in the process of democratization. Most states like Rwanda are less coherent than the theoretical account suggests. Migdal suggests that states are actually fragmented and to the extent that they all face and depend on a myriad of other social organizations such as families, clans, multinational corporates, domestic businesses, tribes, political parties, and a wide range of other patron-client dyads (2001: 41-71). Accordingly, it is useful to trace the failures of civil society to democratize within the state's apparatus.

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in Rwanda because of five (state caused) factors: a) disconnect between civil society and *political parties*, b) parties joined the 1992 coalition *government*, c) the expansion of the *state* coercive capabilities, d) *state* orchestrated chaos, and e) ethnicity and cooptation by the state. More scholarship on civil society go on to take a similar position and rarely do they take a hard look at civil society itself, i.e., its historical grounding and constitutive forces. It is almost as if the strength of civil society groups were a given and that no failure could be rooted in the horizontal workings of civil society to begin with. Even Ndegwa's (1996) assessment that four factors are missing in order for NGOs to advance democratization in Africa (organization, resources, alliances, and political opportunities) feeds into the same assumption that there is no other way for civil society groups than (superficially) balancing the state's power in order to democratize.

[8] That view (generally) feeds off the Weberian conception of state as a legitimately hyper muscular structure that can bend everything in the society to its will. But other views actually finger to the contradictions and limitations of such sort of ultra-deterministic power that states are believed to have (Migdal 2001: 41-47; Lawson 2000; Woods 2001; O' Murchú 2000). They point to the inability of states to use such power to translate states' policies (including in some advanced societies) into real social change. Migdal (2001), for example, sees a dilemma in the assumed state's mighty power. On the one hand, there is the state's 'indispensability' and 'vulnerability' on the other. He sees the vulnerability of the state as deriving from that it is an entity with limitations just like any other among the myriad other ones in the society who is always vying for social control—with the exception that the state has the most dominant instruments at its helm to achieve its aims. But the fact that the state has to regularly depend on alliances from both domestic (clans, families, and other forms of patron-client dyads) and international (part of the world social system of organizations, international major powers, corporates, NGOs, and other states) groups shields it from being absolutely invulnerable.

This new way to look at the state has an implication for the ways we assess the failures of civil society. That is, if both the state and civil society constantly adapt in response to a culture imposed by other organizations, then that suggests there is a factor transcending the theoretical mighty of the state that we need to turn the focus on. We need to examine the horizontal patterns that give way to the constancy of political behavior not just among civil society groups but also among the stewards of the state at its various levels. Seldom has the analysis of civil society's failures been contemplated also as reflective of a horizontal paradigm that permeates all structures of the society. The bulk of scholarship (Haberson, *et al.* 1994; Makumbe 1998; Fatton 1992; Bratton 1994; Gready 2010; Orvis 2001) has analyzed civils society by focusing on the direct relationship of groups with the state (*a functionalist view*), overlooking the role of the groups' organic developmental fabric (*ontological approach*). In a way, most scholarship has evaluated the vitality of civil society in African state-society relations from the traditional Shils' dichotomy emphasizing the "prominence of the governmental center" (1975, 74). But the problem with analyzing civil society's failures in that dichotomous structure, i.e., casting the logics driving civil society as detached from those driving the state, is that it accomplishes nothing in our quest to understand the nature of civil society – democracy relations. In fact, this dualizing mode of studying the state and society relations is, for Midgal (2001) "divisive" (49). It is disruptive an approach to pit groups against one another when their logic of persisting and changing is meant to keep them as a *mélange* in that cluster of social organizations, which suggests that an examination of them together and not one as foreign to the other.[9]

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[9] The Schils' tradition that prominent African scholarship (Ndegwa 1996; 2001; Monga 1996) on the failures of civil society have followed presents the state as the center (with omnipotent power) and civil society is a periphery (whose abilities are irresistibly repressed), supporting that the question of survival of civil society

In addition, the simple dichotomous categorization of a complex dynamic of state civil society relations as in—state versus civil society, or center versus periphery, or elites versus the mass—advances too little our comprehension of the phenomenon. Such analysis is dismissive of the very heterogeneous nature of the struggles led by multiple organizations in a society. As Midgal (2001) argues, "civil society and society are not synonymous" (132). The two are not tantamount to the same thing because there are multiple arenas of domination and opposition in the society, some groups simply not hardwired to pull in the direction that addresses the state yet still affecting the way the state operates. But we often treat civil society as though it were a coherently organized entity theoretically meant to oppose or balance the state. Yet, as Naomi Chazan (1994) points it out, "civil society encompasses only one portion of what has become a complex and diverse associational scene" (278). Midgal reinforces it by pointing out that "some social forces have not lent their support to the state's universal pretensions or, for that matter, the pretensions of a civil society pitted against the state" (2001, 132). This research strains the bewildering views of the constitutive forces of civil society in Rwanda in order to better ascribe any democratizing role to it.

Another gap that prior analyses have not filled is that between the various components of grassroots civil society. The rural and popular associational life is an integral part of civil society often dismissed in the way we seek to understand the workings of civil society and how it affects democratization in states such as Rwanda. Scholarship has taken a generally narrow view of civil society by limiting it to the groups with a national or regional profile, as if democratization starts and ends at the apex of the state's pyramid.

is at the sole will of the state system. While the state's power to repress civil society groups is not a novel discovery, it even tells a limited story on the true nature civil society failures to democratize in Rwanda.

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The majority of civil society groups exist in rural arenas in most African states, including Rwanda, where more than 80% of the population still lives. And we know that civil society, as a set of autonomous institutions meant to mediate between state and society in democratic governance (Putnam 1993, 130), is enhanced by successful attitudes and participatory behaviors of citizens (Brehm and Rahn 1997). Civil society exists and functions as a composite unit with multiple segments, drawing its support primordially from below (Putnam 1999; Kwak, et al. 2004; Uslainer 2004; Irwin and Berigan 2013; Simpson and Eriksson 2009; Ndegwa 1996).[10] It is therefore important to focus on the organic resources that civil society draws on to interact with the state first. Rural civil society, commonly cast as 'peripheral groups,' are thus one of the key elements in successful democratization (Gibson 2001). In Eastern Europe, for example, eclectic civil society organizations were instrumental to the democratic revolutions of the late 1990s (Bernhard 1996; Kubik 1994; Ost 1990; Stokes 1993; Tismaneanu 1995; Weigle and Butterfield 1992). But many Africanist analyses often excluded these grassroots organizations from the pool of analytical ingredients that grow a democracy up despite their recognition to be generally a "precondition for effective self-government" (Putnam 1993: 90). In a way, these grassroots networks are connected to and hence cannot be treated in isolation from the national democratic fate. This research provides a horizontal framework for understanding the workings, or the "ecology" driving civil society in Rwanda, as well as the recipes of its identity at different strands of democracy. I provide a new analytical dimension for understanding the logics that have given impulse to this

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[10] That is the case in principle. We also know that there are many cases were civic associations have been "created" at the top, too (Gyimah-Boadi 1996; Gary 1996; Tripp 2001; Fjelde 2009). But such are the not the kind of organizations that would drive the change we are talking about here.

civil society such that we can understand the sources of its behavior in the process of engaging politically with the state in Rwanda.

Among other major factor that the analysis also has considered but with only partially satisfying answer over is institutions. The general assumption is that institutions, in the sense that they *reduce uncertainties* (North 1989; 1991) will protect civil society from repressive responses to their activism. North and other institutionalists believe that civil society will not achieve any democratic goal without an institutional framework favoring it (idem). But aside from reinforcing the prominence the role of the state in democratization, this view of institutions tells us too little about the values profoundly affecting the behavior of such institutions themselves. The dominant scholarship in Political Science often emphasizes the institutional character as an organization or a set of organizations that make rules or simply with recourse to coercion, but it does not tell us what may cause institutions to follow one set of behavioral pattern in a specific cultural context. If both state and civil society have an unchanging behavioral pattern in the way they relate one to another democratically, then there must be an element of commonality with institutions, too. Therefore, to understand the behavior of civil society in democratizing the state needs to extend beyond the simple institutional function of 'rules making,' and instead focus on the origins of variations in institutional behavior. That means, analysis needs to pay attention to the effects of culture in the outer structures of institutions in terms of democratic behavior.

Civil Society and Democracy—A New Analytical Framework

As we have seen, while the linkage of civil society and the failure of political liberalization in African states is not a new theme in African politics research, there are several issues with how the analysis and theorizing have treated the question. Conceptually and analytically, inquiries on civil society and democracy in Africa have suffered from enough insufficiencies to preclude us from reaching a proper apprehension of this problem. One of them is the inattention to the evolution and historical patterns of civil society in relation to domestic politics and liberalization. Both historical materials and cultural artifacts to the formation and evolution of civil society in Rwanda are essential, but missing from previous inquiries connecting civil society and democratization. In this research, I treat civil society not in a dichotomous and divisive way that excludes it from the forces that drive both the state and its institutional practices. Rather, I treat it along with the state, as an integral part of the wider society. My analysis builds from Migdal's (2001) approach to state society relations; that is, an approach that sees the state as evolutionarily part of, rather than separate *from*, society.

By this logic, wherever civil society has succeeded at transforming political life, there has been a historically cultural rationale that favored it.[11] De Tocqueville was right to ascribe the success of the American political system to "a culture congenial to

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[11] For instance, we know that a wide community-grounded associational life created a culture of civic engagement that became a building block in the success of the American political system (Tocqueville, *et al.* 2000; Huntington 1991; Huntington 2000; Putnam 2000; Putnam 2003). The British consensus model arose from a collective effort from liberals, social democrats, nationalists, and the aristocracy to altogether transcend parochialism and created a new culture of "civic virtue" and active citizenship in which protection of group interests and pluralism would be guaranteed (Biagini 1996; Dunleavy, *et al.* 2000; Almond and Verba 1963; Almond and Verba 1989). In France, the historical role of representational structures, such as unions, in policy bargaining processes has become so crucial and inescapable that those are characterized as *corps intermédiaires,* or intermediary institutions, in French state-society relations (Legay and Baury 2009; Druelle-Korn 2011).

democracy" (in Lipset 1959, 82). Putnam (1993) was equally right to redevelop de Tocqueville and to note that culture had been at the root of differences in democratic performance between the Northern and the Southern regions of Italy. Additional works on the intersection of political institutions, institutional change, and human progress have also pointed to the unequivocal role of culture in political and economic outcomes (North 1990; Harrison 1985; Banfield 1958; Almond and Verba 1963; Lipset 1990; Harrison & Huntington 2001). Some have bluntly posited that "culture makes almost all the difference" (Landes 1998; see also Inglehart and Welzel 1997: 210-230). Others inductively asserted that "culture is the mother, institutions are the children" (Etounga-Manguelle 1991, xxviii). Yet, both academia and international NGOs have consistently treated civil society in Rwanda as though the history of that cultural dimension were irrelevant.

Many Western civil societies succeeded in supporting democracy primarily because they started off as a true expression of culturally cultivated *intrinsic* values. When such values emerged, and when they were practiced over and over, they unconsciously devolved into routine and habit, carrying into institutional arrangements before translating into rules of governance. Values personifying individual rights became central in political imaginations and served the anchor of all movements that defined political life in such societies. And as people practiced it over and over, a routine bred habit and eventually a liberal political culture. Civic engagement was a result of an *organic* culture that began at the grassroots level. It was a function of an inward and internal development first. Community "civicness" was not produced from exterior forces. Nor was it a result of the state's sole initiative. Instead, the statehood too was a byproduct of that same culture.

Grassroots and parochial dynamics were responsible for the emergence of a vibrant civil society. Then the state appropriated and integrated those values in its institutional mechanisms (e.g., rules, processes, and civil society) of interaction with the society. That is the not logic that institutional construction followed in Africa. And that has profoundly affected the character of institutions, the state, and civil society.

Yet, when civil society is studied in Rwanda and other African states, this interior dimension of civic engagement, as well as the logical progression of its development, is more assumed than traced or understood. The wave of democratic transition in many African states did not begin in the manner that easily promised civil liberties, core to conventional civil society. Instead, it coincided and collided with other influential forces such as traditional authority in governance, political culture, ethno-national/regional politics, civil war/conflicts, economic opportunities, and under-development (Clark 2008; Buur and Kyed 2007; Diamond and Plattner 1993). In a way, and contrary to the Western experience, civil society in Africa—as formal institutions for interactive and participatory governance—morphed out of strictly coincidental and sometimes opportunistic conditions. Civil society organizations did not organically carry a political feature before the 1990s. In Rwanda, for example and prior to 1990, the existence of such groups was never primarily meant to challenge the political practice (Uvin 1999; Longman 2010). This dynamic has continuously handicapped the trajectory of a *liberal* civic tradition they vied to promote. Therefore, continuing to evaluate civil society-democracy relations from a purely normative—extra local—standards does not advance our ability to understand it. This study describes the evolution of civil society democracy relations also from that historical

construction, and uses that description to explain why the expansion of civil society did not lead to democratization in Rwanda.

Contextualizing the Analysis of Civil Society in Rwanda

When one looks deeper, it becomes clear that civil society in Rwanda operates around a contextual logic that is still vaguely understood in academia and the West. The debate has yet to provide us with a practical framework for understanding the culture that would have created a democratically transformative civil society in the first place. There is a general tendency in scholarship to always gauge civil society against a set of rules, standards, and expectations that the dominant world community and academia intended it to follow. That is, scholarship treats civil society as a linear progression of the Western liberal democratic constitutionalism, or that because civil society worked well in one place, then it should work in the same way if applied wholesale. But that is erroneous insofar as increase of associational groups ignores that such groups must have a culture around them that supports them. Pushing for creation of numerous groups is treating the problem only half-way the process. It is true that civil society in Africa still has a lot to learn from the evolution of civil society in the West, and thus adapt, grow, and root organically. But this hasty way of analyzing it raises the question of whether we can truly understand its workings without understanding whether the recipes that grew it up in the West exist in Rwanda or elsewhere in the first place. Therefore, we need to gauge civil society as something with an ontological substance in the domestic environment, not merely as a normative model ordained to succeed anywhere no matter what.

From culture to history through social, political and economic realities that connect and define politics every day in Rwanda and Africa, there are still several unexplored

contours in the workings of civil society to be understood. Much of academic inquiry has focused on the outer forms of civil society's connection to democratization, ignoring and dismissing the inward processes of its development and growth. There is therefore a need to trace local cultural beliefs, practices, democratic commitments, and behavior that produce a civil society unproductive of democracy. That effort is worthwhile insofar as continuing to test the marriage between civil society and democracy in the manner that links the mere existence of local NGOs to political outcomes—while eschewing the domestic cultural dimension—overlooks a recipe that was crucial in the evolution and success of civil society in the West. That approach is partial. It only renders the debate even a more contested terrain and limits our ability to understand variation of democracies in other regions of the world.

That is why a new analytical framework is needed, insofar as much of the enduring contestation surrounding civil society, as both a concept and an ordering principle, cannot be understood from a purely normative vantage point. This research has taken an organic approach and offered a different inquiry method. That is, the research takes a neo-Tocquevillian way of understanding the problems of civil society from culturally rooted factors and patterns. It is from a process embedded in structures of the society (horizontal analysis) that this research unpacks and explains the logics of the failure of civil society expansion to lead to democratization in Rwanda. The following section illustrates the systematic format in which the research was conducted.

Hypotheses

This research tests three potential explanatory causes for the unimproved relationship between state and civil society. The independent variables that I test are poor economic conditions and shallow institutions, and political culture). The first two are commonplace in mainstream inquiries seeking to explain a series of political, security, or even economic outcomes in Africa. This research tests them not as a static outcome, but as a process and an expression of other major static factors. I started with the premise that both economic conditions and institutional arrangements do not constitute inhibiting factors to the failures of civil society to affect the democratic trajectory in Rwanda. Rather, the research started off with an assumption that the economic component and institutions in Rwanda are both a medium and an expression of a more salient factor to the problem than absolutely independent explanatory variables to it. The third and major hypothesis the research has tested is political culture. It is the major explanatory variable to the focus of this inquiry: what accounts for the failures of civil society to shape the democratic trajectory in Rwanda?

These three variables have exposed the unexplored and hidden logics out of which the Rwandan civil society emerged and to which it has been responding. They are poor economic conditions, lack of favorable political institutions, and an unfavorable political culture. Investigating these three variables will lead, first, to understanding why civil society has failed at its work to enable democracy in Rwanda; then, to identifying the real social forces to which Rwanda's large and apparently vibrant civil society organizations are responding.

Hypothesis 1: <u>Lack of financial self-reliance undermines the strength and forestalls the ability of civil society groups to address the state in autonomous and wide-ranging ways</u>. From Machiavelli to Inglehart and Welzel, economic conditions have been tied to democratic transition and consolidation, insofar as democracy and poverty are unharmonious. Machiavelli would say that it is difficult to be both poor and a good civic subject at the same time. In other words, economic capacity transforms social and political structures by bestowing the necessary power upon the middle class, which then demands a democratic polity (Moore 1993). The idea behind this reasoning is that democracy and poverty are unharmonious, and that economic development, by transforming the social structure, sets a stage for making democracy possible (Lipset 1959; Limongi and Pzreworski 1997). Central to the economic theory to democratization is the significance of an economically viable middle class in arbitrating the democratic polity. The belief is that economic development transforms the polity by guaranteeing most electoral power to the middle-class. In other words, an economically strong middle class is important to those people who are not poor are the ones likely to participate intelligently in politics. This literature draws on what came to be known as 'modernization theory' or 'modernization and cultural change' (Inglehart and Welzel 2005). There is also a consensus (idem) over the belief that poorer countries tend to move into nepotism and a political system that supports friends and kin while a society divided between a large impoverished mass and a small favored elite would result either in oligarchy (dictatorial rule of the small upper stratum) or in tyranny (popularly based dictatorship). Although The argument does not connect development to democracy *per se,* it draws a consequential association between the two. That is to say, a concatenation of systemic events (industrialization, education,

reforms, etc.) will all make democracy possible by transforming the social and political structures that make democracy possible.

Applying this theory to Rwanda, the deduced testable proposition is that the inability of civil society in Rwandan democratic life was primarily a function of its lack of economic autonomy and vitality, but also a result of civil society operating in a poorly resourced economic environment. However, while this proposition is evidently plausible, there was no anticipation that it would reveal a response fully connecting civil society to a failed democratization process. Instead, the economic condition is one medium via which civil society manifests cultural attributes in the process of democratization.

Hypothesis 2: <u>The absence of an institutional framework openly favoring anti-governmental activism has impinged on strong engagement of civil society into national democratic life without fear or restraints</u>. By virtue of rules and by stewarding legal protection of individual rights, institutions allow predictable outcomes of actors in all democratic arenas (Przeworski 1997; Lipset 1959 & 1990; North 1989; North 1991). In that sense, institutions are the safeguard of the rules of the political game. Therefore, activists, usually backed by civil society groups, obtain the freedom to engage in political activism and call out the state within their freedom in the manner that guarantees them no harm or any form of repression but rather predictable outcomes. Therefore, from this, I hypothesize that the failure of civil society to lead to political liberalization in Rwanda is a direct result of lack of institutionally protected rules allowing for a cadre of politically active associations. Testing this hypothesis has provided an extended view over the extent to which institutional arrangements have historically restrained an active incorporation of civil society groups into the political life in Rwanda.

Hypothesis 3: <u>The political culture framing the aspirations of civil society engenders strong resistance to liberal democratic practices, which keeps change in political behavior from unfolding</u>. Only a few scholars—amongst whom de Tocqueville (2000), Inglehart (1988); Inglehart and Welzel (2005); Huntington and Harrison (2000); and Putnam (1993)—see the basis for democratic political development as rooted in a set of democracy-prone cultural logics. Understanding the influence of politico-cultural norms on civil society behavior in Rwanda is central to this hypothesis. This research has utilized cultural determinants to analyze the complex realities connecting civil society to democracy in Rwanda. Understanding civil society's failures in democratizing the state were explained through examination of the effects of culture on state and civil society relations in Rwanda. I examined the enduring effects that culture has had in inhibiting the transformation of Rwandan politics via civil society. More particularly, I sought to determine the degree to which the shallow behavior of civil society in promoting democratization was a function of the Rwandan cultural values and the overall cultural belief system on the matter of state.

To know what truly accounts for the discrepancies between expectations and achievements of civil society, an approach different from previous inquiries calls for consideration. To address the need for a different approach, I take interest in the history of civil society. I seek to trace behavioral patterns justifying any democratizing disconnect in the evolution of civil society in Rwanda. Digging into the histories provides us with the evidence for explaining how the actual civil society arose, as opposed to the one that some scholars theoretically imagined would arise. I move the focus from mechanical to organic constitution of civil society forces in Rwanda.

This organic approach, which consists in exploring the workings of civil society from its horizontal constitutive elements, provides us with more nuanced and richer explanations than the traditional normative approach, which consists in gauging civil society against standards exterior to the context. The history of civil society in Rwanda—its growth and development—is germane to understanding its failures. That is why taking interest in the *processes* that led to the production of this civil society, not the extemporaneous outcome of it, gives us a frame of reference anytime we seek to explain it in relation to democracy.

Research Design

One unique feature of this inquiry is that it does not follow the traditional "normative" approach to dealing with the problems of civil society whether in Rwanda or anywhere else for that matter. Rather than approaching the question from the dominant view—which rests on just the verticality of the state - civil society relations—this research focuses on the horizontal processes and the constitutive forces of civil society to explain the failures of civil society and democratization relationships. It explores the problem in a novel way, namely, by breaking away from the recurring assumption that civil society is an already established entity and that the state is a powerful entity constantly repressing civil society. Instead, the research has examined the problems of civil society as a phenomenon embedded in the structures of the society first. I take what I refer to as "an organic approach" to understanding problems of civil society state relations and why those have been democratically unfruitful. This research is a new attempt to present the patterns having shaped the ineffective behavior of civil society in democratic processes as primarily developmental rather than functional.

This methodological (but also conceptual) shift is important considering that the dominant view has created a pervasive assumption that civil society is a composite platform of interests in which there is, as Migdal (2004) complains, a "harmonious consensus" (p. 132) every time it engages with the state. Such view, by dwelling on just the capacity of the state in dealing with democratic processes, undermines the wide array of cultural, structural, societal, and many other complex realities that give impulse to civil society groups, that connect them to it, and hence define the behavioral patterns of their leaders. My approach embraces and explores those ignored layers of civil society so as to determine how those features intrinsic to civil society itself have crippled its ability to be an effective source of democratization.

Moving to the more explicitly methodological front, this inquiry is distinct in that it builds from out-of-routine type of data. Instead of relying chiefly on existing datasets and orthodox modeling, I have relied on in-depth semi-structured (and at times informal) interviews with a wide array of respondents representing and connected to all segments of civil society in Rwanda. I, as a student of Rwanda and also a student of Rwandan origins, organized such interviews in a manner that presented an advantage over a non-Rwandan researcher. My familiarity with layers of the socio-cultural context, but also my (local) linguistic and social aptitudes were suitable to garner a new brand of information that is pertinent to the hidden workings of the democratic game and civil society in Rwanda.

Table 1.1: Number of Organizations Selected by Category and Geographic Location

	North	South	East	West	Kigali City	Total
Mushrooms	2	2	2	2	0	**8**
Balloons	0	0	0	0	6	**6**
Minions	0	0	0	0	2	**2**
Total	**2**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**8**	**16**

My data selection preference was motived by the fact that although existing datasets as well as other statistically-oriented techniques (such as structured interviews and surveys) are useful, they have considerable limitations in this type of phenomenological study. In Rwanda for example, just as in many other societies in Africa, it is very possible to be orthodox and methodologically flawless in an inquiry and yet fall short on the validity and thus quality of findings. Asking a good and structured question in a society (like Rwanda) that is regulated by subtlety and imperceptible political realities, does not necessarily profit to the rigor of inquiry or make it any less invulnerable. Rather, it is by immersing into the daily realities of the local community, by targeting respondents with rich information at the right time, by learning the second meaning of contextual messages, and by talking to them in their language, that one can truly increase the chances of gathering information most germane to the inquiry. It is one thing to analyze what people express in Rwanda, but fathoming what they mean or think is another. Therefore, extended familiarity with the contextual realities and sensibilities was of a crucial advantage in this research.

Considering that I could not study every country of Africa to understand how their civil society functions, this single-case research has begun a new scholarly movement to re-examine civil society in the continent. My research has thus focused on Rwanda, with the intent that its significance will be relevant to other cases in Africa. It aimed to critically and systematically analyze the shape and content of contemporary civil society in Rwanda

to understand the logic of its behavior in light of democratization process. I particularly intend to assess factors continuously precluding the Rwandan civil society from being a democratizing factor.

Table 1.2: Interviews (FGDs and Semi-structured dialogues) between 2012-2015

	North	South	East	West	Kigali City	Total
Grassroots – FGDs						
Mushrooms	16	14	12	14	0	**56**
Balloons	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	**-**
Minions	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	**-**
Key Informants						
CSO personnel						
Balloons	0	0	0	0	16	**16**
Minions	0	0	0	0	7	**7**
*Other CS experts**	0	0	0	0	9	**9**
The State						
MINALOC	0	0	0	0	*1*	*1*
Parliament (LC)	0	0	0	0	*3*	*3*
Parliament (UC)	0	0	0	0	*1*	*1*
NURC	0	0	0	0	*2*	*2*
RGB	0	0	0	0	*3*	*3*
RDB	0	0	0	0	*1*	*1*
RCA	0	0	0	0	*1*	*1*
International						
USAID	0	0	0	0	*2*	*2*
EU	0	0	0	0	*1*	*1*
NPA	0	0	0	0	*2*	*2*
GTZ	0	0	0	0	*1*	*1*
Swiss Cooperation	0	0	0	0	*2*	*2*
Total	**16**	**14**	**12**	**14**	**52**	**108**

* Included members of academia, research institute, private consultants, and a member of the Rwanda Private Sector Federation (PSF). LC means Lower Chamber of the parliament, while UP stands for Upper Chamber of the Parliament, or the Senate. This table does not encapsulate every single conversation I held in the margins of the events I attended, the organizations I visited, and other planned activities throughout this research, nor does it capture the frequency of interviews where those occurred with the same individual more than once.

Methods

This is a qualitative study. It consisted of process tracing to establish causal mechanisms among culture, civil society, and democracy. I utilized the techniques of semi-structured interviews conducted between Spring 2012 and Fall 2016, archival research which included secondary resources and existing literature on the subject and Rwanda, reflexivity, and secondary analysis of data from the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) published between 2005 and 2016, the Demographic Health Survey of 2015, the National Unity and Reconciliation Barometer, the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) 2016, the Civil Society Platform Mapping Report (2011), publications from civil society organizations, as well as other quantitative information on Rwanda available in the United States. This select set of data provided hard evidence on the Rwanda's civil society – democratization phenomenon. They shed light on the problematic disconnect that exists between the democratization project (that started in the 1990s) and the actual domestic realities of civil society organizations. They were invaluable to prove the limitations of programs that are still underway in creating a new democratic course in Rwanda.

A part of my interviews was done and or completed over Skype from Miami. Because there is no way to achieve a perfect sampling, my interviews relied on a purposive selection of groups and individuals making sure to reflect all regions of the country, the plurality of their activities, the dynamics of domestic politics, their various abilities and strengths, and the international support they receive. The investigation included actors at local, national, and international levels. This was a single case analysis and has covered Rwanda between 1959, when Rwanda transitioned from monarchical a republic system, to

2018, marking the latest episode in Rwanda's political evolution which included constitutional amendment that led to President Kagame's third term in office. This timeframe (1959 to 2018) spans three different regimes that I also refer to as three separate republics, or three political systems.

The first hypothesis sought to examine whether the ineffective behavior of civil society on the question of democratization was a result of lack of financial autonomy allowing them to address the state in an independent and effusive way. To test that, I have investigated the sources of their funding, whether they had sustainable mechanisms for revenue generation in place such as recurrent contributions by constituencies. I also asked leaders of the selected groups to name organizations or individuals funding them, by how much, and under what conditions. I asked them to name actions they expended their resources on. I asked them to name examples of any policies they have helped create or influenced with their resources. I also asked them to describe what they envisioned their organization to look like under times of funding. Some of this information was available on their websites and in various reports and publications they gave me. Because groups do not have equal financial power, I was particularly interested in assessing whether those groups with greater financial wherewithal did more and better with respect to democratization and their relationship with the state. I was interested in determining whether the more financially advantaged groups had greater influence in the state's policy formation processes.

The second hypothesis sought to establish the association between civil society's failures and the history of Rwanda's political institutions. To test that, I examined the laws, rules, and regulations governing civil society. I looked at the laws that Rwanda has had

between the 1960s and 2015 to determine how favored or restrained such groups became with legal provisions and regulations in place. I also examined the state bodies overseeing NGOs and the ways they operate. These included requirements (financial, organization, membership, goals, mission, statements, and other bureaucratic conditions) for registration of an NGOs, renewal processes (requirements and frequency), and banning, fining, and censuring an organization. I also examined this process at the community, local, and national levels. In particular, I examined the actions of civil society during the 1990-1994 period, when political space was relatively opened more than at any other time. Documents on the government's websites, archival materials, secondary research publications, political speeches, and brochures were instrumental towards obtaining this information.

The third hypothesis tested the influence political culture has exerted on the ability of civil society to influence the Rwandan polity. I explored political culture—as a set of common beliefs, values, and habits—by examining three major behavioral features: first, *deference to the state* or the anticipatory obedience the public has consistently given the state in Rwanda; second, *risk aversion*, or the habit of people to operate a rational choice when there is a perceived threat to individual or collective security in the face of political actions; and third, *social trust*, in particular, the ability of non-state actors to work and "bridge" other social differences during common political activism. I examined, compared and contrasted this dynamic in three different time periods of Rwanda's political history: 1962-1989, 1990-1994, and 1994-2015. That includes civil society's major actions, achievements, and behavior towards the state's authority during and after the Genocide. Furthermore, I also conducted participant observation at events such as *Umuganda* and plenary sessions in the parliament to identify areas and cases of state-civil society mutual

influence. I analyzed secondary resources and archival materials on how Rwandans respect

authority and elect officials. I analyzed political speeches related to civil society. Other

secondary research materials have provided me with valuable indications on social trust in

Rwanda and how it has shaped the relationship between citizens, groups, and the state.

CHAPTER III

RWANDA'S CIVIL SOCIETY – STATE RELATIONS: AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

To answer the question central to this research—*why has the expansion and deepening of civil society not led to political liberalization in Rwanda as mainstream political science expected*—requires us to look for a historical foundation of the contemporary civil society. It demands us to examine the historical, social, and cultural preconditions that bestowed some specific forms to the relationship and interactions that the state and all organized societal forces have maintained in the governance Rwanda. In other words, to what extent is contemporary civil society activism consistently rooted in the evolution of such groups? And, in what ways is the current state – civil society relationship a function of the political, socio-economic, and or cultural goals and trajectory of civil society groups? Since we know that the history of civil society in Rwanda, as an organized entity, predates 1990—a period corresponding with political liberalization in continental Africa—it is important to examine key moments that forged civil society's relations with the state in the political history of Rwanda.

Revisiting the social environment and major political events that contextualized the development of Rwandan civil society is crucial for gauging the democratic outcomes that theorists and the world community await it to produce. It is useful to trace civil society's behavioral nature in the past if we truly want to understand the origins of its weak connection to democratization. Then we will be able to formulate useful recommendations for future democratic projects, not just in Rwanda but also in other comparable contexts beyond it.

In this chapter, I examine whether the failures of civil society to transform into a vital force for democratic change in Rwanda's governance are a result of some interruption caused by events of the history, or whether they are organically tied to its evolutionary basis. That is, if civil society was not democratically vivacious prior to 1990, then the answer must lie in the historical basis that it took roots from. Similarly, if the enforced democratization movement of 1990 did not improve the democratic prospects of civil society to improve Rwanda's polity, it then suggests that other internal logics explain better the failure of Rwanda's democratization before and after the 1990s. And such intrinsic logics are worth investigating. That is why, the context and the history to the Rwandan civil society provide a valuable framework for understanding the hidden logics that have always driven its linkages to democratic governance. And it is by understanding such logics that we can usefully gauge civil society's future potential to produce democratization.

Historical materials examining the evolution of the Rwandan civil society are relevant to this research in the sense that elsewhere that civil society was successful, e.g., Northern Italy (Putnam 1993) or the United States (de Tocqueville 2000), patterns of state-civil society relations had evolved that were central to each success story. In every case of American or European successful democratization was always a story of "path dependency" that supported it. That is why a diachronic review of civil society as well as of the environmental context that gave life to it is crucial to understanding its present identity and, importantly, its association with democratization processes in Rwanda. Tracing the logic of its democratic behavior in the history serves well our quest to understanding what it has accomplished, and what it has failed to accomplish and why.

And central to that effort is the question of whether the environment where it grew up provided enabling or inhibiting conditions. This chapter discusses and describes the ways in which cultural contexts, political and historical events, economic realities, as well as other social and political forces have all worked in tandem, creating another culture that systematically works against enforcement of the civil society project.

How have the social, cultural, and political environments facilitated or hampered the Rwandan civil society to support or undermine the liberal and liberalizing values ethos? Most inquiries have varyingly explored this question, but only to give partially satisfying answers. We still do not yet know why civil society not only has failed to be a vibrant democratizing force, but also continues to show no prospect for such success. Analyses have treated civil society as a static outcome—as if democratization begins anytime activist groups form—and not as a process indicator—as though there is no such thing as a history of success. The ontology of success of civil society is taken for granted. The politico-cultural environment in which civil society originates is often ignored and dismissed from the analysis.

This chapter shows that civil society has failed to effectuate democratic goals in Rwanda that the mainstream theory expected primarily because the cultural environment it was introduced in was and is still strong enough to be replaced by it. It demonstrates both cultural and historical difficulties that a liberal civil society has consistently and powerlessly encountered throughout its emergence to grow democratic governance in Rwanda. In this chapter, I also showcase the contextual complexities that clashed with, resisted, and wound up dominating the advent of an organized civil society with the effects that have persisted to this day. There is a domestic context that has morphed the logics

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around which both the state and civil society in Rwanda derive their relational patterns. In addition, that context derives from a set of specific social truths, economic realities, and political events that have transformed the Rwandan political fabric as a whole. Furthermore, it is also a context most essentially framed by cultural saliences at the core of the Rwandan political behavior. In that sense, this chapter shows that the advent and success of democratization in Rwanda could not have been brought about by civil society, insofar as it did not draw on organically cultivated democratic forces. In other words, the democratic development project in Rwanda consistently faced cultural and systematic impediments that were too strong to be overcome given.

Typifying the Rwandan Civil Society

Many scholars writing about civil society in Africa have maintained a broad view of it, but too broad to explain its connection to various democratic strands in Africa (see for example, Bratton 1989; 1994; Harbeson *et al.* 1994). While I use a broad definition of civil society, there is a need to catalogue those groups and typify them based on and in relation to their democratic goals. There is a plethora of groups who fall under the civil society umbrella, but the challenge to the utilization of this aggregate understanding of it is that not all groups share aims and values when we attempt to link them to democracy.

Exactly what types of civil society groups have socio-economic, cultural, and political conditions produced in Rwanda? That is where understanding the problems of Rwandan civil society groups begins. In other words, there is a need to explain the difficulties of civil society to change the polity from its evolutionary context if we truly seek to understand its behavioral rationale. The quality of its work is as much a result of the forces that drove its beginning as in the nature of organizational identities they have

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morphed into throughout the years. Furthermore, specifying the categories of civil society we find in Rwanda enables us to make useful connection between their identities and the expectations we have of them with respect to democratization.

One could come up with numerous categorizations depending on the analytical criteria in play.[12] I have categorized the plurality of associational groups of Rwanda into three types: *Mushrooms, Balloons,* and *Minions*. This catalogue provides a useful and practical framework to link them to democratic expectations in Rwanda. To lump all civic associations together is to treat them as if their values and aims were all hardwired to feed into political objectives. But I also consider that speaking of civil society needs to embrace the wide array of segments comprised in the associational umbrella. Such definitional conception also echoes Timothy Longman's (1999, 354) view that understanding the full variety and orientation of civil society activity provides the best context to explain the complex nature of political and economic structures in Africa. And not only does my categorization show the economic limits of each type, it also delineates the political characteristics and boundaries that separate them. It demonstrates the affordability, the accessibility, and the nature of restrictions those groups face as far as the question of political capital is concerned. The characteristics provided in the left most-column of Table

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[12] Some (activists in Rwanda) find the current civil society to be a four-dimension conglomerate of groups worth categorizing by a series of metrics. Socially, there are church groups (and many segments of groups within a church), anti-Genocide groups, survivors' solidarity groups, women groups, youth organized structures, etc. Economically, there are loans and saving schemes (tontines mutuelles), farmers, cooperatives, business groups, etc. Humanitarianly, there are Twa minority representation structures, widows, orphans, etc. Politically, there are human rights activists, anti-corruption, anti-Genocide negation leagues, political transparency, etc. In the past, Peter Uvin (1999, 163-167) studied the groups that existed in Rwanda before the Genocide and provided a more economic categorization framework: a) Cooperative, b) Farmers' organizations, c) Tontines and informal associations, d) Foreign and local development NGOs, and e) Churches. The problem with either of such catalogues is that neither of them permits us to determine their connection to democratic goals both locally and nationally. It is difficult to know which group is concerned when we aggregately refer to them as "civil society." I have provided a politically practical catalogue which enables us to draw a better link they each share with political liberalization processes.

3.1 below represent a synthesis between the standards used by the World Bank on governance and accountability and the actual type of work of civil society I observed in Rwanda. I divided the work of CSOs into a three category index, reflecting CSOs with political activism as their primary vocation, those that are purely service delivery oriented, and those whose true objectives are difficult to tell given their flip-flopping nature.

Table 3.1: Cataloguing Rwanda's civil society based on observed indicators of democratization and participatory governance

		Mushrooms	Balloons	Minions
Politically	Challenge the state and advocate human rights	N	N	N
	Agenda set through international logics/principles	N	Y	Y
	Influence national policies and election as watchdog	N	N	N
	Routinely aware of and active in policy formations	N	N	Y
Neutrally principled	Actively participate in local public affairs	Y*—	N	N
	Democratic internal regulations and procedures exist	Y	N	N
	Does not depend on external funding to run activities	Y	N	N
	Engage citizens one way or another in their action	Y	N	N
	Vote and have regular budget to run activities	Y	Y	Y
	Has extra financial needs to execute their goals	Y	Y	Y
	Territorially projected and close to constituencies	Y	N	N
Service delivery	Concrete actions to develop members & society exist	Y	N	N
	Essentially self-promote via economic goals	Y	Y	Y
	Exert social influence in community of some kind	Y	Y	Y
	Organically stem from and are connected to society	Y	N	N
	Solidarity (social capital) is central in their action	Y	N	N

Note: where *Y*_*— indicates that the activity is done to a marginal degree. The table mirrors the mix nature of Rwanda's environment of civil society. It shows the difficulties and chances of civil society to converge efforts and win the state-oriented democratization struggles.

"*Mushrooms*" are civic groups emerging in rural areas, where more than 80% of the population still lives. Members of these mushrooming organizations are people who have consistently been part of some organized collective life of proximity. Politically, they

are vulnerable because they are devoid of significant influence. Members of *mushroom* groups are mundanely low economic status villagers, disconnected from the central power apparatus and are circumscribed in the arenas of power at the village or *Cell* level. Nonetheless, those members are driven by an organic commitment to solving local problems. Their activities range from mutual visitations or taking a meal to a peer who is ill, to building a bridge that connects villages or repairing a community water system in defect. While the Genocide tore apart the groups and the dense associational fabric around which members of the society converged, such movement has resurged after the Genocide. Today, there is an estimate of 190,000 grassroots associations in Rwanda (Rwanda Development Board 2011). They increase inexorably every day; they grow and expand, like mushrooms. *Mushrooms* differ from other groups in the sense that they organically sprout. They are a result of grassroots initiatives between neighbors in a village and are a local problem solving driven. That explains why their economic capacity is limited and hence their vulnerability to all forms of exploitations and cooptation. By all accounts, such groups are not created by external initiatives. Instead, they carry purely parochial goals and are locally focused without national ambitions. They function on the basis of members' contributions and other small scale economic activities such as vegetables farming, cattle raising, or talents based performance. Their governance reflects pure democratic principles, with clear internal rules and laws on how leadership positions are filled and transmitted. They are a materialization of that concept of laboratory of democracy that Putnam (1999) and de Toqueville (2003) developed. *Mushrooms* are generally detached from the aid community by virtue of their marginal influence, which too is a result of their inaudible rustic voice. Their involvement in national affairs is quasi

inexistent. Conversely, their influence is palpable at the village level and it can stretch as far as the local governing structures because they are consulted in various circumstances by local officials.

"*Balloons*" swing and sway in their visions, missions, and actions depending on political and economic opportunities and realties of the moment. They may be connected to the lower levels of the society, but in an inauthentic and temporary fashion. Their leaders have the potential to accept governmental or other political positions in the course of their existence. Unlike mushroom groups, leaders of *Balloon* organizations bear an elevated education profile, are duplicitously vocal, and have learned the tactics and strategies for self-development. Such leaders have, in most instances, occupied visible positions in the community or are simply a result of individual caliber that is most likely to raise them to political positions or international NGO prominence. *Balloons* also play some roles in non-civil society institutions such as higher education or research and policy analysis but to a marginal degree that is only suitable to the temporary goals of their donors. Their areas of intervention range from service delivery to human rights advocacy, but they generally do not engage in politically sensitive advocacy or in a serious way if they attempt to. They are not financially independent and their survival is unlikely should their financial support collapse. These groups sometimes start off as independent, before they are, mostly for economic pressure, coopted.

"*Minion*" groups function to show to the state and the public that they run activities demonstrating their direct involvement in solving the problems of the community. But, in actuality, they are a detached from the depth of local realities and the daily lives of average citizens. They are superficially connected to rustic communities. They do not implement

their own agenda; instead, they are constantly reinforcing that of their ideological mentors. *Minion* groups exist for both the government and foreign NGOs. Those operating in the wing of the state are close to power (money and influence) but rarely translate those into practical social change. Those operating under the wing of foreign groups are rarely in good terms with the state. By and large, *Minions* are trapped between the pressure to please donors and the controlling strategies of the government. A dynamic stemming from this form of cooptation has led to a divide that sets major NGOs as either pro- or anti-government. That tension arises from the very nature of Rwanda's post-Genocide dynamics, which subsumes the work of NGOs into a "with" or "against" the state dichotomy (see Gready 2010; Middleton and O'Keeffe 1997, 115-7). A number of groups characterized as non-state friendly and foreign influence driven have been suspended while their international counterparts have in fact been expelled from Rwanda in the past (USAID 1996, 54).[13] *Minion* groups activities are invisible or do little to solve democratic or major societal problems. Their presence in the general political landscape has more to do with the strategic goals of specific individuals or groups than a genuine quest to improve the lives of constituencies in a significant manner.

Prior to the Genocide, most organizations that were nationally set fit the category of *Minions.* Uvin (1999, 176) describes how most NGOs of the time were skilled at exploiting the shallow space that the aid community left between disconnected goals of

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[13] In December 1995, the government of Rwanda expelled 38 foreign NGOs and activities of 18 more (mostly locals) that were working with the former were suspended. The European Union made a public denouncing announcement but that did not lead to any concrete action. See Official Journal of the European Communities, C 17, Vol. 39, January 22, 1996, p. 0204. A report by USAID in 1996 also depicted the tumultuous relations that existed between NGOs and the government of Rwanda during that crisis era in the political life of Rwanda (USAID 1996, 54-57). The report particularly highlighted the complicated balance that was absent between an expression of freedom that such (well off) NGOs enjoyed in Rwanda while the state officials and personnel pained to even transport themselves to execute their duties.

fostering them as shapers of democratic societies on the one hand and contingents meant to vulgarize seeds of development. Hence, because those NGOs needed the aid to survive, they did very well at the "talk the talk and walk the walk" of the development enterprise. That is the same trend that we are still observing among the *minions* of today. It makes it not just difficult but also ironic on the part the funders to continue the same strategy while outcomes have not changed since the 1970s.

Delineating Rwanda's Civil Society Over Time

Another key element to understanding civil society in Rwanda is its evolution over time; that is its correspondence to different eras and epochs in which such groups have existed and the ways in which different political times pushed it to mold, change, and adapt its behavior. There are three distinctive epochs in Rwanda's political life in understanding how Rwanda's civil society has evolved. First, there is the pre-initiation of civil society period. That is the period between 1959 and 1990. That timeframe is characterized by a continuation and perpetuation of lack of alternative opposition in the polity, a tradition of one-party rule, complacency towards domestic politics on the part of world powers, a period of civil society of one-party, and a period when there were virtually no alternative voices to civil society in Rwanda (and in most Africa). I describe that epoch as *'the era of indigenous civil society in Rwanda.'* It is divided into two subsets, *pre-Republic* (before independence) and a *pre-democratization* (before the third wave) categories of civil society.

Next is the period between 1990 to 1994, corresponding to Rwanda's encounter with the Third Wave of Democratization in the continent that Huntington characterized as the arrival of the "democratic revolution" (1991, 33). Civil society was enforced during

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that period. The political space opened more than at any other time in the previous history of independent Rwanda. It was Rwanda's democratic transition moment. During that time, a series of democratic reforms took place. The Rwandan constitution was revised to accommodate voices that an organized civil society represented, which led to a crescendo of organized groups that were vocal. Political parties were now permitted and a favorable legal framework was enacted. All those changes gave hope to actors who sought to instill liberalization into Rwanda's political system. In everyone's eyes, Rwanda was on the verge of a democratic revolution. However, that period also accounts for the collapsing of the same democratic experiment that Rwanda went through. In less than four years, all the vibrancy of civil society and of other political opposition that democratization had unleashed evaporated. More particularly, mid-1994 marks the end (and the absence) of an enforced civil society. The hope that recent civic associations had inspired inside and outside the country quickly eroded. And Rwanda rapidly descended into the Genocide. The existing civil society groups had ethnically fragmented, causing many of its constituencies to collaborate with the extremist regime and to participate in the crimes. That period is crucial to understanding the logics having, since years before, produced an unchanging type of civil society in Rwanda. I call it *"the 'revolutionizing' period for civil society and democracy."*

The last critical moment in understanding the evolution of civil society and its connection to democracy in Rwanda is that which began from the second half of 1994 to 2017, the year in which constitutional amendments occurred, allowing Kagame to re-run for a third term in office. It is an epoch marking the resurgence of civil society, which previously had gone dark and virtually dead, in the Rwandan political life. It is when

Rwanda experiences what I refer to as a *renaissance of civil society* in its *Mushroom*, *Balloon*, and *Minion* trilogy. It is a period with a unique comparative content to the extent that we seek to understand the ways in which the new civil society would emerge and be expected to function differently from that which has existed before. To the extent that the post-Genocide civil society emerged out of a set of different logics and also lessons from the past, there is a need to connect that context to the behavioral outcomes we see in contemporary groups. It is important to understand the type of incentives that currently exist in Rwanda to embark civil society onto another aggressive expedition for democratization following the failures from the past. I describe this third epoch "*a period for realist civil society and democratization*" in Rwanda's polity.
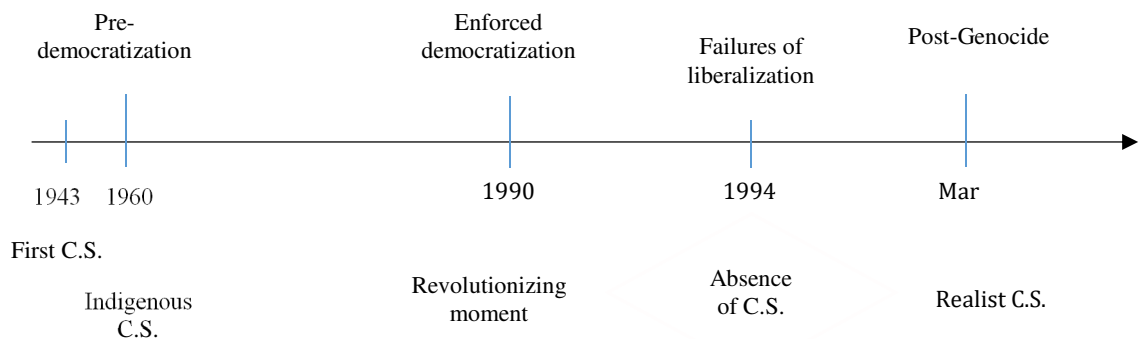
Figure 3.1: Rwanda Civil Society Evolution Chart

Connecting 'failures' of civil society to the past

In this section, I seek to determine whether there were constituent parts of democratic principles—such as defense of human rights, promotion of individual freedom and civil liberties, or even engagement in other public affairs matters like fighting corruption—embedded in Rwanda's pre-1990 civil society. Is the disconnect between civil society and democratization something that its evolution has consistently inherited or is it rather an outgrowth of forces exterior to that civil society? Were there civic engagement forces imbued in the formation of civil society groups and in the type of activism they led since their inception? To what goals was the nature of the relationship such groups have always kept with the state?[14] In particular, was there a direct association between the inabilities of civil society to successfully stand up for a liberal democracy and the type of forces that influenced it and gave it the impetus to take off. In other words, comprehending the dynamics that defined civil society at the hour of independence is elemental to understanding why it has evolved its current relationship with democratic ideals. It will enable us to understand the sources of its values in Rwanda's political life over time. Lastly, I seek to determine why the accomplishments of Rwanda's civil society have not measured up with the democratic ideals it was always expected to uphold.

As the evidence shows, the rise of the first civil society in Rwanda emerged out of a whole set of logics that were different than those aiming to create alternatives to the state's unassailably dominant behavior. The kind of groups then representing civil society were a response to demands dissimilar to those that democratic forces seek to inculcate in Africa's public life. Instead, the groups we find in pre-1990s Rwanda emerged because

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[14] Uvin (1998, 165) defines civic engagement is defined as an active participation of people in public affairs.

the state wanted them as supportive instruments to the state system. The state, via its mighty apparatus, helped create civil society. The first idea to lead to creation of civil society in Rwanda came from the state early in the 1940s. The state was not benevolently looking to create a force that would challenge it; it was a creative way that the state had found to bolster itself. Such groups did not emerge to address or challenge the state in any form. They were instrumental to the fulfillment of the state's developmental agenda. They were not meant to alter the vision that the state had of state-civil society relations. Civil society groups, in a way, represented the state's plan implemented through them.

Cooperatives are the oldest organized civil society groups in Rwanda. In fact, the first group to ever have an organizational structure and a financial framework began in 1943. It was a cooperative that processed milk in Nyanza, south of Rwanda, in the surroundings of the chief area of the monarchy and the colonial rule Uvin (1999, 164). The first movement of organized groups was composed of workers but they were required to produce goods that directly supported commercial and export interests of the colonial system. The cooperative in Nyanza, like many others that followed, had a development mandate that the colonial rule had fixed for them to implement its economic agenda (idem). Musahara (2012, 3) believes that Georwanda, a mine extraction company created in 1953, was the first group in the history of cooperatives in Rwanda and that it was a direct response to a law on rural cooperatives that the colonial state of Ruanda-Urundi had just enacted. Another law was passed in March 1956 granting cooperatives the license duration of 50 years (idem). In 1957 another prominent group appeared in the history of cooperatives in Rwanda—TRAFIPRO, whose secretary—Gregore Kayibanda—would become the first

president of the first Republic of Rwanda.[15] Among other groups is the *Union des Banques Populaires du Rwanda (UBPR),* a ubiquitous set of financial networks, supported by a Swiss NGO which loaned money to private individuals and small-scale businesses, and who has today turned into one of the largest bank institutions in Rwanda.

Even after independence, the density of civil society groups in Rwanda served the new government as the reliable instrument to organize the population around the implementation of its development agenda in. It is estimated that by the independence time, 1962, already 8 cooperatives were working in Rwanda (Sentama 2009, 3; Uvin 1999; Mugesera 1987; Nzisabira 1992).[16] They all were focused on economic promotion activities. As Peter Uvin (1999: 163-8) has argued, until the 1990s, the groups that formed the civil society of that era were a direct result of an enforced national policy supported by the complacent international aid community to produce development in Rwanda. Between 1962 and 1966, the number of cooperatives rose to 36. In 1966, the government passed another law that encouraged the creation of more cooperative initiatives throughout the country. As a result, the number of cooperatives grew to 423 between 1967 and 1973, and to 1,203 between 1974 to 1980 Musahara (2012, 6). The movement on cooperatives grew even more vigorous when the government integrated it into its institutional apparatus. That is, the state launched the Office in charge of Cooperatives and Community Development, resulting in the growing the number of cooperatives to 1,528 between 1981 and 1983.

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[15] TRAFIPRO was a micro-personification of what a mini-grocery store brand looks like and was present in major towns of the then Rwanda. The exception was that TRAFIPRO was not accessible to all average Rwandan citizen with limited purchase power.

[16] Those are Georwanda, Somuki, Impala, Nkora, Abahizi, Trafipro, Thé-Ntendezi, and Codar. Sentama (2009, 3) estimates that they, altogether, had a membership mounting to 22,475 adherents. Of them, 2 were church created and closely affiliated, three focused on farming exports (coffee and tea), two were mining companies, and only one (Thé-Ntendezi) was created by Europeans and run as typical business corporate, unlike any of the other cooperatives.

Perceived by national officials as a quick avenue through which to channel development, cooperatives led to a law that even decreed the creation of the Ministry of Youth and Cooperatives in 1988.

There are two major observations to make from this history of cooperatives in Rwanda. First, membership in the cooperative movement between 1943 and 1962 was accessible to only a select few elites who were educated and had a generally advanced knowledge of the development that the government had envisioned for the society. It was a movement conceived, implemented, and managed from above, not the grassroots. It was also a movement whose initiatives aimed to empower, not to diminish the state's eminent role in the society. The forces encapsulating the elites and all the voices that could have channeled people's demands to the state were not grassroots issue driven: they were state-launched and state-controlled. Their primary motive was not to challenge or scrutinize the state in its developmental agenda or in ordering other policy matters beneficial to the wider society. That set of organized groups was a product of the state's enforced agenda. They were an integral part of the state system. A patrimonial state system—in whose eyes no one understood better the needs of the society and how to meet them—created them. The state incited the rise and the action of cooperatives. Those groups were inextricably tied into a patrimonial agenda driven by a patrimonial state. A patrimonial state—whose understanding and power transcended everything else in the ordering principles in Rwanda—created such groups and laid out a vision they followed and helped implement. And to the extent that there was no resistance that such vision encountered, patrimonialism was a crucial determinant in the birth of civil society of Rwanda dating as far back as the colonial time. Major civil society groups in Rwanda were a byproduct of a patrimonial

culture, not of a democratic one. Patrimonialism was reinforced and, to a degree, legitimized itself as an approach toward mitigating the developmental challenges the Rwandan society experienced.

The second important observation to make out of the evolution of cooperatives in Rwanda is the sheer disconnect that was between them and other organized structures existing in the society. While cooperatives represented an advanced level of self-organizing in both power and activity in Rwanda, they did not articulate a vision driven by other structures beneath them. Their vision (to empower the state first) took primacy over that of rendering marginal structures strong and independent. There was no clear line of coordination between cooperatives and the existing grassroots associational structures. And lack of a ground-up synergy among associational groups has sustained throughout the course of the civil society evolution in Rwanda. Rarely have groups with some relative advantage sought more strength from the bottom. Rather, they each seek power from above, i.e., the state and international organizational bodies. It is not because there were no other organizational forces below the structures that cooperatives represented that such a synergy still lacks in Rwanda. We know that *Mushroom* phenomenon in associational life in Rwanda since the 1960s has incrementally flourished (Uvin 1998, 163; Brusten and Bindariye 1997, 30). And yet, *Mushroom* groups have always operated in the margins of the society, i.e., outside the interest of most power financial structures. *Mushroom* groups were disconnected from both the vision and constitution of *Balloon/Minion* organizations that cooperatives represented. *Mushroom* groups existing in rural Rwanda since the 1960s included "tontines" and "farmers' groups", two of the categories that Peter Uvin (idem, 165) has extensively documented in his analysis linking associational movement and

violence in Rwanda.[17] *Balloons*, by virtue of the power and visibility they benefited from, dominated all other categories of civil society forces—particularly grassroots based mushrooms whom Uvin (idem) refers to as *tontines* and *farmers' groups*—and that deprived them of most forms of autonomy and the ability to act independently. *Balloons* or cooperatives and all other associational sectors represented by the pre-1990 Rwanda's civil society were elite driven. Members held, by comparison, far more advanced knowledge of the problems of the society than most members of *mushroom* organizations but did not use that knowledge advantage to shape civil society's trajectory as a society driven (not a state-dominated) force. The state-created elite established a vision and an unchallenged line of activism for virtually all entities qualifying as civil society. It is within that top-down, elite-engineered (not grassroots driven), state-emboldening (not populously determined), always vertical (not horizontally integrated), and patrimonial (not consultative) logic that the structures that civil society represented were born. Such represents the mechanism out of which the cultural logic that grounded *local NGOs* was born, and a state decreed ruling had to bless their entrance into activity.[18]

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[17] Uvin (1998, 165) defined the "farmers' organizations" as small-scale versions of cooperatives other times also called "pre-cooperatives." He found that nearly all of them were both a creation of and in close relationship with the state and the aid system. And according to the World Bank's report in 1989, there were 3,240 registered cooperatives and farmers' groups in Rwanda (p. 28). Nzisabira (1992, 215-258) estimated that there were 9,243 tontines '*mutualistes'* comprising around 200,000 members in Rwanda. He traces their origins in Uganda and affixes a modernization label to them (for creating human progress) through what he calls "contractualization." He categorizes them into financial, mutual aid, and contingency fund groups.
As for the "tontines," Corrèze, Gentil, and Barnaud (1982b, 107) have traced their origins in the traditional and cultural mechanism of reciprocity and mutual support. Such groups, expectedly, did not receive external funding. Unlike "cooperatives" and "farmers' groups", "tontines" are made up by the lowest financial category of citizens. They are spontaneous, ubiquitous and grow in a geometrical progression, like *mushrooms*. [Farmers' groups are also populous but they "are not the poorest" (idem, 108-9)].

[18] Among prominent local NGOs were Centre Iwacu (Center for Training and Research on Cooperatives). It was created in 1984 to be the lead research institute on cooperatives and it was a direct result of the needs of the newly created Ministry of Cooperatives and Youth. ACOR (Association for Coordination of NGOs in Rwanda) was also created in similar conditions in 1983. CCOAIB (Council for Concertation of Local Support Organizations), created in 1987, and Bureau Épiscopal du Dévelopment (BED), created in 1972, followed the same trend and consistently aligned themselves around the laws decreed by the state. Centre

Later in the 1980s, as local NGOs became neatly woven into the development vision established by the state, many *Balloons* sought to own and subsume the work of smaller organizations in the name of mentorship. They became the intermediary of more local organizations with the state. But the relationship between local NGOs and grassroots structures was not a two-way process. Far from being democratic, that relationship translated paternalistic habits that always connected the state to the society. Most local NGOs worked as umbrella organizations, coordinating a sizable number of small groups below them whom were rarely consulted. In addition to being state enforced, many local NGOs were also under a direct oversight of international organizations.[19] Just as most of their names suggested, the dominant local NGOs became known because their slogan echoed that they were taking development to the people. Addressing and challenging the state was not in the mandate they began with and continued to hold. It is out of a state-driven developmental philosophy that a formal civil society emerged. Development, not democratic governance, was the central force civil society and the state established their relationship upon from the beginning. In a way, formal civil society was pre-programmed to follow, align with, and submit to the state's vision; it was not born out of a benevolently liberalizing logic.

Iwacu was promulgated by the Ministerial Decree n°096/05 of September 12, 1984; INADES by the Ministerial Decree n° 119 of August 22, 1977, then amended by another n° 75/11 of April, 18 2006; and CCOAIB was first promulgated by a similar decree in 1987 then amended by another one nº 103/11 of July 9, 2004.

Godding in 1985 counted 268 NGOs in Rwanda and some of them were international, but most of them were born as a result of the state's enforced vision (even though many of them carried a religious identity to them too). A report by INADES, another local NGO created in 1977 aiming to provide technical assistance to local development initiatives, estimated that there were 143 registered NGOs in Rwanda in 1987 (42 non-denominational, 68 Catholics, 10 Protestants, and 1 Muslim).

[19] According to Seruvumba (1992), ACORD, CCOAIB, IWACU, and BED altogether spent Rwf 1.7 billion, managed 730 projects, and employed more than 4,000 staff members, 370 of whom were foreign technical assistants.

The state-civil society relationship has maintained its self at such standards throughout Rwanda's political epochs. Rarely have there been relationships connecting civil society to the state beyond the patron-client relationship. After Rwanda became independent in 1962, the ensuring *mushroom* groups along with *Balloon* cooperatives were carefully and systematically absorbed by the state and incorporated into its developmental agenda through legal powers of its institutions. A series of laws led to the creation of such groups and defined constraining lines around which they functioned. In the 1980s, the government optimally perpetuated those relational lines and made them arenas for a structured popular regime support system. The state's view of civil society thus comes from the logic whereby such groups are an important channel for achieving grand development plans. Despite multiple other vulnerabilities they present, formally organized (civil society) groups have perhaps never been as much focused on anything else as on serving the state's goals.

The proliferation of both *Balloons* and *Mushrooms* was an idea well thought out by the state and systematically pulled and incorporated into its system. In the real sense, they have always been an integral part of the system whose vision for them has always been to achieve goals different than liberalizing the state. Such associations represented a fledged furniture best suited to furnish the development that a patrimonial state had architected for every citizen. The state designed, owned, and set in motion a working framework and the direction of their action. There was no wiggling around this construction of the relationship that has gone on to connect civil society groups and the state. For example, the government named 1989 "the year of self-organization of the rural world" (Uvin 1998, 165). Subsequently, a special presidential fund was mobilized the same year to incentivize and

promote such initiatives. Through provision of small loans and grants, the state controlled the full action of civil society. In addition, the world community embraced the state-society relations as such; rather than challenging it, it supported it. The World Bank report in 1987 hailed the government's faith in the associational movement and argued that "the widespread presence of cooperative, associative and risk-sharing groups…[was] largely responsible for the vitality of local communities" (World Bank 1987, 28).

Development became the sole unifying factor among civil society, the population, and the state. In a sense, the development machinery—that the state has always piloted—was meant to leave no one and no organized structure off board. Development was the convenient medium via which the state recruited civil society groups and the population to line up with the power system. As the slogan on the national seal of pre-1990 period indicated (*liberté, coopération, Progrès*), just as the acronym of the then one ruling party *Mouvement Révolutionaire National pour le Dévelopement* (MRND) recapped, no one was meant to remain outside the developmental agenda in every stratum of the Rwandan society. Ntavyohanyuma (1987) has estimated that there was at least 1 farmer organization per 35 households in Rwanda before 1990, 1 cooperative per 350 households, 1 NGO per 3,500 households, and more than 12% of Rwandans belonged to mushroom organizations. As such, we can see that the same post-1994 civil society vibrancy existed in pre-1990 Rwanda. Namely, a large swathe of the population participated in civil society associations, but these did nothing to alter the state's domination.

Why Did the Political Opening of 1990 Not Help Civil Society in Rwanda?

With the advent of the Third Wave of democratization that swept through the continent in the 1990s, one would have expected this development to launch reform of civil society and the modes in which it had traditionally connected citizens and the state. One would also think that the associational capital that Rwanda had registered by 1990 was easily going to translate into change as far as governing relations were concerned. Unfortunately, however, Rwanda's political opening proved not to mark the start of democratization, but rather the long slide to the Genocide of 1994. It did not take too long to witness a nefarious fallout of the introduction of multi-party competition in Rwanda. Relative political freedom reigned in Rwanda for some three years, but there truly came no fundamental change out of it. One would even make a case that rather than enhancing the role of civil society, the political opening degraded its capacity for supporting change.

In a surprising turn, the supposedly now autonomous civil society exposed its extreme weakness and limitations during the moments leading up to and in the 1994 Genocide. Despite several reforms that the state had implemented—including a constitutional revision guaranteeing associational freedom and other civil liberties, the results became a megalomania of violence, i.e., the Genocide. The freedom that independent media enjoyed, the multi-party competition freedom, the diversity of voices expressed throughout the streets of Rwanda, numerous popular gatherings by opposition parties' constituencies, the negotiations between antagonistic forces that yielded the Arusha peace accords, the newly created transitional multi-party government, multiple other reforms and laws enforced in Rwanda's political arena including preparation for the first free and fair elections in Rwanda's then history, all proved insufficient to lift Rwanda

to democratic transition. All that democratic momentum did not produce the liberalization culture that many had hoped for. Instead, political activism resulted in the collapse of both the political system and civil society.

At the height of the Rwandan conflict in 1993, democratic forces were qualified, by the state, as enemies. Political opposition parties became conveniently lumped together with rebel forces of RPF. Then the conflict became not only regime versus opposition; it also became Hutu (the regime elite) versus Tutsi (all opposition led by RPF). Every organized group, be it a political party or civil society association, that opposed the state was dealt a fatal hand by extremist components of the state. Leaders of such groups were quickly labeled enemies of the state, tracked down, and arbitrarily assassinated (Longman 1999; Uvin 1999, 67-81). Surprisingly enough, many other groups sided with the state, often participating in the propagation of pro-Genocide propaganda and in direct killing. A dynamic along the Hutu versus Tutsi and State versus Enemy divide formed. Ethnicity quickly became the site upon which the survival of the state and the future of democracy were defined. At the apex of the Rwandan Genocide in July 1994, civil society had lost its purpose and its mere existence. The *democratizing* relationship they had attempted to erect between the state and the society had lost a sense of meaning. It is almost as if the *democratization* movement of 1990 not only did nothing to channel the demands of the people to the state, it actually unleashed forces in society that supported mass violence to save the Habyarimana regime.

There is a case to be made here that democratization, in the various forms it was implemented, helped activate violence and precipitated the downfall of the political capital in Rwanda. But this quick turn of events in Rwanda also raises the question of whether the

failure of civil society to use the opportunity of a political opening to be a strong force in democratic governance was a function of inherent internal or external causes, structural or cultural artifacts, and perhaps a direct result of the perturbed traditional state – society relationship. Both endogenous and exogenous factors were important but more deterministic were the internal strands of power structures in Rwanda. Three major factors explain the quick unraveling of state – civil society relations and the ensuing demise of the democratic experiment in Rwanda: a) a politico-cultural environment inconsonant with the liberal democratic logic, b) Rwanda's ethnicity and the Genocide, c) a return to power relational status quo in Rwanda's polity.

An Environment Inherently Inelastic to The New Multiparty Logic

To the extent that the democratization wave was about to challenge the routine in Rwanda's political *habitus*, it remains unclear how Rwanda had prepared that about-to-happen radical change in its political system. There was no evidence that there existed any cultural predilection for opposition—potentially stemming from non-state actors—to the state's imminent role in Rwanda's political habits before 1990. No other events had thus far successfully attempted to balance the state's monopolistic and inviolable power.[20] Democratization was about normatively altering that power status through institutionalization of civil liberties and a widespread set of democratic principles. But one needs to remember that there already existed some form of associational movement in Rwanda even before 1990. The difference was that such movement had conceptually and

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[20] By the state I mean a non-personalist entity. There had been a coup d'état in 1973 and Habyarimana replaced Kayibanda but the behavior of those two presidents as well as the unchallenged central role the state remained a constancy across those two republics.

practically existed in the sole logic to support, not to oppose, the state and channel its agenda for the society.   Up to that point in time, the Rwandan state had skillfully and successfully tied virtually every civic association in the society (cooperatives, church, business groups, media, education institutions) to its patrimonial power structures. It was a state omnipresent in every sphere of the society (Straus 2013; Longman 2010). Therefore, challenging that order inevitably sought to strip the state of its long-standing strands of power. By the 1980s, President Habyarimana and his government had built a state in which the population, his unique party MRND, every state agency, national symbols, and every organized entity in the land harmoniously coalesced around his goal to foster "unity" and "cooperation" for "development." When he took power through a coup in July 1973, President Habyarimana and the single legal party he subsequently created and imposed on everyone in the land claimed to encourage a "*démocratie responsable*," meaning one allowing "free expression of ideas on the condition that they were developing the *mass*" (Mfizi 1983, 61). In a sense, President Habyarimana meant that organized forces had no purpose in Rwanda unless they served and represented the pro-government vision. When he allowed political competition to infuse Rwanda's political arena, there is no doubt that he had believed that all political forces would remain within the same power logic, and that he had been assured that such forces would never go out of his reach.

But having in place laws and public announcements or constitutional reforms guaranteeing civil liberties and space for political power competition alone proved too little to undercut the causes that had inhibited a liberal democracy in Rwanda prior to 1990. Rwanda had a civil society, essentially, born to serve the state, not to oppose it or alter its traditional power *modus operandi*.   The state had purposefully created a working

framework for civil society primarily meant to bolster central power consolidation. The political landscape was hardwired to accommodate a relationship in which it was virtually inconceivable to raise a civil society with a potential to obliterate or balance the state's unchallengeable primacy. It is almost as if the attempt to alter the power structures could not have happened without mass violence. In the political environment of Rwanda, instituting an independent and strong civil society in Rwanda equated to reducing the state's absolute power. An abrupt activation of the buttons of democratization whereby the organized groups were the locus for alternative political choices accomplished no other goal than rendering the state vulnerable, and provoking a profoundly violent response. That is why democratization took off in Rwanda—a democratically palatable constitutional reform took place and a multiparty government was formed—but the distribution of power changed very little (Longman 1999, 339). The state stayed strong and all attempts to balance its power yielded results in the other direction of closing the political space. Rather than democratizing the society, liberalizing attempts summoned every reactionary force from the state, exacerbating the already poor governance, and magnifying violence in which a considerable part of the same civil society took part. The pre-democratization civil society was illiberal in conception in the first place. Nominal democratization did not render the competing social forces any more liberal. The seminal political freedom and opportunity that 1990 promised—to imbue liberal democratic values into the Rwandan governance establishment—led to a backlash against such principles in the Rwanda. Radical governance and extreme violence became the alternative to an approach that was meant to be normatively liberalizing by balancing the state's supreme power. Therefore, the failure of civil society (along with other parallel forces of democratization) owes it

primarily to its obdurate move to challenge a political culture deeply engrained in the Rwandan political society.

Identity and Genocide in the Era of Liberalization

The political freedom that came along with the normalization of a multiparty system and a freed civil society in 1990 paralleled a civil war that broke out later that same year.[21] At its apex, the Rwandan armed conflict was not only instrumental to frame an ethnic division and to serve as a pretext for Genocide by the state, it also served the same state to redraw the rules of the political game. The conflict also provided a wide array of tools to the state to assert new political directives but also to justify what had for long been its behavioral tradition when responding to other political threats. But if anything, the concomitance of conflict and democratization in Rwanda exposed the state's gravest vulnerability.

Because the liberalization of civil society coincided with the military rebellion of 1990, the state woke up with two powerful enemies in its face: democratic opposition forces represented by calumnious political parties on the one hand, and bullets shot by RPF forces on the other. The former represented an attack to the one-party (and Hutu dominated) ideology that Rwanda's power structures had rested on since independence; the latter (for the extremists) meant the arrival of a new ethnic order in which the majority would be subjected to the rule of the minority once again as it was in the pre-colonial era. To the extent that these two *enemies* (of the state) individually sought to disrupt the central

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[21] The Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), a military branch of the Tutsi population living in exile since the 1950s, led an armed rebellion from Uganda on October 1, 1990 to overthrow the then government whose leadership had been impervious to the peaceful return of the refugees.

power, it gave the state the justification for maximal usage of force and violence against the enemies. Ethnicity, hence, became the most potent mobilizing instrument for the state to respond to that dual threats. In this double-front war, the state skillfully crafted a venomous narrative conflating democratic competition and the civil war as a strategy for self-preservation. But it did so as it allowed for some symbolic (yet carefully controlled) reforms to occur at the same time as it engaged into a physical war. A multiparty government was formed, but at the same time insecurity was raging, particularly in the Northern region of Rwanda, causing significant internal displacement. Habyarimana and his inner circle in the government blamed the chaos on the opposition, meaning the Tutsi population directly. In that narrative, persuasively presented to the public, the Tutsi population was unreflectively linked to the RPF rebels, the enemy of the majority population, Hutu, and hence the enemy of the state. It then became virtually impossible to separate the democratic warfare from the physical warfare. One leading preoccupation was that the state and its majority Hutu population were under existential assault and that the common enemy was the Tutsi population, present on the warfront and also dispersed within the population. The democratic debate conveniently disappeared into the now all-attention-centered narrative about the civil war.

The internal dynamics of this conflict and democratization included a dimension of regionalism to it, further decimating all hopes for independent democratic forces to flourish. As new political parties formed between 1990 and 1993, some of them found impetus in what they saw as a single region dominated political system and emerged principally to countervail that regional dominance.[22] An anti-Northern movement emerged

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[22] Habyarimana, a Hutu leader who took power through military coup in 1973, was from the Northern side of Rwanda. Throughout his reign, his fellow Hutu Northerners dominated all major political and strategic

seeking to challenge that regionalist culture in Rwanda's politics but the irony was that it, too, comprised of exclusively Southerners. For example, PSD, the major opposition party at the time—arguably set to win had there been a competitive election in 1993—was ethnically inclusive but was essentially known as a party of Southerners coalescing against a Northern-dominated oppressive system. The South was home to the unique intellectual institution of the time: the National University of Rwanda (UNR), the geographic symbol of opposition to the single party system and also where the freedom of assembly dominated throughout the country, is in the South. The PSD was the idea of Southerners, which bequeathed it the nick-name of "the party of intellectuals" (Twagilimana 2007, 180). That was a group of elites among whose members were the good guys who vehemently fought the ethnic division sowed by the regime and later fell victim to their belief are the ones who later inherited the name of 'moderate Hutu.' The leader of PSD, Félicien Gatabazi, a Hutu, was shot killed on the evening of February 21, 1994 on his way home from a party meeting in Kigali. PSD members accused the Habyarimana system of masterminding his death since it was the only party the system had failed to split. On their side, members of the Habyarimana party blamed the "opposition," Tutsi's RPF, apocryphally because Gatabazi had discreetly revealed his intensions to break up with RPF rebels whom he first felt lenient towards (Kiesel 1994, 9). In the most chaotic political turmoil, *Abakombozi* (redeemers), a youth wing of PSD stopped the vehicle carrying Martin Bucyana, the leader CDR—a satellite party of MRND—and brutally murdered him to avenge the killing of their leader 3 days previously.

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spheres of governance, including military, finance, education, and foreign relations. He and his governing circle later became ubiquitously and unapologetically known as *Akazu,* a little house which signified a one-centered micro political dynasty.

The political turmoil of the 1990s not only perturbed the ways in which democratization was set to unravel in Rwanda, it also rearranged its political traditions quite profoundly. For example, when Agathe Uwilingiyimana became the first female to ascend to a high governmental position as Prime Minister—as a result of a pressure on Habyarimana to nominate her—it posed a serious threat to the one-party system; not because she was a voluble democrat who sought to instigate radical change in Rwanda's unidirectional political practice, but primarily because she was perceived by the Habyarimana regime as a woman like no other in their time who was capable of achieving her objectives. Uwilingiyimana had set a precedent prior to her ascendance to power prominence. She was peculiarly intelligent and competent with firm convictions and principles (Taylor 2001, 179). She was respected for her commanding and persuasive words. She had many degrees in science that she had obtained from European academic institutions. She was well spoken and was not afraid to speak her mind including criticizing the President in public. She was popular and had succeeded at galvanizing women and many men in the country against a patriarchal system that the state represented, which resulted in the birth of a first wave of organized groups in 1990. In a way, Uwilingiyimana's own story was a rebuttal to a political culture that was male-dominated and which she symbolically sought to displace. She belonged to the Hutu ethnic group but her ideas and persuasive skills reflected unifying tendencies across the identity divide. She did not seek to profit from the ethnic card that the regime had played. She believed in the power of persuasive ideas as a cure for social injustices, just as many other civil society organizations did.

Most importantly, Uwilingiyimana saw and denounced the wrongdoings and injustices numerous people were suffering from in Rwanda, including women. When she became the Minister of Education, for example, she executed stern reforms and attacked some of Habyarimana's major policies head-on.[23] Those included abolishing the proportional rule which, up to that point, promoted children from elementary to secondary school on the basis of national statistics and the 84% Bahutu-14% Batutsi- 1% Batwa *balance* policy (see Freedman *et al.* 2006, 174-192). The *Iringaniza*-balance policy purported to inject "social justice" into education and other areas (the army, diplomacy, and other public services), but by giving a disproportionate educational advantage to Hutu ethnic children and excluding many Tutsi children from education. For Uwilingiyimana, performance, not ethnic or regional background, was the only criteria upon which children were to be promoted to secondary education. She wanted to decouple education from all forms of political interference. In 1993, she directed that two armed security officials be stationed at every site where national examination took place to avoid theft of test copies and other cheating maneuvers. Her independent positions on policies, her determination, and her refusal to parallel education with favor proved to be a threat to a system that was built outside democratic principles she wanted to subject it to. She represented an antithesis to a regime system whose survival had been erected on a whole new logic for governing. To them, Uwilingiyimana represented an iconoclastic force that was poised to displace the state's immovable power. But it would prove costly when, on May 5, 1992, a group of 25

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[23] In a joint communiqué released in Kinyamateka newspaper no. 1378 of September 1992, Minister Uwilingiyimana and other opposition voices supporting her denounced the "ethnic and regional equilibrium" policy or the "quota system" in education by casting its unjust nature. The minister argued that such policy had excluded talented children from education and started to progressively change it in favor of neglected regions (Freedman *et al.* 2006, 198).

armed men stormed her residence, physically molested her in front of her children, and pillaged her house. This violence attracted a national reaction of women who, for the first time in the history of Rwanda, filled the streets throughout the country in solidarity with the molested Minister (Kiesel 1994, 9).

Uwilingiyimana's popularity among women prompted the state to take serious consideration of women and to garner more support in an organized way. With a personal involvement of the then first lady who was tied into the system, URAMA, a women development movement, was created in 1991.[24] It functioned as the female wing of the MRND party and essentially aimed to counter the threatening civil society movement that Uwilingiyimana had aroused. URAMA's *de jure* purpose was to represent all women of Rwanda and bring them into development in a practical way, but as Mageza-Barthel (2015, 58) notes, it was *de facto* "never consulted on policy matters or else rubber-stamped governmental decisions".[25] URAMA was essentially made up of elite women and represented primarily the views of regime elitist women in whose intentions some saw a tactical move for prominent women to profit on the back of the ordinary women (de Lame 2005, 388). But more singular to URAMA was that it was introduced by MRND and the regime in the name of a civil society movement which did not want to be outcompeted by Uwilingiyimana in garnering support from women. More structures like URAMA were created by MRND, but aiming primarily to annihilate rebellious actions perceived as threatening and diminishing the state's power just as the Uwilingiyimana phenomenon.[26]

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[24] URAMA stood for *Urunana rw'Abanyarwandakazi mu Majyambere* (female coalition in development).

[25] Other organizations, including PROFEMMEs, were created to countervail URAMA.

[26] One of them was *Association des Femmes Parlementaires pour la Défense des Droits de la Mère de de l'Enfant* whose action is remembered for supporting the venomous extremist rhetoric and laying the groundwork for the strategies which were used to execute the Genocide. The association is also known for

That is why, in the eyes of the regime, she represented a threat that had to be dealt with in a singular way.

By focusing on Uwilingiyimana as traitor to the nationalist Hutu cause—and dismissing her opposition competitive skills—the regime had tried to activate the most effective weapon to tilt in the new multiparty context. Some have even argued that Uwilingiyimana's assassination at the onset of the Genocide owed as much to the fact that she was a woman representing culturally revolutionary ideals, unlike others as to the simple fact that she was in the political opposition (Taylor 2001, 164-169). In a traditionally patriarchal society with salience of male dominance in political life, women had not yet risen to prominence that would allow them to reverse the gender status quo. Her advent into politics, in a highly ethnicized context, was perceived as a credible threat to the survival of the existing state system. In the extremist Hutu imaginary, the threat that Uwilingiyimana represented was perhaps higher than that represented by Tutsi elites given that she had taken moderate views and built ties with Tutsi RPF leaders, and hence had the power to appeal to both Hutu and Tutsi forces at once.

By late-1993, ethnic division in Rwanda had reached a point so high that the prior liberalization efforts became irrelevant. Instead of staying as an idea originally aimed at creating orderly governance and peace, democratization became quickly conflated with a national security crisis. A priority order emerged out of this combination. Its civil exponents lost popular support and legitimacy, became increasingly depleted, and ultimately lost that democratic war. In the public view—partially resulting from the

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having co-published an extremist pamphlet with Léon Mugesera, a Northern extremist elite known for his venomous speech in 1992, entitled *The Whole Truth on October 1992 War Imposed Upon Rwanda by Aggressors from Uganda Armed Forces* (Mageza-Berthel 2015, 58-9; Des Forges 1999, 63-4; see also Brandstetter 2001, 160). since the introduction of multiparty in Rwanda.

narrative cooked by the state—the democratization project had only sowed civil strife in Rwanda. Public opinion believed the conflict would have been of a smaller scale had democratization not complicated the strategies of the state and not forced its hand for maintaining order, given the abrupt and ubiquitous participation of people in the conflict in an attempt to save the state's survival and their own. Democratization was not a battle that the Rwandan society was ready or had organically prepared for. To be fair, while it is true that democratization would have taken a different form without the civil war and the Genocide, it is equally unclear what the course of democracy in Rwanda would have become without enforcing the political freedom of 1990 by the international community. What is though certain enough is that when the enforced liberalization veered into ethnic and regional cleavages, it prompted the state to go to extreme lengths to nullify the perceived threat, and that marked the beginning of anarchy.

A Review of Power Relational Status Quo in Rwanda's Polity Since Independence

If the way civil society developed in Rwanda was organically flawed and difficult to create liberal activism in Rwanda's public governance, the Genocide that sought to eliminate Tutsi from the public square in 1994 has intractably complicated every new attempt to promote democratic governance. Aside from fundamentally changing the sociology of Rwanda as a collective, the Genocide and the ethnic dynamics around it have closed the space for any liberal democratic movement to flourish in post-Genocide Rwanda. The Genocide has given the state power infrastructures robust enough to restore its imminence at every level of ordering the society and to supplant all other forces seeking to balance it, all in the name of avoiding reoccurrence of the past. The bar was way too high for civil society groups to aggressively address the state and to achieve, in a normative

sense, its conventional democratization objectives. To the extent that the political opening of 1990 was about making the transition from the "supreme" state to a "moderate" or diminished state possible, the state has proved savvy in using the Genocide to restore the primacy it lost between 1990 and 1994. There is a convincing justification—stemming from the horror of the Genocide—for the state to behave and act as a ubiquitous buffer against return to the evil past and to insulate society from all forms of threat against its integrity. This raises two questions. In what ways has this dynamic redesigned the behavior of civil society in Rwanda? And, can political liberalization survive in such environment despite the aspirations represented by the post-Genocide civil society? To answer these questions, it is important to first remember that not only has the Genocide transformed the workings of the state, it has equally transformed the Rwandan society and the complete architecture of its social forces.

At the state level, the Genocide has exposed the complications that political openings may entail in conflict-prone ethnic environments. That is, as Khadiagala (2004) has rightly noted, constructing a democratic governance in post-conflict societies entails "recreating a wide array of institutions against the backdrop of social and political polarization" (p.1). Because violence decimates social consensus and civic norms, post-conflict governance takes a shape-shifting focus of resuscitating effective state authority, correcting past human rights violations, and promoting social reconciliation (idem.). Both a combination of a history of violence and the difficult environment that the state inherits complicate the strategies that civil society can use to effect democracy (Schmitter 2010). A violent past sets contextual particularities in the processes of democratization in the sense that the state employs it to alert the public to the possibility of toggling into same violence

again if *nothing is done* (Wiarda 1993). But also, along that process of recreating a governable environment, the state often commits the same misstates as those it seeks to correct, including refraining and repressing political freedom. In crafting new institutions to mitigate the problems spawned by the conflict, the challenge becomes for the state to remain faithful to democratic principles, and for activists to hold the state accountable to its action, and enabling participation (Khadiagala 2004, 1).

Most projects on developing democratic governance in Rwanda since the Genocide still confront the dilemma arising from those two legitimately held and yet antagonistic views. Such projects are faced with the choice between competing objectives; that is promoting political liberalization on the one hand while remaining sympathetic to the central state role on the other. As Khadiagala maintains, when the atmosphere of transition from civil friction to peace is fragile, "donor programs seek to reconcile tensions between political order and democratic governance, state and human security, and justice and reconciliation" (idem.). The unique circumstances of the post-Genocide transition, the legacy of the Genocide, and the lingering of its effects have hampered the search for broad-based governance in Rwanda (idem, 2). The impact of the Genocide on the beliefs and the perceptions of challenging the state through democratic means has complicated the work of civil society in Rwanda. The confluence of political freedom and an armed insurgency in 1990 and the Genocide against Tutsi at the apex of that conflict rearranged the meanings attributed to the concept of political freedom in modern Rwanda. For the state, a free civil society did not intend to prop up the state but to destroy its authority. Civil society activism denoted bad intentions against the survival of the regime and of the society. There was no clear line separating armed and peaceful activism in the ethnically divided polity of

Rwanda at the time. The public had widely bought into the belief that multipartyism offered alternatives to the status quo but only for a short time because out of multipartyism also came anarchy and a political disorder. Self-expression efforts—essentially replacing the tradition of following the state's directives unquestionably—led to acute division among the population who were already ethnically vulnerable. As democratization proceeded, interethnic trust and general trust eroded overnight. The national social fabric disrupted. A lingering collective trauma, a latent interpersonal contempt, and a general state of public dismay all worked to the disadvantage of civil society and of the role civil society intended to play in the Rwandan polity.

Part of why the state has not permitted civil society, to this day, to flock into streets and burn things in Rwanda to voice concerns or protest some bad policy is the fear that such freedom has the potentiality to turn the state upside-down, eventually driving it to disintegration. The most memorable images of burning things on streets in the Rwandan collective memory date back to the Genocide. Violence with burning fire was leveled at the Tutsi population, then designated the primordial enemy, by the state-supported extremists. This violence had a symbolic intent and meaning beyond the traditional destruction through popular protest or unrest. This one aimed at obstructing and extinguishing the perceived obstructing enemy (Taylor 1999). Another violent protest moment in Rwanda came about when *Interahamwe* militiamen infiltrated from eastern DRC and conducted sporadic attacks across the Eastern villages of Rwanda between late 1994 and 1997. They would trap road grounds and other frequented areas with explosives to which both pedestrians and vehicles succumbed. Disguised militias would launch grenades and shell rockets at bypassing vehicles or explode one in a public market at

daylight, and would ambush people and execute them. The tactic of burning vehicles and other symbolically significant objects was also used by RPF, then rebels, after their first launch of a guerrilla in 1990. One would also remind that RPF, the ruling party since 1994, was once a civil society entity among other socio-political forces of the time.

It is simply unfathomable today to imagine *Balloon* and *Minion* CSO constituencies coordinate action and congregate on the streets of Kigali determined to overturn some major policy decision made by the Kagame government. Both the pre-1990 and the current incarnation of the Rwandan state seem to have been aware of the potentialities and the power that any organized opposition force has to inflict severe damages upon that state. Therefore, the tactics of the state have consistently been those of pre-empting such forces well before they can crystalize and pose a danger to it. All political activities hinting at such historical references of opposition summon swift attention and or serious responses from the state. It is not due to the lack of protective laws that keep people silent and non-aggressive toward the state. Memories and reference to the recent history may explain the timid behavior of most organizations vis-à-vis the state. Such behavior is characteristic of the old tradition of deference—as opposed to deterrence—with respect to the state and the choices it makes for the society.

At the society level, it is important to understand the impact of the Genocide from a historically structural vintage point. The structure of the Rwandan society has not been simply a collection of dispersed and unconnected households (See Desmarais 1977; Lemarchand 1970; Longman 2010; NURC 2004). The Rwanda's social fabric was always structured in local communities or spheres where collective memories and consensus are built. Just like in other rural African societies, Rwandan families reacted with a

communitarian spirit when facing either external interventions or local tensions arising from their living conditions (Lemarchand 1970; 2012, 270-3). This traditional mode of coping with hardships was always supported by their communal ability to support one another and also by the belief to count on that solidarity. However, prior to and after the war and the 1994 Genocide leveled against Tutsi, the Rwandan trust evaporated, significantly affecting all Rwandans and the structure of their social conditions. To a significant extent, the war, the Genocide, and mass movements of refugees paralyzed their ability to act together again. In April 1994, for example, the 'relative' trust felt by survivors (Tutsi) was transformed into complete distrust. When the Genocide ended, over two million of Hutu refugees fled into the former Zaïre, fearing reprisals from the survivors and/or the new regime. When they returned in 1996, they came back with diminished trust and fears of being denounced and of suffering acts of vengeance. All of the protagonists in the Genocide were prey to very powerful emotions of fear, hatred, anger, despair, a sense of abandonment, disappointment, shame (NURC 2005, 21). In addition, another important section of the population (Tutsi), born and/or raised in neighboring Uganda, Burundi, Zaïre, and Tanzania since 1959 repatriated following the RPF victory of July 1994. Distrust has since fluctuated across segments of the population, hence affecting the processes related to the reintegration and re-composition of communities. This confluence of people of different historical and cultural backgrounds brought about social norms upon which a new understanding of democracy would come from.

An environment combining distrust, a devastated state, failed cultural values, economic uncertainties, a general despair, a collective trauma, and guilt of conscience for many marked the start out of which current Rwandan civil society organization regenerated

itself and was reorganized. Such a smorgasbord of people, traditions, views, experiences, and ideas is fundamentally at the core of values and goals having defined the new civil society's behavior in Rwanda. A fragile environment—with collective trauma, contentious backgrounds, and divided thinking and visions—became the embryo that conceived and gave birth to a resurgence of civil society in the post-Genocide Rwanda. In a way, the Rwandan society, at one point in time, was not only devoid of civil society, it also lacked environmental conditions for it. And even though a wide effort has been directed by the new government to help mitigate some of these environmental challenges, civil society is still prey to that fresh history. That history has redirected the focus of actors in terms of scope, interests, and strategies. Strategies for mobilizing a liberalizing civil society have inherited a far restrictive history stemming from a severe conflict, markedly conditioning the ways groups operate. The current civil society, just as any other entity in the Rwandan society, comes from a fundamentally damaged background that is rooted in that history of ethnic conflict. Despite the rapidly growing reemergence of grassroots associational networks in Rwanda in recent years, the post-Genocide sociological environment is not yet ripe for a liberal democratic culture to arise as a function of civil society activism.[27] The general public dismay, wide scale poverty, trauma among numerous Rwandans, self-

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[27] A USAID and the Government of Rwanda's joint assessment (Rwanda and Development Partners 2008, 42) showed that there were over 37,000 active associations in Rwanda. Of them, 96% are located at the rural or village levels—where more than 80% of Rwandan citizens/inhabitants live (Rwanda DHS III 2005, 25)—while their age had not yet exceeded a decade. In addition, there are around 2,500 local NGOs registered in Rwanda today (USAID 2011). In a sense, the resources out of which a new civil society can revitalize democracy have lived on or are resuscitating in Rwanda; and they are located at the peripheral level. It raises the question of whether this trend in associational movement in Rwanda has produced any different results or will ever behave differently from the density of associations of pre-Genocide Rwanda? Given that a high density of associations is not a new reality in Rwanda, in what ways are the new associations an asset to political liberalization? Prolific associational movements had existed prior to the Genocide, the time they disappeared. In fact, it is estimated (Uvin 1999, 164-5) that there were 3,240 registered cooperatives and farmer groups in Rwanda by 1993. An additional estimate of 9,243 saving and lending groups, with approximately 200,000 members, were functional.

loathing and rejection, and many more plights stemming from a bad history that the society is confronted with have all not only complicated but rendered practically impossible for an organically liberal and independent civil society to emerge. The Genocide has even challenged the perceptions of members on the kind of problems civil society can resolve. For example, some in and some outside Rwanda do not understand why only the orphans of the Genocide alone are beneficiaries of state funded educational support by the government, while there are numerous other orphans in the country who are equally poor.[28] There is no social contract yet among civil society groups with respect to the priority problems of the society. It is difficult for civil society to have a unified voice on some of these complicated issues; and much less is civil society made up of members—at any level (national, local, and grassroots) of the society—immune to that damaged environment.

The post-Genocide political space was adapted to make it difficult for an energized civil society to act freely on any such challenges. Certain laws created by the post-Genocide state were purposefully to constrict debate over such extremely sensitive and complex matters as a way of preempting recurrence of the past turmoil. For example, the severity of the law against "the Genocide ideology," the "never again" slogan in daily discourse, and many other structural mechanisms enforced by the post-Genocide state are both a constraining condition for autonomous civic activism to take root in Rwanda.[29] The

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[28] The *Fonds d'Assistance aux Rescapés du Génocide* (FARG) was set up by the post-Genocide Rwanda to provide some moral rehabilitation and support to the victims. Assistance includes paying education cost for orphans from the Genocide by this public-budget fund. The process of selection of such children was participatory and began at the village level. FARG was decreed by law No 02/98 of 1998 and aimed to provide assistance to the survivors of the period spanning October 1, 1990 through December 31, 1994. It was amended by Law No 69/2008 of December 30, 2008 and again by Law No 81/2013 of November 9, 2013.

[29] The Law No 18/2008 of July 23, 2008 aims to proscribe the "Genocide ideology." It stipulates, among other provisions, that a leader of an NGO incriminated with such a crime is passible to a punishment of an imprisonment of 15 to 25 years along with a fine ranging between Rwf 2 to Rwf 5 millions. If the crime is

state has re-designed the political space in the manner that is not easy for other social forces to try to balance its governing centrality without being part of the protective state system. Events from the past as well as the fresh memories of political liberalization in mid-1990s have not given any advantage to the new civil society groups in their struggle to an independent democratic force in Rwanda's polity.

Conclusion

Going as far back as pre-colonial times, we do not find ingredients of autonomous forces whose primary goal was to counter or undermine the state's action. A strong social capital always existed in Rwanda but always in support of the central authority. Colonialism did not alter that structure of social order. It reinforced it and did not institute recipes for a liberal constitutional democracy via independent organizational movement. In fact, colonial order complicated the chance for a democratizing civil society when it picked and switched sides, perturbing the stability of existing social order. That instability is still an important ingredient in the ways Rwanda's political culture has historically adapted and changed to democratic pressures. Historical patterns that characterize state and society relations in Rwanda are rooted in the fact that there was no organically held view on the part of elites and population that a desired strong state comes from a polarized polity.

The first rise of organized groups in Rwanda—in 1956—did not come out of popular desire to countervail the power of the colonial state. It was a creation of the

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linked to an association, an NGO, or a political party, such organization is dissolved and the fine increases from Rwf 5 to 10 millions. The law is also intractable, albeit imprecise on details, on spreading the Genocide ideology via documents, speeches, media, social media, and other avenues, all whose culprits can go to jail for 20 to 25 years with a fine going from Rwf 2 to 5 millions.

colonial state to channel economic needs of the colonial elite. Subsequent associational movements were always viewed and treated as such. The pattern took roots and during the democratization era, the Genocide exposed the weaknesses and the danger of enforcing democratization through archetypes that are not organically grounded in the contextual cultural realities. Before and after the outbreak of the Genocide, civil society split into both "constructive" and "destructive" forces, and in remarkable instances turning against the very population it claimed as its own constituencies.

CHAPTER IV

CIVIL SOCIETY AND POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION IN RWANDA: DOES THE ECONOMIC ARGUMENT ADD UP?

Connecting Rwandan voluntary associations to democratization requires us to explore the wider economic context in which the interaction between the two occurs. After all, economic well-being and political freedom do not rule each other out. They march in tandem; they are intricately bound to one another. The underlying logic is rooted in the idea that democracy and poverty are not inharmonious and that political development is inextricably tied to economic conditions (Lipset 1959). Machiavelli would say that it is difficult to be both poor and a good civic citizen at once (Rose 2016, 735-6; Del Lucchese 2009, 80-1). Over time, this enduring argument has evolved to support that the notion that republican citizens must enjoy enough economic security in order to shield themselves against authoritarian domination and to safeguard their equal rights status in the republic (Rose 2016, 743; Waley 1970, 93; Dagger 2006, 166; Lovett 2010, 190-3; Pettit 2012, 112-4). Advocates of this view also believe that citizens will develop civic virtues, support public norms, engage in politics with the spirit of "contestatory vigilance" (Pettit 2012, 226), monitor the government, and avert eventual domination of public officials only under the condition that they enjoy a secure economic environment (Przeworski and Limongi 1997).

This is essentially modernization theory on display. Scholarly authorities with this view have continuously argue that economic development transforms social structures by incorporating (and empowering) a middle class into the spectrum of governance (Inglehart 1997; see also Moore 1993). Because of the relative material comfort gained, the middle

class is believed to inevitably seek to protect its status by intelligently taking part in politics, resulting in an electoral power that serves as a bulwark of the democratic polity (Inglehart 1997). There is also an empirical convention (e.g., Inglehart and Welzel 2008) that poorer countries inevitably experience neo-patrimonialism and identity community politics. Similarly (idem), a society divided between a large impoverished mass and a small favored elite will likely result in oligarchy, with a dictatorial rule of the small upper stratum, or in tyranny, with popularly based dictatorship (idem.).[30]

But if building or achieving democratic habits in a republic requires certain economic attributes and attitudes, then the question arises of whether there could truly be alternatives for civil society in the absence of material security.[31] Is it still possible for organized groups to "invigilate public officials to respect the rule of law" (Rose 2016, 744) and, with utter confidence, to denounce fraud, violence, infidelity in the republic (Pettit 2012, 127-9 and 225-9; Lovett 2010, 214-7) in the absence of a financially secure middle class? To the extent that material security is a prerequisite of a healthy republicanism, what

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[30] Inglehart (1997), in his long career research on this phenomenon, has not established a causal linkage between economic development and political development—because the sequence in this paradigm is also debated—but he has consistently observed an enduring correlation between the two and seen that modernization produces shifts in economics, politics, and culture. However, these shifts do not happen as a linear process involving urbanization followed by mass education then occupational specialization and so on. Rather, he asserts that cultural, political, and economic changes occur simultaneously and should be viewed as interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Most relevant to this work in Inglehart's analysis is his explanation of the materialist-postmaterialist shift. Inglehart demonstrates that as citizens come to feel more secure physically and economically, they become more prone to emphasizing postmaterialist, quality of life issues, such as a cleaner environment.

[31] There is a duel, in academia, over the interpretation of Machiavelli's maxim, "keep the citizens poor." Classic republican theorists hold that Machiavelli meant to promote poverty, material austerity, soft living, lack of luxury among citizens, or irrelevance of private wealth vis-à-vis the public wealth in the republic (Skinner 2002, 176; Waley 1970, 93; Yoran 2010, 269; Nelson 2004; 76-7). On the other hand, neo-republican theorists interpret Machiavelli's maxim as expressive of a value aimed to discourage material pleasure at the cost of real public concerns (Rose 2016, 743-4); that citizens must not value personal wealth more than the public good; that poverty was a necessary condition for a citizen to live decently (Rose 2016, 735; Viroli 2002, 76; Ionescu 1975, 255). In this chapter, I use the second interpretation of Machiavelli's interpretation of that civic-engagement versus wealth relationship.

else could create civic virtues among citizens, as well as an ability to challenge the state's power when there is no financial well-being and autonomy to count on? Put differently, in an insecure macro-economic environment, what else is likely to place political action at the center of civil society's priorities? In this chapter, I tested the extent to which widespread financial insecurity was an impediment to civil society's democratization action in Rwanda. I wanted to look closely at the nature of relationship that exists between the economic context of civil society and its political engagement with the state in Rwanda. Simply put, this chapter assesses the degree to which civil society's weak political behavior is a function of lack of financial self-reliance.[32]

Here I explore the ties linking economic success to political engagement among voluntary associations at three levels: the individual, group, and the country levels. I tested three hypotheses. First, individuals who are active in civil society associations are those with a relative material security. I wanted to assess whether engagement by civil society groups was a result of material security of individuals who form that group. I sought to determine whether economic goals were primary or secondary to activism in the choice that individuals make before joining a group.

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[32] The sequence of influence or causality between economic progress and democratization has yet to be determined in academia. One view on this debate holds that material conditions are a precursor to democratic development (Linz and Stepan 1996; Dagger 2006), because it is possible to have authoritarian system and economic reforms happen in tandem as a precursor to democratic transition; e.g., Spain and Portugal in the 1970s (Wiarda 2001). A neo-liberal economic view holds that economic development has not been happening in the world because there are no democratic governments to support it in the first place (Collier 2007, 53-76; Collier 2009; Van de Walle 2001; Moore 1993). Another nuanced and non-zero-sum view considers economic stability as one among many elements that work interactively and in tandem towards solving the democratic equation. Linz and Stepan (1996, 5-6), for example, posit that economic development is one among the five key arenas conditional to political consolidation. The complementary factors include an independent vibrant civil society, a viable political society, the rule of law, and a usable bureaucracy. A whole different look at this phenomenon claims that economic considerations are less important in the equation of a democratic culture development, and that what matters the most are such factors as stable borders, a large and diverse civil society, periodic alternation of political leaders and political parties, and a minority that does not depend on coalition arrangements to have a voice (Bunce 2008, 25-40).

Second, again deduced from neo-modernization theory, I posited that civil society groups will not confront the state unless they are financially self-reliant. That is to say, financial vitality for a given group is a necessary requisite for it to actively engage the state on democratization issues. The idea I sought to test here was whether relatively well-off groups were more inclined to demand political reforms of the state than more financially marginal groups. To qualify a group as well-off, I began by defining what counted as 'financial vitality.' Namely, I defined financial vitality as the ability to continuously raise operational support from international organizations or donors, rather than relying on transient funding of marginal group members. I deemed financially viable those groups whose survival depended on recurring contributions from members and or on a deposited venture or assets generating financial resources in a sustainable way. Other groups with a financial vitality are those who may not have assets or other form of investments but may be involved in agriculture or other forms of revenue generating activities and in a sustainable way.

Third, there are groups who essentially survive on writing grant proposals and whose average annual budget may exceed that of any of the preceding categories. I deemed such groups as non-financially viable but with a higher functional financial capacity. Therefore, I looked at both long and short-term means of financial survival to qualify each on the financial vitality spectrum. I hypothesized that in a weak national economic environment, only groups that are financially vital survive the state's potent coercive instruments in their democratization struggles. Concurrently, I posited that the financially dependent groups are vulnerable to external coercion (state and donors) and that in such

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situations all that matters for them is their own survival (members and the group), not democratization.

The findings at all these three levels point to the contrary of what I hypothesized. Financial vitality does not enable groups to engage into actions geared towards democratizing the state. There is no direct association between the economic well-being and political activism among civil society groups. Groups with a relative financial independence and those with marginal means and whose survival exclusively depends on donors all share the same behavior in the way they relate to the state. If anything, a strong financial capacity gives civil society the ability to increase its national visibility and hence increase opportunities for service delivery, but that is by no means an impetus for political activism nationally.

The findings also suggest that groups represent a place where members come primarily to pursue their social and economic needs, not as a training ground for challenging the state. In addition, the interviews suggest that individuals do not join groups primarily because they have secured a comfortable economic status and therefore that democratization is an additional goal. Rather, in the majority of cases, groups attract individuals who are essentially financially destitute, especially in rural areas. Membership to a group is a path towards achieving and strengthening material needs; the goal for members is never expressly political. Evidence also shows that just because some groups have proved durable, and that they possess tools to generate financial resources, this does not turn them into viable interlocutors of the state who are able to influence its behavior. Quite the contrary, in engaging into organized efforts, groups gradually experience benefits from the government in their individual and group life and end up embracing the state's

agenda. Groups willingly become adept implementers of state-directed development programs. While the state is overly present in all spheres of society in Rwanda, which makes everyone vulnerable to cooptation, there was no indication that ordinary rural groups are coerced to cheer up and champion for the government and its programs. The state exercises consistent control over them either way, and group members do not see it as a coercion. Even the groups that are relatively comfortable in an economic sense, that status does not give them any impetus to view the state differently. At the rural and poor level of the society, *mushroom* civil society groups are inevitably linked to the government cause because they, in most instance, have depended on its program to meet their economic needs. On aggregate level, there is no visible linkage between economic factors and the political outcome as a result of the work of civil society groups.

Instead, there certainly appears to be some other force that has been girding political behavior within Rwanda's organized entities than the economic power of groups or individuals. The shallow political performance of civil society must be explained by other factors besides their relative economic autonomy. Economic factors alone are not a good predictor for the failure of political liberalization that the conventional wisdom expected Rwanda's civil society to furnish. The Rwandan political culture offers a far more tenable explanation of civil society behavior than the economic capabilities of a group, as discussed in chapter six. Politico-cultural forces are visible in the ways in which economic struggles are waged across civil society groups. It enables civil society to seek and achieve economic needs and goals altogether. It also remains a prevalent variable to explain the democratic struggles behavior we see among the Rwandan civil society groups. Let us now look more closely at each of the three levels of the economic analysis.

Individual economic status and political engagement

At the basic level, I wanted to understand the economic impetus of an ordinary citizen in Rwanda when they choose to join a given group. That is, I wanted to know whether political engagement is the driver of individual participation in a group, or the contrary, i.e., whether individuals joined groups in pursuit of economic advantage. Overall, the findings did not surprise me. The salient driver for individual involvement into group activities in Rwanda is economic. Individuals are looking for a place to elevate themselves materially; they are not vocationally pushed into activism by a natural urge for political justice or freedom. In the broad view of the picture, my interviews suggest that there are three essential categories for what accounts for individual engagement into group activities in Rwanda. Those are social, economic, and pseudo-political motivations.

Within the grassroots *(mushroom)* organizations, people are poor in general. Associations are made up of people with limited or no economic means. Group spirit attracts them primarily because it makes them feel better than remaining detached from the community. They rely on the strength of the group to gain comfort and moral support during adversity within the family, as in when a member is gravely sick and requires transportation to the health facility far off their home. In such case, four men bring the patient on *ingobyi,* a locally woven four-hand bamboo-edged bolstered stretcher, on their shoulders to the health facility or the ambulance. Such cases typically come from very remote and inaccessible places where it is impractical to drive, and it is generally because they are too poor to live elsewhere.

Members of *mushroom* organizations also join them because they perceive that they will benefit from the collective action that an individual labor would otherwise not give

them, for instance, when they collectively decide to repair a broken bridge that connects one village to another. Members from such groups that I interviewed told me that they willingly take part in such activities because they know in advance that their child will use that bridge to go to school in a neighboring village. They, themselves depend on a functional bridge to attend church or when they go to a meeting on the hill across that bridge to discuss their farming or livestock projects.

At no point in the course of my interviews with members of mushroom groups did the exchange suggest that their membership had been driven by a desire to assess, much less denounce, what local authorities were failing to do in their villages. Quite the contrary, my respondents consistently voiced the view that they were appreciative of the support stemming from the government to resolve their health needs and provide assistance in livestock projects. To them, the government was there to protect them and help them fulfill their material goals, and it was their view that all that could not happen without the government. In a way, their view is that the government—across its structures—is an entity that is needed to support their activities, not one whose intentions and activities are to be decried. That is generally an economic sentiment that comports with the national economic context. Rwandans are generally poor. It is true that Rwanda has registered significant economic gains including lifting nearly two million people out of poverty since between 2005 and 2014 (World Bank 2017). Yet an ordinary rural Rwandan remains generally poor because 60% of them still lived under $2 a day by 2013 (World Bank 2013), and over 70% of the rural population still live on subsistence farming (World Bank 2016), and hence have not yet reached an economic autonomy necessary for civil society members to turn their focus on the state in an independent way (Nkubito 2002, 33-34).

Within *balloon* and *minion* organizations, the underlying motivation for individual investment is also economic. This pool of organizations attracts individuals who are not exempt from the economic needs of everyone else in the Rwandan society. The activists I interviewed alluded to this syndrome as "*esprit d'opportunisme*" among leaders of civil society in Rwanda. Both the leadership and the support members within *Balloon* and *Minion* organizations pursue and see their positions primarily as a route to personal material security. In a sense, CSOs have become a medium for *"waiting"* personal prominence for many in the civil society elite. That *waitingness* has interlocked economic struggles and political activism of members of civil society. That has the immediate consequence of failing civil society at becoming a prevalent actor that can influence the agenda setting in the process of national policies. My respondents expressed lack of confidence in the ability of leaders to genuinely act on behalf of their constituencies. They indicated that leaders of prominent groups were generally operating outside the primary responsibilities of civil society, and that they had used the visibility earned from associational leadership to target employment in better positions within the government. In a sense, a CSO is a good place to earn notoriety that propels their leaders to prominence. One of the most cited examples is that Ms. Edda Mukabagwiza. This public figure had served as the leader of HAGURUKA—a prominent local human rights organization providing legal aid to vulnerable people—before she was appointed the Minister of Justice and then the Ambassador of Rwanda to Canada. Rose Mukankemeje also headed HAGURUKA before she was recruited by the government to head the Rwanda Environmental Management Authority (REMA). As these examples suggest, many individuals see leadership in prominent civil society groups as a stepping stone to

remunerative public service in Rwanda. The real cause of eager participation in these groups is an incentive that is located in that material pursuit.

> "[…] *people who make up civil society are also members of political parties. Most of them are in the ruling party* [RPF]. *The interests of an individual and those of the party are above those of the members of the organization.* […], *look at the most powerful women in this country. They are among those who began civil society in Rwanda when it did not exist. Today, they all have become nice and comfortable people but also vulnerable because none of them can criticize the government. So, civil society is nearly absent here; it only exists in theory..*" (key informant in Kigali in 2015).

Table 4.1 is a good illustration of the ways in which economic struggles of the civil society elite are waged in the name of the battle for democratization. Based on the data from 1992 on one *balloon* CSO in Kigali, the table exemplifies the nature of struggles that lie between the thirst for political mobility and how civil society truly cares about playing the role of state challenger. It shows a pattern whereby becoming prominent in civil society is a pre-condition for becoming prominent in the state apparatus. Given the historical role of the state for upward mobility in Rwanda (see the last two sections in this chapter), some CSOs have become "a nursery that grooms future politicians" (a key informant in Kigali, 2015) in Rwanda. The social pressure to access the economic privileges that the government bestows upon the most vocal leaders of civil society inevitably take primacy the organizations' stated mission to democratize the state. But most importantly, it shows how that *esprit d'opportunisme,* along with other factors explained by the pressures of history on individuals, have complicated the ways in which we assess the workings of democracy not just in Rwanda, but also elsewhere in Africa. That state of affairs raises the question of whether democratization can be understood in just the 'numerous-CSOs-is-equal-to-democratization' framework. Or whether it is utterly possible for individuals

representing civil society to sacrifice the economic advantages that the state represents to them and charitably commit to purely non-personal objectives of democratization.

Table 4.1: Inventory of Former Members of PROFEMMES-Twesehamwe, a CSO, Who Ascended to Prominent Positions in the Government

No	Name	Position held at CSO	Years spent at CSO	Positions held in the state apparatus
1.	Rose Mukantabana*	Member of the steering committee	1999-2003	• Speaker of the Parliament • Head of REMA
2.	Zainabo Kayitesi*	Member of the steering committee	1992-1995	• Second top tier of the Supreme Court • Minister of Public Service and Labor • Executive Secretary – Ministry of Land, Rehabilitation and Environment • President of the National Human Rights Commission • Commissioner at the African Union's Human Rights Commission
3.	Oda Gasinzigwa*	Member of the steering committee	1994-1998	• Minister of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF) • Member of the East African Legislative Assembly • President of the National Women Council (NWC), a Constitutionally mandated body to empower women • Commissioner at the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC)
4.	Marie-Claire Mukasine	Member of the steering committee	1994-1996	• Senator, Rwandan Parliament-Upper Chamber • Permanent Secretary Ministry of infrastructure • Secretary General MIGEPROF • Judge – Ministry of Justice (in the 2nd Republic) • Lawyer of the Ministry of Education (in the 2nd Republic)
5.	Jeanne d'Arc Gakuba	Managing Director	1996-1998	• Vice-President of the Senate, Rwandan Parliament-Upper Chamber • Vice-Mayor of the City of Kigali • Head of Division in the Ministry of Transport and Communications • Head of climatology service in the Ministry of Infrastructure (MININFRA)
6.	Thérèse Bishagara*	Chairperson	1997-2001	• Senator, Rwandan Parliament-Upper Chamber

No	Name	Position held at CSO	Years spent at CSO	Positions held in the state apparatus
7.	Solina Nyirahabimana*	Executive Committee Member	1992-1995	• Board of Rwanda Local Development Support Funds • Ambassador of Rwanda to Switzerland • Minister for Cabinet Affairs in the Office of the President
8.	Jeannine Kambanda	Executive Secretary	1999-2001	• Clerk of Chamber of Deputies • Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation (MINAFET) • Rwanda Ambassador to Singapore
9.	Alphonsine Mukamugema	Member of the steering committee	2001-2003	• Member of the Parliament • Vice-President of the Forum of Rwanda Women Parliamentarians (FFRP) • Bourgmester • Mayor of Muhanga District
10.	Berthe Mujawamaliya	Member	Unknown	• Member of the Parliament
11.	Agnès Mukabacondo	Member	Unknown	• In charge of gender promotion in Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) party
12.	Edda Mukabagwiza*	Member of the steering committee	1999-2000	• Ambassador of Rwanda to Canada • Minister for Justice (MINIJUST) • Secretary General (MINIJUST) • Member of the Parliament
13.	Agnès Mujawamariya*	Member of the steering committee		• Member of the Parliament
14.	Zaina Nyiramatama*	Member of the steering committee	2006-2011	• Head of the African Union Liaison Office in Chad • Executive Secretary of the National Children Council (NCC)
15.	Spéciose Mukandutiye	Member of the steering committee	2007-2009	• Chairperson of the FFRP • Chairperson of social affairs in the Parliament • Member of Parliament • Mayor of Huye District • Bourgmester
16.	Immaculée Mukarurangwa	Member of the steering committee	Unknown	• Executive Secretary of ASSOFERWA
17.	Fatuma Ndangiza	Member	Unknown	• Member of the East African Parliament for Rwanda • Second top tier of the Rwanda Governance Board (RGB) • Ambassador to Tanzania • Executive Secretary of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC)

No	Name	Position held at CSO	Years spent at CSO	Positions held in the state apparatus
18.	Angelina Muganza	Member of the steering committee	2000-2002	• Executive Secretary of the Public Service Commission • Minister of State in Charge of Labor • Minister of Gender and Women Promotion (MIGEPROF)
19.	Valerie Nyirahabineza	Member of the steering committee	1999-2001	• Member of the Parliament Rwanda • Member of the East African Parliament for Rwanda\ • Minister of Gender and Family Promotion
20.	Immaculée Mukankubito	Member	2010-2012	• Deputy director of Never Again Rwanda • Deputy director of Institute of Research for Dialogue and Peace (IRDP)
21.	Yvonne Mutakwasuku	Member	2012-2013	• Mayor of Muhanga District • Member of the Parliament of Rwanda
22.	Immaculée Mukankubito	Member	1994-1997	• Deputy Director of Never Again Rwanda • Deputy Director of Institute for Research and Dialogue for Peace (RDP) • Head of Institutional Capacity Building at the Ministry of Local Administration (MINALOC) • Employee of the Canadian Agency for Cooperation (ACDI)
23.	Yvonne Mutakwasuku	Member	2000-2005	• Mayor of Muhanga District • Deputy Director of the National Commission against the Genocide (CNLG)
24.	Odette Kabaye	Member	2001-2005	• Expert at the Ministry of Justice (MINIJUST) • Chairperson of a women entrepreneurship promotion organization called *Duterimbere*
25.	Jane Abatoni Gatete	Vice-President	2008-2009	• Director of Rwandan Association of Trauma Counselors (ARCT)
26.	Claudine Nyinawagaga	Member	1999-2003	• Mayor of Gasabao District
27.	Marie Mukantabana	Member	2000-2001	• Minister of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROFE) • Vice president of the Rwandan Senate and chair of the Women's Parliamentary Forum
28.	Marie-Josée Mukandamage	Member	2007-2009	• Judge to the Supreme Court in July 2009 • Vice-President of the High Court of the Republic

No	Name	Position held at CSO	Years spent at CSO	Positions held in the state apparatus
				• Vice-President of the Supreme Court and President of the Court of Auditors • Director of Administration and Finance and Director of Legal Affairs and Human Rights in the Prime Minister's Office • Director of Board of Directors to the Social Security Fund of Rwanda (CSR) • Legal Advisor to the International Transportation Company in Rwanda (STIR) • Legal Advisor to the Rwanda Pension and Retirement Scheme (CER)
29.	Julienne Munyaneza	Member	Unknown	• Secretary General of the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROFE)
30.	Nura Nikuze	Member	Unknown	• Member of the Parliament
31.	Espèrance Mwiza	Member	Unknown	• Member of the Parliament
32.	Constance Rwaka	Member	Unknown	• Member of the Parliament
33.	Immaculée Mukarurangwa Mugabo	Member	1992-1995	• Member of the Parliament
34.	Marie-Immaculée Ingabire	Member	1999-2003	• Head of Transparency International Rwanda
35.	Isabelle Karehangabo	Executive Committee Member	2003-2007	• Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Justice • Member of the Media High Council • Employee of the Supreme Court
36.	Francesca Twikirize Tengera	Member	2003-2007	• Member of the Parliament • Chair of the National Council for Children • Director of a department at Rwanda Tea Authority.

Source: Compiled from direct interviews at PROFEMME-Twesehamwe, reports, local newspapers, the website, the article of Muhirwa (2013)[33], and the Internet. **Note:** The * denotes that the individual was an activist in more than one CSOs.

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[33] Muhirwa, Olivier. 2013. "Urutonde rw'abagore banyuze muri Pro-Femme bakaza kuba ibikomerezwa," *Igihe Newspaper* of March 7, 2013. Retrieved from http://www.igihe.com/amakuru/u-rwanda/urutonde-rw-abagore-banyuze-muri-pro-femme-bakaza-kuba-ibikomerezwa.html on March 2, 2018.

Analyzing the financial autonomy of groups and political activism

To assess the role of economic power in enabling civil society to democratize the state in Rwanda begins by analyzing the past behavior of civil society groups. At the group level, one would expect that those groups with some relative economic power would behave differently and use their financial advantage to move from service delivery to the channeling of political demands from the public to the state. Yet the supposition that organizations with sufficient economic wherewithal to make them autonomy would make a difference in the struggles to challenge the state does not appear to hold when one examines the wealth across organizations in Rwanda.

The work of Uvin (1999) examined the impact of donor's aid to the associational movement in Rwanda on democratization in Rwanda and found no correlation between economic power of organizations and democratic results in Rwanda during the multi-party era. Until the Genocide, Rwanda was counted among the most generously aided countries in the world. Development aid alone was superior to private investment and commercial exports combined (idem, 41).[34] The development aid that Rwanda received from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD 1991, 189) equated to 11.4% of its gross national product (GNP) in 1989-9, which was higher than the average aid Africa and other poor countries received. In the 1990s, Rwanda received even more development aid because it increased from an average of $45 per person in the 1980s to $80 or more; Uvin (1999, 41) cites the structural adjustment programs as the major cause of that increase. He (idem) also estimated that each six-person household had received an

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[34] Uvin notes that data on development aid included the money earmarked for technical assistance but that the work of Voyame et al. (1996, 51) contended that actually much of it never reached the destination.

average Rwf 57,600 ($480) in development aid in 1992, i.e., more than its total income in the whole year. An estimated 200 donor agencies were present in Rwanda in 1986, including 20 bilateral, 30 multilaterals, and 150 NGOs (Voyame *et al*. 1996, 60). They managed a portfolio of over 500 projects that year (idem). Uvin (1999, 42) estimated that the ubiquity of development aid in Rwanda made it the highest density of technical experts living in the country per square kilometer in Africa. That means there is no place in Rwanda where they had not heard about or been under some influence of foreign aid instruments. It also means that organized groups were the most sub-level channels through which this foreign aid went through. The ideas brought about by the aid community were undeniably pervasive in the Rwandan collective mind including in the private sector. An estimate of 70% of public investment between 1982-87 came from foreign assistance (World Bank 1989b, 11).

But despite the abundance of aid that a dense network of associations had been receiving from the international aid community, Rwanda's democratic experiment did not benefit from it. Up until the mid-1990s, the church was the largest non-state actor, with colossal wealth and a larger membership than that of other organizations (Longman 1995a; Longman 2010). Contrary to expectations, Uvin (1999, 166-168) found that the organizations who had the most colossal resources were instrumental in dissemination violence rather than supporting democratization. For example, after the state, the church was the most powerful organization in Rwanda up until the Genocide. As the work of Guichaoua shows (1995a, 18), the Catholic church owned most schools, most land, and health care centers; it was a significant investor in lucrative businesses, it was also heavily involved in agriculture, handicraft, and was the most connected with international donors

and other alliances. Longman (2010) has also demonstrated the extent to which church

had an unparalleled social clout. Even protestant churches, the minority in Catholic-

dominated Rwanda, owned 300 elementary schools with 173,000 pupils, 20 high schools

with around 4,700 students, 480 centers for adult literacy, and a bevy of hospitals (Gatwa

1996, 39).   But as both Uvin (1999) and Longman (2010) have argued, none of that

colossal economic power of the churches was used to reinforce Rwanda's fragile

democratic experiment.   The colossal economic opportunities that organized groups

managed represented ripe opportunities to ground Rwanda with a sustainable democratic

culture. If we were to believe the theory on the causal mechanisms between financial

autonomy of groups and democratization, then the "successful […] economic and social

development" (World Bank 1989b, 3; Voyame *et al.* 1996, 57) that Rwanda had registered

in the years preceding the Genocide would have fundamentally altered the democratic

course without the possibility of regressing. But it did not.

After the Genocide, we see a similar trend in civil society to that of the multiparty

period of the early 1990s. Civil society again gained political autonomy through economic

empowerment and yet remained politically inactive. Civil society as a collective entity is—

on aggregate—economically stronger than ever before.   The aid community has

uninterruptedly pumped more money into this sector since 1995. Based on the OECD

report (2017), the National Demographic Health Survey (DHS 2015), the National Institute

of Statistics in Rwanda (2016), and the World Bank data (2016), each Rwandan received

on average $101.8 from the development each year between 2010 and 2015.[35]

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[35] Calculated based on the average bulk of development aid dispensed by the OECD between 2010 and 2015 and the average resident population of Rwanda between 2012 and 2015.

Comparatively, the average GDP per capita during the same period was only $660.78.[36] Meanwhile, Rwanda's economy steadily grew at an average annual rate of 8 percent between 2001 and 2015 (World Bank 2016; NISR 2015, 3-5), even though the struggle against poverty is still on-going, since 72 percent of Rwandans still live on subsistence agriculture (NISR 2015, 4). Rwanda is above the average mean aid (2.0 percent versus 1.7 percent) out of the total 59 recipients (individual states and bureaucratic bodies) of the OECD aid in Africa between 2010 and 2015. Rwanda has consistently received more aid per capita than all its neighbors in the same period (more than twice than that of Uganda, and nearly twice that of Burundi and that of Tanzania).[37] The results of economic opportunities that Rwanda has enjoyed over the years—all commensurate to Rwanda's competitiveness—are evident on the ground. Such success is reflected in the performance and achievements of civil society groups. A study conducted by the Rwandan Civil Society Platform (2011, 31-2), commissioned by numerous international agencies, to present a situational analysis on the work of civil society, showed that over 20 percent of the in-country budget in the fiscal year 2009/2010 had been expended only by Civil Society Organizations. As the same report indicates (p. 27), the total in-country money that was directly managed by CSOs went almost exclusively into development service delivery and concentrated in the areas of health (29.7 percent), education (21.1 percent), social protection (22.8 percent), and agriculture (15.3 percent).

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[36] World Bank Country Data, GDP, Rwanda. 2016.

[37] I could not find data on how much development aid went directly through the hands of civil society and which one went through governments in Tanazania, Burundi, and Uganda. The table is meant to provide a simple comparative view with the role that civil society in Rwanda plays in the development action (because more than 20% of Rwanda's GDP is expended by CSOs).

Parallel to that, the church and other voluntary organizations remain more economically empowered even than in the 1990s. Out of the total 2,842 primary/elementary schools counted Rwanda in the 2016 year, 1,854 (65 percent) are church-owned and count 1,660,163 student population with 28,400 employees (MINEDUC 2017, 22-25). Parent associations, another important component of civil society, whose members and leaders are also generally members of a church, own 4.3 percent of the total in-country elementary education establishments too (idem).[38] The church also owns 60 percent of secondary schools (937 out of 1,575), another important area in Rwanda's economy with a 553,739 student population, employing 28,785 personnel (Idem, Pp. 33-34). See also Tables 4.2 to 4.4.

It is true that the Catholic Church and the state have had a tumultuous relationships since the Genocide (Longman 2001; Maillard 2014) and that such a relationship has continuously been at the center of a mutual effort to re-normalize (Igihe 2017; RFI 2017). Yet it also true that the Catholic church remains by far not only the most economically sound social organization in Rwanda, with almost as much social clout at the state itself. The Catholic Church alone runs 40 percent of all elementary and secondary schools combined. The churches, mostly the Catholic Church, also owns universities, vocational training centers, numerous adult literacy centers, commercial banks and other micro-finance institutions, insurance companies, hotels and guest houses, and private radio stations. They own shares in financial markets, own some of the most expensive and exquisite buildings in the country, and are involved in numerous other lucrative activities,

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[38] On how religion continues to intersect with other spheres of life in Rwanda (even when it is the primary driver of personal choices), see the work of Fox 2012; Kubai 2007; Longman 2010.

hence remaining a crucial actor in Rwanda's economy.[39] Impressed by this aggressive approach to wealth accumulation, some in Rwanda refer to this evolution of church workstyle as "*la bourgeoisie catholique*."[40]

All of that makes the church, following the state, the second largest employer in Rwanda (even though most of these schools receive, to a degree, subsidies from the state). Assets present a unique advantage to the church because with such investment comes influence and the logistical advantage associated to it. One would therefore suppose that the church would utilize its ability to rapidly project throughout national communities and to use that unparalleled social clout to rally constituencies around its goals in ways that breed consequential political activities. Yet, civil society as a collective has not yet succeed at using its economic influence to accomplish more than developmental work in post-Genocide Rwanda. This takes us back to the question of the true association often put between well-financed civil society organizations and political activism in Rwanda's state-society relations. Despite change in economic capacities, civil society has not moved away from service delivery to channeling social demands to state authorities. Economic development is the field that civil society is best equipped to do, political development is not. In addition, the behavior of organized groups has not changed as a result of economic change in CSOs. By deduction, tt appears evident that political behaviors are guided by

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[39] As examples, the Université Catholique de Kabgayi, the Christian University of Rwanda (CHUR), and the Catholic University of Rwanda (CUR) are all owned by the Catholic church (Ntambara 2010). Both the Adventist University of Central Africa (AUCA), commonly known as Mudende, and the University of Lay Adventists of Kigali (UNILAK) are owned by the seventh day Adventists church. Other universities such as Kibogora Polytechnic (KP), and Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences (PIASS) are also Protestant church owned. In the banking, insurance, and micro-finance sectors, examples of church owned institutions are COGEBANQUE (Catholic church), the Inter-diocese network of microfinance (RIM), CORAR insurance company (Catholic church), the GOSHEN microfinance (Assemblies of God), and Amasezerano Community Bank (Anglican church).

[40] From one analyst I interviewed in Kigali.

some deep-seated customary order (or something else to be identified) rather than by economic autonomy.

Table 4.2: Primary and secondary schools in 2016 by ownership

School by ownership	Primary		Secondary	
	# students	Percentage	# Students	Percentage
Public	725	25.5%	460	29.2%
Catholic	1,137	40.0%	620	39.4%
Protestant	640	22.5%	279	17.7%
Adventist	57	2.0%	22	1.4%
Islamic	20	0.7%	16	1.0%
Parents associations	122	4.3%	106	6.7%
Others	141	5.0%	72	4.6%
Total	**2,842**	**100.0%**	**1,575**	**100.0%**

Source: Compiled from statistics of the Ministry of Education, 2016.

Table 4.3: Population in primary and secondary education in 2016 by ownership

School by ownership	Primary		Secondary	
	# students	Percentage	# Students	Percentage
Public	770,642	30.3%	173,109	31.3%
Church, and Others	1,775,621	69.7%	380,630	68.7%
Total	**2,546,263**	**100.0%**	**553,739**	**100.0%**

Source: Compiled from statistics of the Ministry of Education, 2016.

Table 4.4: Workforce in primary and secondary education in 2016 by ownership

School by ownership	Primary		Secondary	
	# staff	Percentage	# staff	Percentage
Public	12,102	27.9%	8,632	30.0%
Church, and others	31,284	72.1%	20,153	70.0%
Total	**43,386**	**100.0%**	**28,785**	**100.0%**

Source: Compiled from statistics of the Ministry of Education, 2016.

Financial autonomy of civil society: an empirical look

To test this relationship evident in a qualitative analysis, I collected empirical data and analyzed the political participation of CSOs in relation to their financial situations. I wanted to see if the financial and domain variations that exist among CSOs would point to differential behavior in their relationships to the state. To begin, I carefully selected sixteen CSOs by their location and member constituency category. Eight of them are *Mushrooms*, and were selected from four different provinces of the national territory. Another eight are all based in Kigali, the capital city, but claim to have representation throughout the country. Six of these are *Balloon* organizations, owing to their inflatable and fluctuating character in activity, ideology, and longevity. They are numerous such organizations in Rwanda, some existing for only as long as one funding cycle. The remaining two are in the category I named *Minions*, having been created by state agents. When they have funding, *Balloons* and *Minions* are generally financially well off compared to the Mushrooms. Unlike the more popular and rural *Mushrooms, Balloons* and *Minions* also feature a structured functional framework.

I met with the leaders of all of the *Balloon* and *Minion* organizations. These were typically the Executive Secretary, a permanent position with the most institutional memory, together with one or two technical personnel who were also permanent members of the organization. From their websites or the materials I received during the interviews, I gathered information on what each organization had achieved in the previous three years, and the budget they had expended. In addition, I conducted a focus group discussion with a select few (8 to 12) members in each of the eight *Mushroom* groups, and also an interview

with leaders of such groups separately. Where available, I also collected written reports on *Mushroom* activities.

To analyze the capacity and roles of these groups, I used a four-part procedure. First, I attributed a score to each organization to reflect their financial power. The score ranged between 0 and 4, zero indicating the lowest level in budget spending, four the highest. The numbers associated with these rankings are provided below in Table 4.2. Then I created an index called "CSO Financial Ability." Next, I created another index called "CSO financial vitality," which consisted in determining the level of self-reliance of an organization, based on its source of funding. From that, I attributed a score of 0 to 3, zero being the least financially vital, 3 the most. Third, I created the "CSO Theoretical Vocation" index, based on their stated 'mission statement' and stated 'goals'. I categorized them into three groups: "political democratization oriented," "development oriented," and "non-bound" organizations. Fourth, based on records and the type of actual achievements in the previous three years, I created the "CSO Activity-based Vocation" index, which too led to a threefold typology: "only political democratization groups," "other type of democratization-state building groups," and "Neither."

When I cross-tabulated my new variables to assess the variation of political-activity behavior in relation to financial capacity, the results did not reveal anything new or that I had not observed during my interviews and other exchanges I held with informants. The findings show no correlation between being financially independent and active political engagement. However, what I had not expected to find out is that *mushroom* organizations have a more practical record of achievements in both promoting development, and demanding more state accountability at the local level. Tables 4.5 and 4.6 illustrate the

financial vitality of organizations based on whether they are national or grassroots oriented.

Table 4.7 encapsulates the activity-type for CSOs at those two levels (central & grassroots).

Table 4.5: Sampled Organizations by Financial Vitality

	0	1	2	3	4	Average
Mushrooms	6	2	0	0	0	**.25**
Balloons	0	0	0	4	2	**3.33**
Minions	0	0	0	0	2	**4.00**
Total	**6**	**2**	**0**	**4**	**4**	

Note: 0 indicates that the organization had an average annual budget of Rwfs 50,000 – 500,000; 1 for Rwfs 500,001 – 3,000,000; 2 for Rwfs 3,000,001 – 8,000,000; 3 for Rwfs 8,000,001 – 20,000,000; and 4 for Rwfs 20,000,001 and above. Rwfs 787 equaled $1.00 at the time I collected data.

Table 4.6: Sources of Organizational Funding

	Members Regular contributions	Lucrative Activities	Donors	Government	Others
Mushrooms	8	8	2	2	0
Balloons	0	0	6	0	2
Minions	0	0	2	0	2
Total	**8**	**8**	**10**	**2**	**4**

Note: Organizations (as Mushrooms) collect regular member contributions and simultaneously collect revenues from projects such as farming and livestock. A few of them also received aid from government programs in the form of a cow or agricultural seeds, which projects are another source of the associational wealth.

Table 4.7: Frequencies of open-ended comments of CSOs on their democratic participation by their financial vitality and their partisan valence

Democratization objects	Financial Ability	0	1	2	3	4	Tot	Partisan Valence
Civic Engagement (national)								
Attend parliament public debates		0	0	0	0	1	1	4.4
Give written inputs on new law drafts		0	0	0	0	1	1	7.1
Done research-based advocacy to parliament		0	0	0	0	1	1	3.8
Have published research-based report on social issue		0	0	0	0	1	1	4.7
Civic Engagement (local)								
Attend planning meetings of sectors		8	1	0	0	0	9	16.2
Attend planning meetings of districts		0	0	0	7	1	8	19.9
Ever took a local issue to those meetings		6	2	0	4	4	16	15.1
Local officials accepted or looked into that issue		6	1	0	4	4	15	20.8
Other Democratization Action								
Mobilize others to solve a local issue		6	2	0	4	4	16	26.4
Meet members regularly to discuss village problems		8	0	0	4	4	16	39.4
Group leaders are elected in transparency		8	0	0	4	4	16	32.4
Group has statute and other written rules		8	0	0	4	4	16	33.5
Group rules and statute are always followed		8	0	0	4	4	16	29.9
Take to local officials a problem we can't solve		6	2	0	0	0	8	31.7
Report misconducts of village leaders to higher officials when necessary		6	2	0	0	1	9	37.2
Political Rights and State Accountability								
Ever publicly or in writing decried state officials		0	0	0	0	0	0	— 19.4
Some leadership activities do not benefit the group		0	0	0	0	0	0	— 24.4
National leaders care for all Rwandans		6	2	0	4	4	16	34.3

Note: All valence scores indicate the level to which groups are attracted (positive favor) or are averse to (negative favor) the government's effort on the same corresponding issue (positive & negative values). N=16.

Again, none of these variations seem to create a positive change in the ways civil society groups interact with the state on purely political issues. The one area that a CSO's financial power strongly correlates with is "other forms of democratization," representing the activities that the state is already invested in or encourages, such as participation in the Joint Action Development Forum, and in resolving local problems at the village level. But

that correlation is also the same even among *mushroom* groups, whose economic power is indeed marginal.

Tables 4.8 shows no positive correlation between being financially able CSOs and democratic engagement at the central level; and that there is no positive correlation between grassroots organizations and democratization at the central level. The negative correlation is confirmed and strong at various degrees of financial vitality of organizations. These findings confirm and corresponds to my findings in interviews. That is, organizations (mostly based in the capital city) who appear to be financially prepared, who have the ability to hire well educated personnel, and who possess logistical equipment adequate for mobilizing and conducting activism throughout the country are not any different than those without financial vitality on the question of democratization. Conversely, grassroots organizations, the most financially destitute, were more democratically organized and involved in developing the society than their national counterparts.

Table 4.8: Regression Table on Financial Self-reliance Conditions and Democratization at the State Level

	Demands for Political Accountability from National Officials
Members financial situation	
Members give regular financial contributions	— 13.8***
	(.62)
Member's lives have improved because of being members	— 22.7***
	(.21)
Sustainable funding strategies	
Hold regular fundraising activities	— 4.4***
	(.06)
Yearly budget (or most of it) self-funded	— 19.4
	(.12)
Own equity and other assets	— 3.4***
	(.23)
Not paying office other rental cost because owns the building	— 1.6
	(.41)
Are into other commercial activities to raise revenues	— 19.4***
	(.32)
Financial dependence	
Yearly budget funded through donors (NGOs and others)	—9.4***
	(.21)
Often borrow from bank or lending institutions to fund activities	—3.9***
	(.12)
Correct Prediction	—83%
N	(9)

(Left side vertical label: Financial Conditions or CSOs)

Note: Entries are logit estimates; standard errors in parentheses. Only responses to the questions making up the 'national political accountability' predictor were included in the analysis. ***$p < .001$. N is the composite sample.

Considering that the first generation of civil society failed to transform the economic clout into a democratization success, the challenges remained the same and mostly increased in the future generations. Peter Uvin (1999, 43) calls those challenges the "forbidding obstacles" that Rwanda shared with other poor countries. The World Bank ascribes this pattern to a "vicious circle of poverty" that leaves the poor as "the chief

victims and the chief culprits" (World Bank 1994b, 29). We have nearly a similar situation in Rwanda after 1994. The church is richer than it ever has been in the past; and Rwanda continues to receive generously from the aid community. But even the most financially empowered organizations make do not attempt to constrain the state, or play the role of transmitting demands from the population to state authorities.

Table 4.9: Comparing net aid received in $US millions, GDP in $US millions, and population in millions between Rwanda and its neighbors in 2010 – 2015

		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Rwanda	Aid	1,033	1,263	879	1,086	1,035	1,082
	GDP in $$	5,774	6,492	7,316	7,623	8,016	8,261
	Aid/gdp %	18%	20%	12%	14%	13%	13%
	Population	10.2	11,5	11	11.1	11.3	11.6
	Aid/pers $	101	12	81	98	91	93
Burundi	Aid in $$	628	572	523	559	515	367
	GDP in $$	2,027	2,356	2,472	2,715	3,094	3,067
	Aid/gdp %	31%	24%	21%	21%	17%	12%
	Populat.	8.8	9.0	9.3	9.6	9,9	10.2
	Aid/pers $	72	63	56	58	52	36
Tanzani	Aid in $$	2,960	2,442	2,822	3,434,	2,649	2,580
	GDP in $$	31,408	33,879	39,088	44,333	48,197	45,628
	Aid/gdp %	9%	7%	7%	8%	6%	6%
	Population	46.1	47.6	49.1	50.1	52.2	53.9
	Aid/pers $	64	51	58	68	51	48
Uganda	Aid in $$	1,690	1,573	1,643	1,700	1,635	1,628
	GDP in $$	20,186	20,177	23,132	24,600	27,295	27,059
	Aid/gdp %	8%	8%	7%	7%	6%	6%
	Population	34.9	35.1	36.4	37.5	38.9	40.1
	Aid/pers $	50	45	45	45	42	41

Source: Compiled from World Development Indicators (2017); National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda. 2015. Democraphic Health Survey (DHS) 2014-2015. Kigali,

Rwanda; EICV Rwanda (2016); Tanzania Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children. 2016. *Demographic and Health Survey and Malaria. Indicator Survey 2015-2016;* Institut de Statistiques et d'Études Économiques du Burundi 2016-2017; Uganda Bureau of Statistics. 2016. *Demographic Health Survey (DHS). Key Indicators Report;* OECD 2017.

The Dynamism and Challenges of Civil Society in Rwanda's Macro Economic Environment

> *"There are two debates on the role of the civil society organisations in developing countries by international scholars. On one side, civil society is seen as a counter power to government, and on the other civil society is seen as an effective partner in the service delivery and development process. Rwanda favours the latter approach."*

Hon. Protais Musoni[41]

Analyzing the nature of state-civil society relations in Rwanda also requires us to examine them in the country's macro-economic context. That is, we must search for relationships between the motives and activism of civil society and the wider environment of development that has historically encapsulated all social forces in the country. From the post-independence era, there has been consistency in the ways in which politics and the politics of economic well-being have affected organizational tendencies. Across time, Rwanda functioned as a state-directed economy, meaning the state was always both a policy designer and interventionist. That structure has always challenged the goals for civil society to be independent. Therefore, the dominant role of the state in the economy cannot be separated from the difficult condition that civil society must meet first, that is to achieve economic security that would allow it to be independent from the state.

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[41] See MUSONI, Protais, "Building a Democratic and Good Governance Culture: Rwanda's Experience and Perspectives," a paper presented at the International Conference on Elections held at the Intercontinental Hotel, Kigali, Rwanda between 7th and 9th June, 2004. At that time Hon. Musoni was Minister of State for Good Governance, MINALOG, Rwanda.

Let us begin by acknowledging that economic performance is one of the sources of the state's power—through tax collection principally—but also a way to gain popular legitimacy. For a state-directed economy like that of Rwanda, this undermines the effort of civil society to achieve financial independence since that independence would necessarily diminish the state's power over the economy. Insofar as the state remains a dominant active economic actor, one wonders how possible it would be for civil society to achieve its economic independence and hence balance the state's power in return.

In Rwanda, being independent but separate from the national agenda to fight poverty always protrudes, in the eyes of state elite, as being anti-Rwandan. There is virtually no other theme as unifying as development in Rwanda. Everyone wants it and everyone knows that development comes through the state. Such has been the dogma that both leaders and citizens have subscribed to throughout the three Republics of Rwanda. The following (Toraccinta 1988) is the answer that Juvénal Habyarimana, the then president, gave to *Télévision Suisse Romande* (RTS) in 1988, when Jean-Claude Chanel and Guy Ackermann, two journalists, asked him why Rwanda was the only country in the world without a national television station:

> "..because we are poor. But there is no regret for that. We want a television that serves the purpose of development. Not a television to show Cowboy movies daylong, or to air what is happening in Paris or what is happening in Brussels. We want a television that is the engine of development: how to run a cooperative, how to properly vaccinate their children…when and at what frequency, how to fight off land erosion, …that is the television that we want—a television of the mass, not of an urban elite."[42]

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[42] Obtained from the archives of Télévision Suisse Romande, the show called "Temps Présent," episode titled "Afrique de l'Espoir" by Claude Toraccinta, in 1988. Documentary found on Youtube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zU-QWfhIXnU on August 13, 2017.

Habyarimana's statement encapsulates a central truth on how economic forces and the questions of civil liberties have always interacted in Rwanda's political landscape. The paternalistic tone of the response is a testament to the limits of civil society's goals for freedom in Rwanda since colonial times. The positioning of this former Head of State on the role and place of the broad civil society in Rwanda prompts one to wonder whether unrestrained civil liberties would have been destined to a different fate than its current state of affairs. Let us reflect here.

By evoking poverty in response to a purely journalistic question, the contemporary leader of Rwanda was reminding the world that standards had been set about what priorities in developing his country ought to be. He meant that no social entity was good unless it enabled his duty to fill his people's granaries, and that if any non-developmental entity aimed to achieve other goals, then it was unwelcome in his Rwanda. He essentially meant that the potential liberties represented by TV broadcasts were not a substitute for his effort to mitigate hunger and promote good health in Rwanda. Evoking Paris and Brussels, Habyarimana was fundamentally rejecting a mode of life that came from the West, unless it embraced and supported his vision for Rwanda. Habyarimana had, from this response, a clear sense of what the order of priorities was between economic freedom and civil liberties in Rwanda. As if the role of TV was limited to airing just Western movies, Habyarimana wanted to affirm that his duties—as the "father of the state"—were to care for Rwanda's "children" and not to teach them how the *children* of France and Belgium behaved towards their *parents*.[43] He saw the success of his duty in his ability to drop food

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[43] The father and family metaphor is best developed in the work of Schatzberg (2001).

on his people's plates and in insulating them from fatalistic diseases caused by hunger and improper vaccination. To him, TV represented leisure that would distract from his anti-poverty programs. But most crucial, his reference to "mass" versus "elite" interests represents the way counter-state forces have always triggered a duel that is difficult to reconcile. That is the hierarchy that must separate all entities competing to resolve people's problems. On the one hand, Habyarimana cast himself as the sole individual with best interests of the people at heart, and that such other forces (represented by TV) were a false on the other. It affirmed that the norm in Rwanda was such that the masses are more legitimately important than the elite, and that among his tasks was to impede the elite from getting in the way of people's interests.

Food versus free speech has always been at the core of civil society's struggles to be an important voice in governing Rwanda. To the extent that Rwanda's economy is still too small to provide even basic subsistence needs for the mass, it makes it nearly impossible for civil society to win its civil liberties struggles. Rwanda's leaders present themselves as providential, protective, and the ultimate recourse in the provision of societal necessities. They also use Rwanda's socio-economic needs as a pretext to repress any possibility that civil society might organize itself as a critic or watchdog of the state. In so far as civil society forces remain dependent and vulnerable, their role in the provision of welfare to the population must be fused with the goals that the government sets.

Throughout time, the state in Rwanda has been skillful at pulling everyone in the society in line with its agenda. And for a long time, Rwanda's rulers have constructed the state's role as nothing other than promoting economic development. This has consistently been a strong argument in the sense that society is poor and Rwanda's citizens survive on

a subsistence economic basis. Poverty makes it difficult for any other social goal to gain attention and eventually prevail if the fight against poverty is far from being won. That creates a situation whereby both the state and civil society seem like two antagonistic forces fighting to drive the well-being of the population, except that the former wages it in an economic logic while the latter is widely judged (by international agencies) on its ability to balance the state's power, or democratize. But one other big challenge for civil society in Rwanda is that it is financially weak, giving the state the upper hand in the implicit debate. But even if it did not have a financial problem in the first place, the most dominant challenge for civil society has to do with Rwanda's political culture as a whole. The state in Rwanda has been consistently good at providing a compelling justification for prioritizing poverty over political freedom. And the world agrees on that assessment.

In the first Republic, i.e., the era following the end of monarchy in Rwanda, Kayibanda, who was the first elected president, built his entire governing style around development strategy. When he became the president in 1962, Kayibanda built a posture of a legal-rational thinker and leader who wanted to revolutionize the economic life of his people. He had what he called "the four pillars of development" for the country: (a) education—to train a generation of technocrats in all economic sectors; (b) agriculture— because it was the sole major source of wealth of the population, (c) infrastructure—in transportation, hospitals, education, telephone communication, …to enable people to meet, interact, communicate, and be informed, and (c) manufacturing—starting with agricultural transformation (Foka 2017). Kayibanda created new structures to deploy and control his power, and those included "commune," the small bureaucratic unit below a prefecture on

the national organigram of power structures.[44] Kayibanda always alluded to *communes* as the "motor of development" and sought to make them the middle passage for his hopes and expectations to lift Rwandans from poverty.[45] During his rule, Kayibanda successfully legitimized his development vision both internally and externally. In fact, the Swiss government gave him a personal economic advisor who was directly paid out of the development fund resulting from their bilateral partnership (Scherrer 2002, 77-8).

In his time, Habyarimana was hailed by nearly all development partners, as well as the international community at large, as a "good manager" (Foka 2015). A substantial literature has documented Rwanda's cherished image in the world community as a state characterized by efficient use of aid, good governance, stability, lack of corruption, serious vision for the country, and commitment to development of its people under Habyarimana (Schürings 1995, 495; Renard and Reyntjens 1993, 11, 18; Reyntjens 1994, 35; Guichaoua 1995a, 33; Willame 1995b, 436, 445; Brusten and Bindariye 1997, 12; Voyame *et al.* 1996, 61, 64). Coming up on its thirtieth anniversary of bilateral cooperation with Rwanda, the Swiss Development Cooperation agency's 1991 annual report expressed its "admiration" for Rwanda for "the government's seriousness in its desire to develop the country" (in

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[44] A commune was headed by a bourgmestre, French adaptation to the Flemish title, burg-meester, or the master of a village. There were 143 communes in Rwanda under both the first and the second Republics.

[45] At the same time, as shows the 1957 document of "Hutu consciousness (Bahutu Manifesto)", Kayibanda's rule (1962-1973) was built on a 'racist' and pervasive anti-Tutsi ideology, which finally was the leitmotif of his development agenda. In Kayibanda's psychie, the Rwanda's problem was that there were two Rwandas, and that of Hutu and another of Tutsi, that were unrelated, unrelatable, separate, and de facto not meant to intercourse in the first place (Clark2006). As Scherre's accounts (2002, 77-8) suggests, Kayibanda framed his action on the basis that the fundamental problem of Rwanda stemmed from "the monopoly of one race, the Tutsi" and that such had destined "the desperate Hutu to be forever subaltern workers." Kayibanda then viewed development as the most potent tool to uplift the underdeveloped (Hutu) mass, which the language coded as the "living forces," who had "freed themselves from the yoke of their feudal masters" (idem; see also Voyame and Gern 1996; Friedli 1997). While he championed for development, some characterized the Kayibanda's regime as "ethnocracy" (Scherrer 2002, 77-8). For an extended discussion on this topic, see (Prunier 1995, 9, 37 ff; Newbury 1992; Lemarchand 1970).

Voyame *et al.* 1996, 61, 64). A consensus existed within the bilateral and international community acknowledging that Habyarimana's leadership placed development and well-being of his people at the center of his policies and political action.[46]

To rally everyone around his political and economic agenda, Habyarimana created a single legal party that widely became accepted in the public mind as the "movement," the National Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND), in 1975. The party was the center where virtually every social, economic, political ambition for Rwandans had to be channeled (Reyntjens 1986). MRND was crafted as a way to avoid alternative avenues through which civil might contest the state's rather totalitarian approach to development. It was intended to be a composite entity that would absorb all ambitions and goals for Rwandans. To legitimize the party, Habyarimana gave it the slogan of "peace, unity and development" [for all Rwandans]. Habyarimana used the metaphor of a ship whose sole mission was to save everyone from poverty. Habyarimana called and expected everyone to be a party to that Rwanda "ship" project. "… If there is a ship aboard which we will cross the sea …and that you're not on it, how are you going to cross that sea?" he once said in a public address (Radio France Internationale 2015). The MRND called upon every

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[46] Again, even within the international community, the analysis was absorbed by economic performance, and completely disowned other equally important issues such as the human rights violations, especially the targeting and killing of thousands of Tutsi across Rwanda's regions, offices and agencies that were simultaneously being committed by the same regime way before even the Genocide properly commenced (des Forge 1994). The aid community kept its blind eye and deaf ear even amidst the ubiquitous policy of exclusion built on an ideology that Uvin (1999) alludes to as the 'racist Hutu' "imagined political community" (Pp. 37; 35-37); this systemic racist policy allocated children in school, public employments, and in military recruitment based on statistical ethnic quota that disfavored Tutsi ethnic members. The danger of this anti-Tutsi sentiments was not something new in the ears of the international aid community because aid activities increased even after Kayibanda, the first president, expressed unequivocally Genocide-charged romanticisms that Tutsi rebelling against him with the intention to seize power could be certain that "the whole Tutsi race will be wiped out" (Erny 1994, 62-63). As an example, TRAFIPRO, the largest cooperative in the country (actually once headed by Kayibanda himself), lost all its 91 Tutsi employees in 1973, but in the following years, its patron (the Swiss Development Cooperation agency) increased aid and began "rwandanizing" (Uvin 1999, 38) all of its activities with complete disregard for the marginalization of Tutsi in Rwanda (see also Guichaoua 1995a, 19).

organized structure and regional entity of Rwanda to mobilize all of their energy for development (Newbury 1992, 195).

Habyarimana employed a "responsible democracy" strategy to mobilize everyone around national development. The aim was to bring everyone into the workforce. The time for rhetoric to meet pragmatism had come. In the 1970s, agriculture fed over 90 percent of the rural Rwandan population. Habyarimana did not want anything else to detract from this goal. He wanted to ensure that the rural area was not emptied of its working people and hence reinstituted a society-wide manual labor requirement to promote the agricultural sector. Development was the only song in town, and all organs of the state had to dance to that tune.

Agriculture was at the center of the state's development strategy in the 1970s, even though the results were limited. The year 1974 was, for that purpose, baptized "year of agriculture," but the year ended with a general famine, which pushed Rwanda to call for international aid. The agriculture failure of that year only reinforced President Habyarimana's obsession with agriculture, however. Even the army was mobilized to help develop this economic sector. The army was ordered to be a party to the agricultural development cause. The state successfully channeled the military's vivacity and energy to the development mission. Aside from other non-military services that the army effectuated, such as helping repair crumbling bridges and educating non-educated youth, soldiers were required to offer farming and livestock work twice a week. In 1975, the entire country was like a vast farmland. The strategy allowed Rwanda to feed itself, but also served to prevent the emergence of an autonomous civil society.

In the third Republic (1994-2018), development continued to be the focus of the Rwandan state, but agriculture was subordinated to more 21st century ambitions. Development, though, has remained an essential dimension of whatever intersects with life in Rwanda. It is also a metric against which all legitimacy is gauged. It permeates every structure of the society and has become as the sole anchor to achieve advancement of Rwandans.

Paul Kagame's rule set out high archetypes for what a Rwandan life must be like in the future. Those standards were articulated in the principle document called "Vision 2020," first published in 1999. Out of it came the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS), a policy document that describes the vision, and lays out a plan to realize it. EDPRS aims to transform Rwanda into a middle-income country by year 2020 by achieving an ambitious growth target of 11.5 percent on average, by raising GPD per capita from $225 in 2000 to $1,240 in 2020, by bringing poverty under 30 percent, and by restructuring the economy towards services and industry.[47] The EDPRS identified and is framed around 14 major economic sectors, and has set quantified benchmarks and with corresponding timelines against those strategic milestones.[48] The EDPRS is an ambitious meta-plan, the logic of which is difficult to imagine considering Rwanda's past and

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[47] In 2012, the government revised the Vision 2020 document and raised the target for GDP per capita from $900 to $1,240 to adjust it to the updated World Bank's world income categories: lower ($1,006 to $3,975; upper ($,3976 to $12,275); and high ($12,276 or more). When EDPRS 2 (revised) came out, it reviewed the target GDP again to $1,000 by 2020 (World Bank 2017; see also EDPRS 2 (May 2013). The updated Vision 2020 document reassures that Rwanda will be in the lower middle-income threshold by 2020. See the document Republic of Rwanda. 2012. Rwanda Vision 2020, Revised 2012, retrieved at http://www.minaloc.gov.rw/fileadmin/documents/Vision_2020_.pdf on December 6, 2017.

[48] The fourteen EDPRS sectors are: (01) General Public Service, (02) Defense, (03) Public Order and Safety, (04) Environmental Protection, (05) Agriculture, (06) Industry and Commerce, (07) Fuel and Energy, (08) Transport and Communication, (09) Land Housing & Community Amenities, (10) Water and Sanitation, (11) Youth Culture and Sports, (12) Health, (13) Education, and (14) Social Protection.

structural disadvantages. Its geographic predisposition which has less farming land and costly infrastructure, but it is also landlocked, which makes it difficult and expensive to trade with the world. Drawing inspiration from the South-East Asian models, Kagame's main goal is to make Rwanda "the Singapore of Africa."[49]

Domestically, the state has created a vast network of institutional infrastructure to promote and implement the vision. It began by rolling out a series of structural reforms to implement this ambitious development enterprise since early 1999. The Rwanda Revenue Authority (RRA), the tax collection agency, was established in 1998 to finance national development programs (Hope Magazine 2016). RRA takes an 18 percent Value Added Tax (VAT) portion off every invoice and is strictly enforced. Paying a day late means the bill can be doubled (Kanamugire 2016; RRA law on payee penalties).[50]

Security forces have also been reorganized, but continue to have a role in development. The Rwanda National Police (RNP) was created in 2000, replacing a mix of para-military and civil defense forces that protected and enforced the law under the preceding regimes.[51] The Rwanda Defense Force (RDF) replaced the Rwanda Patriotic

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[49] The Rwanda Development Board was created specifically to model the "international best practice examples of Singapore and Costa Rica" with a dearth of technical backstop of experts from the "Singapore Development Board," World Bank, IFC, and the former British Prime Minister Tony Blair (see RDB website at http://www.rdb.rw/about-rdb/history.html retrieved on December 20, 2017).

[50] According to the RRA 2016/7 fiscal reports (p. 38), tax liabilities in that reporting period had involved 1,177 cases totaling Rwf 21.8 billion ($1.00 = Rwf 850). Of them, 116 cases were heard in the court of law, and 93 were ruled in favor of RRA.

[51] The Rwanda National Police (RNP) was created by law No 09/2000 of June 2000 and later was amended by another law No 46/2010 of December 14th, 2010. It has regularly trained professionals with specialized units including a criminal investigation department, traffic and road safety, a children and family protection division, a fire fighter brigade, an anti-corruption division, an anti-smuggling unit, forensic investigation laboratories, and service dogs. The RNP has three schools and gives a Bachelor's degree, Graduate, and non-degree certificates to its graduates. The curriculum also integrates courses on human rights violations and protection as well as fighting gender-based violence. This information was retrieved from the RNP website at https://www.police.gov.rw/home/ on December 10, 2017.

Army (RPA) in 2002 and has, as part to its mission, "to contribute to the development of the country."[52]

Returning to civil society, the Rwanda Development Board (RDB) was established in 2009 to coordinate, stimulate, and promote the national economic development with a special focus on promotion of the private sector.[53] It takes as little time as six hours to register and obtain a certificate at RDB.[54] As described elsewhere, the main purpose of the RDB is to channel the country's many CSOs into the implementation of Kagame's development vision. It implicitly discourages them from taking any critical stance against the government's priorities or policies. There is also the Rwanda National Cooperative Agency (RCA), yet another institutional provision whose essential role is to regulate, coordinate, and channel all "economic, social, and other activities" into the "general interest" of the nation.[55] Philosophically, there is no distinction between what RCA considers a cooperative from what a typical civil society organization does. The RCA defines a cooperative as "an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned

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[52] See the Mission Statement of RDF as stated on its website at https://mod.gov.rw/about-the-rdf/rwanda-defence-force/#.WmyoQ1yfZ-g, retrieved on December 10, 2017. The RDF was established by Law No. 19/2002 of May 17, 2002. According to World Bank's 2015 statistics, the RDF is a professionally trained force of 35,000 personnel comprising the Rwanda Land Force, and Rwanda Air Force branches.

[53] RDB encapsulates all agencies associated to do with development under one roof and, through its numerous agencies, RDB implements tasks related to "business registration, investment promotion, environmental clearances, privatization and specialist agencies which support the priority sectors of ICT and tourism as well as SMEs and human capacity development in the private sector" (*TIGR* 2017).

[54] See, *The Investment Guides Rwanda (TIGR). 2017. "Business Registration." Kigali, Theiguides.org (TIGR)*. Retrieved at http://www.theiguides.org/public-docs/guides/rwanda on December 10, 2017.

[55] From the RCA official website at http://www.rca.gov.rw/spip.php?article1 retrieved on December 20, 2017. RCA was established by Law No 16/2008 of June 11, 2008 establishing Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA) and determining responsibilities, organization and functioning of Law No 50/2007 providing for the establishment, organization and function of cooperative organizations in Rwanda. This information was retrieved at http://www.rca.gov.rw/spip.php?article2 on December 20, 2017.

and democratically-controlled enterprise, according to internationally recognized co-operative values and principles."[56] The RCA's mission to promote cooperative movements is also directly connected to the national development vision, considering the dominance of farmers in the realm of cooperatives (MINECOFIN 2011).

Local government is another area of reform, but again focused on development. The "Decentralization and Good Governance (DGG)," a vast territorial restructuring campaign of March 1999, changed old *communes* structures into *districts*, a new "local government" unit, or the locus defined as "the foundation of community development" (MINALOC 2011, 6).[57] Districts represent the chief physical structures where achieving development, i.e., effective implementation of vision 2020, passes through. The Mayor, head of the district, is the chief executive officer with the power to oversee and coordinate all development activities in their district. The Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC), the direct supervisory structure above the Mayor, requires that everyone doing anything in the district—public, private, civil society and all other non-state sectors in their infinite variety of specialty—congregate under a platform called "Joint Action Development Forum" (JADF) every month to plan and evaluate the progress district plans of action (MINALOC 2011, 6). Districts also set *Imihigo,* annual performance contracts with the mother ministry (MINALOC), in line with the EDPRS/Vision 2020. Then,

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[56] TIGR (*The Investment Guides Rwanda). 2017. "Business Registration: The Rwanda Development Board, A One-Stop Shop for Investors." Kigali, Theiguides.org (TIGR).* Retrieved at http://www.theiguides.org/public-docs/guides/rwanda on December 10, 2017.

[57] It is the Rwanda's Constitution (Article 167) that requires that local government structures be the primary locus for community development. The DGG reform created new administrative units by shrinking them from 12 to 4 provinces, 130 (communes) to 30 districts, 1545 to 416 sectors, and 9165 to 2148 cells. Along with this reform, some public services such as birth and marital registration, once far off several households, were brought down to the Sector, entity below District. For details, see MINALOC (Ministry of Local Government). 2011. *Decentralization Implementation Plan (DIP) 2011-2015.* Kigali, Rwanda.

MINALOC evaluates, ranks, and rewards outstanding performing districts every year at the results dissemination meeting in the presence of the president of the Republic, who personally hands the awards. It is hence nearly impossible for a civil society organization to operate outside the district's knowledge and framework of activities without the risk of being expelled out of that district or sanctioned.

The government has also created a plethora of other initiatives and programs primarily directed toward protecting the socially vulnerable, developing purchasing power for the rural poor population, and thus alleviating poverty. Those include *Vission2020 Umurenge,* which aimed to give employment opportunities to the poorest and most vulnerable (women and youth) to work through public work (MINALOC 2011, 19). The *Girinka Munyarwanda Program* with its motto "one cow per family" aims to fight malnutrition among small children by giving a milk cow to homes with such risk and fulfill the "one cup of milk a day" goal for all school children (Abbott and Malunda 2014, 11).[58] The national health insurance scheme, *Mutuelle de Santé,* aims to insure everyone in Rwandan households within its grand strategy to reduce preventable mortality.[59] The *"Bye Bye Nyakatsi"* [Bye-bye-Grass-Huts] campaign is another radical initiative aiming to revitalize landownership and to modernize housing by replacing thatched-roofs with metal sheet roofs. This campaign was executed with brutal efficiency, as even government officials admitted (Rumanzi 2011; Rwanda News Agency 2011): over 98 percent of grass-

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[58] The government of Rwanda aimed to give out 350,000 milk-cows to homes with between 2006 and 2015, which represented 14,5% of the totality of Rwandan households. Abbott and Malunda (2014, 11) estimated that 180,000 households had received a cow in 2013.

[59] According to the statistics of the Ministry of Health (2010, 6), Mutuelle de Santé had covered 8,419,560 population (86%) by end of 2009; enrollment had risen from 7% in 2003 when it was launched.

thatched huts were razed in just six months (OHCHR 2012, 8).[60] The hasty pace (January through June 2012) with which the *Bye Bye Nyakatsi* campaign was executed is perhaps the best illustration of Rwanda's resolute pursuit of a development agenda. The program illustrates its unassailable determination to combat with full force anything obstructing its vision for the people of Rwanda. Civil society (including local media) has been systematically bound to these goals without resistance on the part of its leaders.

"[...], *when Nyakatsi were being demolished, there was a pregnant woman in the Eastern Province who went to stay in a banana forest and was rained on with her newborn for a week. No newspaper wrote about it, but it was a big headline when a priest criticized Bye-bye-Nyakatsi in a mass and later jailed. [...] it is akin to that old story: '...the news is not the dog who bit the man but the man who beat the dog,'* (an informant in Kigali, July 2015).

The Kagame regime has rolled out many other social protection schemes which cannot be fully documented in this chapter. Those described above, however, show that Rwanda's development agenda today also exhibits an ideology that no other societal force has the practical ability to withstand. Ministers have gone to jail for embezzlement and other common misuses of public goods that their counterparts in other African states easily undertake without punishment (Bachorz 2009; Economist 2012; East-African 2016). Development is a wage issue in the way politics is lived in Rwanda. The state has successfully securitized it. It is as a common resource as clean air or water. Abusing it is

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[60] The eradication of Nyakatsi houses was widely criticized for its extreme haste and is generally faulted to have lacked consultation with the displaced families, as well as to have lacked alternative or fully-usable new housing (Rumanzi 2012; OHCHR 2013, 8). One priest was reportedly imprisoned for publicly criticizing the hasty way the 'bye bye Nyakatsi' campaign was implemented (See OHCHR 2013, 8).

seen and treated as abusing the collective Rwandan life just as the common resources that all benefit from and have the duty to protect. For Kagame's government, poverty is the most lethal of Rwandans' illnesses and development must be prescribed in immediacy while other concerns may have to await.

What is noteworthy is not just the impressive degree of economic gains Rwanda has realized since the end of the Genocide, but also the degree to which it has legitimized this "Rwanda miracle" also outside of Rwanda. The World Bank reported that "Rwanda had met most of the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) by the end of 2015" (World Bank 2017).[61] GDP (real growth) has been around 8 percent every year between 2001 and 2015 (World Bank 2017).[62] The World Bank recently ranked Rwanda first in East Africa, second in Sub-Saharan Africa, and number 41st in the world as a place easy for doing business; it had been ranked number 150th eight years previous to that (idem). It takes less than a day to fully register a business company in Rwanda (World Bank 2018; TIGR 2017).

Rwanda has enjoyed social gains along with its economic progress. *The New York Times* has placed Rwanda on the list of places to visit in the year 2018 (Kamin 2018). The world has also come to know Rwanda as a country at the vanguard of the progressive feminist cause because, thanks to its constitutional mandate, 64 percent of Rwanda's parliament members are women, while 30 percent of its cabinet seats are occupied by women (World Bank 2017). Life expectancy has risen to 66.6 years in 2015, while it was 29 in 1994 and 48.3 in 2000 (World Bank 2017)[63]. Child mortality is down by two-thirds

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[61] World Bank. 2017. *Country Overview, Rwanda.* November 06, 2017. Retrieved at http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/rwanda/overview on December 20, 2017.

[62] Idem.

[63] World Bank. 2017. *Country Data, Rwanda.* Retrieved at https://data.worldbank.org/country/rwanda on December 20, 2017.

(World Bank 2017), while maternal mortality declined by 77 percent between 2000 and 2013 (WHO 2014; Worley 2015; Ministry of Health *et al.* 2014).[64] Similarly, near-universal education enrollment has been achieved in Rwanda (World Bank 207). Furthermore, the net enrollment rate in primary education for school age girls in 2015 was 97.4 percent and that of boys was 96.3 percent (NISR 2016, 8; see also Ministry of Health *et al.* 2014, 9, 16). In addition, there was one medical doctor per 60,000 people in the year 2000; today, there (NISR 2016, xvii) is one doctor per 15,000 people. Similarly, malaria related deaths plummeted by at least 75 percent between 2000 and 2014 (WHO 2015, 64). Rwanda recently also became the first country to fly drones to transport and deliver hospitals with blood all over the country, enabling timely transfusion to patients (Baker 2017; Simons 2016; McVeigh; Hotz 2017).[65] Rwanda has also connected the full national territory with a high-speed optic fiber infrastructure to ensure that 95 percent of the population has access to high speed (4G) Internet (GoR 2010, 54-66). The mobile telephone density in Rwanda by the end of 2015 was 77.8 percent (NISR 2016, 84) while 99.11 percent of the national territory has telephone network coverage, representing 99.88 percent of the population-inhabited territory (idem). Again, the government justifies this

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[64] The Ministry of Health *et al.* (2014) states: "Rwanda had already achieved an under 5 year mortality rate (U5MR) of 54/1000 LB in 2013, a reduction of more than 70%." (p. 4). Reports retrieved at http://www.who.int/pmnch/knowledge/publications/rwanda_country_report.pdf and at http://www.prb.org/Publications/Articles/2015/rwanda-maternal-health.aspx on December 20, 2017.

[65] Baker, Aryn. 2017. "U.S. Startup Zipline has teamed up with the Rwandan government to deliver blood supplies by drone." *Time.* July 20, 2017; retrieved at http://time.com/rwanda-drones-zipline/ on December 21, 2017. See also Simons, Dan. 2016. "Rwanda begins Zipline commercial drone deliveries." *BBC. October 14, 2016; retrieved at http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-37646474* on December 21, 2017; McVeigh, Karen. 2018. "'Uber for blood': how Rwandan delivery robots are saving lives." *The Guardian.* January 2, 2018; retrieved at https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/jan/02/rwanda-scheme-saving-blood-drone on January 15, 2018; Hotz, Robert L. 2017. "In Rwanda, Drones Deliver Medical Supplies to Remote Areas." WSJ. December 1, 2017, retrieved at https://www.wsj.com/articles/in-rwanda-drones-deliver-medical-supplies-to-remote-areas-1512124200 on January 15, 2018.

Internet revolution in terms of development. It views and has integrated Internet as a tool to accelerate "the socio-economic development of the country" and to "create an information and knowledge economy" (idem, 16).[66] Another area in this "Rwanda miracle" is to do with the corruption that is nearly imperceptible. In 2011, a Transparency International survey noted that "more than 80 percent of Rwandans have neither encountered nor witnessed corruption."[67] The 2015 Corruption Perception Index (CPI) report by Transparency International ranked Rwanda the fourth least corrupt state in Africa, and number 44 in the world.[68]

But Rwanda is also subject to growing criticism regarding its "miracle." An increasing volume of scholarship has contrasted the "Rwanda miracle" narrative with a rather more negative analysis. Reyntjens (2013), for example, posits that the post-Genocide state's emergence as a 'success' is ersatz, insofar as it owes it to the dexterous manipulation by Kagame of both internal forces, including the reification of his "for us or against us" (p. 61) strategy towards civil society, and the international community who, out of their "Genocide guilt," have turned him into their "darling" (p. 253). Reyntjens's work goes as predict—albeit unconvincingly (Day 2017)—that, unless it ended, the

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[66] Ax exemplified in one of his speeches delivered in 2006, President Kagame has always been unequivocal about his glee with technology: "We have said it time and again: the role of ICTs in national, continental development and, specifically, in wealth creation, employment generation, and poverty reduction, cannot be over-emphasized. Disease, illiteracy, poverty and other ills are challenges that must be addressed if we are to attain a good quality of life. Fortunately, ICTs present themselves as key potent tools that can be used to address a number of these challenge" (Kagame, speech at the official opening of the Regional ICT Investment Summit in Kigali, Rwanda, May 4-6, 2006, cited from Economic Commission for Africa 2007, 2).

[67] See Transparency International survey summary on Rwanda's Bribery Index, retrieved at https://www.transparency.org/news/pressrelease/20110513_rwanda_bribery_index on December 20, 2018.

[68] In East Africa, Tanzania came at the 117th place, both Kenya and Uganda the 139th, and Burundi the 150th respectively. The three African states above Rwanda on CPI (and their ranking position in the world) were Botswana (28th), Cape Verde, and Seychelles (both 40th). There are 168 total countries ranked on CPI by TI in the world.

Rwanda's strategy will toggle the region again into a new round of mass killing. Strauss and Waldorf (2011) have termed post-Genocide Rwanda's political order as "a transformative authoritarianism" (p. 5). Similarly, Cheesman (2018) has ascribed Kagame's hailed model to his apt usage of "political dominance and tight centralized control of patronage networks."[69] Pehuria and Goodfellow (2018) have sought to unearth "the disorder of 'Miracle Growth' in Rwanda" (p. 217), showing that this model is a facade. Even the most popular agricultural program—in which over 70 percent of Rwandans are a part of—has been criticized to be not what it claims to be (The Conversation 2017). Mann and Berry (2016) have argued that Rwanda, through its dominant RPF party, is determined to produce economic growth because it is the only way it can survive the pressure from both internal and external opposing forces.

Either way, to juxtapose 'democratic enterprise' and 'development enterprise' in the Rwandan context and to understand the place of civil society in such a binary beg for discussion extending beyond here and now. It requires us to analyze the pervasive role of wealth in the struggles that have historically opposed those at the helm of the state and all others carrying the banner of *political liberalization*. But most crucial, it also requires us to analyze the history of Rwanda's power struggles from the broad comparative scholarship on not just post-conflict political order, but also on how other ordinary states in Africa have always survived pressures from societal organized forces.

The classical scholarship on state building has it that states run into the syndrome of 'dual challenge' in that process. On one side, the state seeks power, to be strong, and to

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[69] Cheeseman, Nic. 2018. "Why Rwanda's Development Model Wouldn't Work Elsewhere in Africa." *Theconversation.com.* Retrieved at https://theconversation.com/why-rwandas-development-model-wouldnt-work-elsewhere-in-africa-89699 on January 10, 2018. Cheeseman is a professor of Democracy and International Development at the University of Birmingham with a focus on Africa.

build strong institutions with authority and capabilities, often through crude extractive means (Tilly 1992; Tilly 1985; Gurr 1988). On the other side, as the state establishes and morphs into a strong organization, the nascent elite faces threats stemming from existing or emerging opposing forces and thus the necessity to reinforce control over them (Reno 1999; Regan and Henderson 2002; Skocpol 2014). Squaring this (theoretical) process with the political and economic development in Rwanda helps us see the challenges that civil society encounters in Rwanda.

Peter Uvin (1999, 19-23) gives us a good historical analysis on the 'dual challenge' as well as the fundamental significance of economic goals that analysts often fail to account in explaining Rwanda's political strife. When it became a presidential republic on July 1, 1962, one mono-ethnic political system had been replaced by another. A small Hutu elite, educated and now supported by the colonial rule and the Catholic Church, had taken power. PARMEHUTU, a party whose ideology was built on anti-Tutsi jingoism, became the site upon which power struggles were defined and established in the first Republic. Tutsi, now ousted, lost the political and social power and more than half of them were massacred and fled into neighboring regions.[70] The Belgian colonial rule shaped the new political order when they switched their favor to a small educated Hutu elite (Prunier 1995, 49) and hence propelling them to a political power. Following the so called social revolution of 1959, power relations were inverted. The Hutu elite was now on the top, the former Tutsi aristocracy was depleted, and the Belgian colonial elite had withdrawn from power. Yet

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[70] Ethnic statistics on Rwanda, and on Rwandan refugees in particular, have always been a contested terrain (Prunier 1995, 61-74), skeptics pointing that those numbers were always been written by those in power… but some estimates have it that more than 2,000 Tutsi were killed between March and April 1962, and at least another 10,000 of them were massacred. And there were between 15,000 and 20,000 Tutsi killed between 1963 and 1964. During this time, about 250,000 Tutsi fled the country (see Kuper 1977; Lemarchand 1970; Prunier 1995; Watson 1991). Descendants from this wave of Tutsi refugees formed the recruitment ground for the Rwandan Patriotic Front (FPR) soldiers who invaded Rwanda in October 1990.

the *Bazungu* who stayed and whose number did not decrease maintained economic and administrative dominance in the first presidential Republic. Their influence even increased as Rwanda began to receive more development aid (Uvin1999, 20). The handful Belgian colonial elite owned "the largest concentration of the financial resources, well-paid jobs, foreign education opportunities, cars and fuel, brick houses, telephones, and other instruments of development of power" (idem). At the same time, thousands of Tutsi stayed in Rwanda, and some of them were well educated and relatively wealthy. Similarly, the lives of many Hutu remained miserable and did not improve well after 1962. The new power holders faced the challenge of knowing how to subvert the threats that those three categories of people (*Muzungu,* disenfranchised Tutsi, and mass impoverished Hutu) represented to their power. The new elite, led by Kayibanda, wanted to have the capacity to deal with the competing forces stemming from the economic power that the *Bazungu* held still. They also needed to justify their grip to power to the Hutu population to whom restoration of social justice had been promised.

Understanding the ways in which the Kayibanda regime handled that power struggle dynamic is very important because in Rwanda—perhaps just as elsewhere in Africa—the state has always been the major source of wealth accumulation (Reyntjens 1995c, 284). The less than one percent of all the people who were wealthy, urban, educated, Westernized, well-traveled had become so primarily because of the access to and the positions they held within the state system (Bayart 1986). This group of people were often referred to as the *state class* meaning that, unlike in Marxist thought where the bourgeoisie was defined on the basis of their control of the means of production, here the elite was a group of people who possessed control over the state. In Rwanda, the state has

always controlled nearly all avenues for self-enrichment and upward mobility. The state has always possessed the ability to shape and to disable one's possibility to ascend to that mobility. At that time in the past, for example, the state was the largest employer in the country, followed by the Catholic and the development aid community followed the state in that order, but even in the private sector, the Ministry of Labor controlled and required approval of all jobs (World Bank 1994b, 21). Education at all levels—and all the opportunities that aligned with it such as traveling abroad—the standard route for upward mobility, was state controlled as well. As Cart (1995, 476) has argued, controlling state revenues and the development aid offered such an exceptional advantage for personal enrichment and patronage and therefore for fighting resistance movements that came one after another in the decades that followed.

Therefore, as Uvin (1999, 21) observes, Rwanda has never been an exception to the syndrome of dual challenge that African states face in state building. That is, to capacitate the state as a strong institution with authority and capabilities in the first place, to establish pervasive and enduring state control mechanisms each time that there is a new elite at the helm in the second place. Rwanda has always been "exceptionally successful" (idem) in the midst of the dual challenge. Other scholars (Straus 2013; Longman 2009; Reyntjens 2013) have also observed this Rwandan state's idiosyncratic ability to pervade all and all remote corners of the territory to achieve its goals and simultaneously. One example of how that thesis holds true for Rwanda is the remarkable fact that a single party was always able to rule in each of the three Republics, and each with strong representation to the very bottom micro organizational structure of the country without any true challenge to such order.

But thinking about the intersection of economic processes and the political struggles in Rwanda prompts us to also look at the argument often made in the study of Africa on the general lack of political progress. That view commonly claims that state building in Africa will remain an impossible mission until states become strong and able, not the sluggish, fragile and powerless entities that can penetrate all spheres of social organization and economy to the very remote rural areas where the majority of its people still reside. This broad view that African state structures are inherently weak compared to those elsewhere in the world is popular even outside academia, even though it is also contested and faulted for being essentially Eurocentric and objectively ungrounded (see for example Olivier de Serdan 1995; Sangpam 1993). Yet, that argument has limitations when applied to Rwanda. As Uvin (1999) again notes, "Rwanda [is] in every meaning of the term a strong state, both in its capacity for effective and uncontested control of its entire territory and in the muscled nature of the exercise of this power" (p. 22).

In addition to building the state into a strong organization, the second challenge for the elite is to strengthen the control over existing forces stemming from the society. Again, this is not unique to Rwanda because every regimes seeks to achieve control nonetheless, either by coercion or other creative strategies for legitimation (Uvin 1999, 23). In Rwanda, all regimes have always been effective and successful at both strengthening the state and controlling potential threats. The first Republic, i.e., the Kayibanda rule (1962-1973), persecuted, chased, and killed most former Tutsi power holders and Tutsi politicians as well as other opposition Hutu politicians who did not join his Parmehutu party (see for example, Nkunzumwami 1996). Under the second Republic, i.e., the Habyarimana rule (1973-1994), many power holders of the first Republic were killed, including Kayibanda.

There was no other party or other channel than his MRND party to express a view; the legal system was independent on paper only; and other numerous human rights abuses were reported (see for example Humana 1992; ICHRDD 1995; Kabirigi 1994). In the third Republic, it is the same word-by-word list of abuses as in the second Republic that the current RPF and the Kagame regime (1994-2018) are depicted with. There is perhaps no other critic than Filip Reyntjens (2004; 2006; 2009; 2011; 2013) who have systematically—albeit problematic scholarship—exposed the third Republic's underbelly, its authoritarian style, and structural violence. Therefore, political and economic struggles have always been intertwined in Rwanda. Control of the former has always affected the latter across regimes. The only difference has been the pace at which and the extent to which Kagame has chased and taken development, and legitimized it among the population after such events as the Genocide.

Between 'Development Enterprise' and 'Political Enterprise': The Ambiguities of CSOs and the Clear Choice for Mushrooms

Between the dualism opposing the Rwanda miracle and its critics lies a lingering question of whether civil society can truly wield some kind of popular power and check the unrestrained state power. To the extent that the economic goals and gains are deeply associated with the personae of Kagame, what are the possible instruments can civil society utilize to level itself up to that reality? It simply is an unlikely situation. Part of why civil society has failed the democratization hopes primarily stems from its inability to sell its action to the citizens and legitimize it at the same degree as the state sells its action. An ordinary citizen at all levels of the country knows all the economic programs of the

government at heart. They are able to explain them when asked without hesitation. They can link Vision 2020 to life in their community. Civil society has not been able to deploy in the community to a level commensurate to that enjoyed by the state. Quite remarkably, some grassroots civil society members too do not imagine their daily lives outside the seminal role of Kagame. When I asked *Mushroom* members (in all four Provinces of Rwanda) whether they could not rely on their numerical advantage to achieve progress, hence avoiding dependence on the government, they would almost effortlessly counter with reference to "*tubikesha umubyeyi wacu* [all thanks to], Kagame Paul."[71] It was almost as if there was no other thing to be acknowledged for their success than the *Ubutegetsi bwiza* (normal-healthy and responsible leaders), spearheaded by the president of the Republic.

On no occasion did any participant of my focus group discussions (*Mushroom* members) ascribe their changed life to the work done by a *Balloon* or *Minion,* who usually operate as their 'mother organizations'. Tutelary CSOs usually are based in the capital city and the tutored grassroots associations such as those I interviewed are rural. They both keep, in theory, a patron-client interaction based on technical and financial support that it seemed unlikely for the former to dominate the responses I received from members of the latter. All of my interviewees had some lucrative activities (mostly in farming and livestock) in their associations. Members and the group had received aid of some sort

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[71] "Umubyeyi wacu" is a contextually charged phrase whose English translation, "our parent," does not by any means encapsulate the culturally coded wealth and the semantic versatility that it imbues and relays for the user altogether. It conveys the maternal, protective endearments as well as the fatherly reassuring sentiments. It exudes both a state of feeling reassured and of venerability simultaneously. Just like my respondents, many use that term to denote president Kagame and to express him a reverence stemming from his appreciated stewardship. Other times, my respondents (especially elderly ones) alluded to president Kagame as "Mzee kijana," which is a variation of 'umubyeyi' and which conveys equal beliefs and sentiments about him but with emphasis on his "youth."

directly from the government programs such as the *Girinka Munyarwanda* (*one cow per household*), crop-augmenting agricultural seeds and fertilizers, and homes built for the most vulnerable or as part of the land reform policies. Participants told me that being in association had provided them a means to access cash, enabled them to pay the cost of education for their children, build and repair their homes, dress themselves and their children, and resolve other quotidian needs.

In the Eastern province, one of my participants was a minority *Twa* member, sharing day-to day-life with both survivors and perpetrators of the Genocide. "*I would have not quit a hut to live in house with electricity. Today, I push something with a finger and the house is lite up. All leaders from the past had excluded us from history, but Kagame is not like them. 'Nyagasani w'i Rwanda' [The god of Rwanda] bless him. […] I would not have changed my profession of building and burning pots in clay; it is a laborious work, it pays nothing…, but today, I don't live at the foot of the cliff anymore. I live with people. I have a home. I met people. We love each other. I ask that you look at me; would you have known that I used to live behind history [connoting that he is Twa] if I didn't tell you?*" my interlocutor said to me. Of course, this and other anecdotes only illustrate the overarching argument I am making, but they highlight the disconnect that we see among members of civil society on what matters for them. All the components of this Rwandan civil society do not share a vision nor goals. They are not a united front on the question of balancing the power of the state. Members' views on what place the state should represent in the society and on how much power it should have are scattered. And it is particularly so because the economic needs of individual members have yet to be sufficiently met.

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As long as the government remains successful at demonstrating and persuading an ordinary citizen that it is working on their behalf, and that its mission is to improve their lives, then the popular interpretation of state – civil society relations will remain skewed. And many CSOs understand this reality but still behave in a manner contrarian to it. That is why numerous organizations find their most comfortable role in development service delivery, as opposed to criticizing the state's performance and limitation of freedoms. They believe the government's dogma and have rationalized their focus on development activities, as opposed to executing political goals. When I interviewed the Head of the Rwandan Development Board in summer 2015 and asked him what his institution's expectations from civil society groups were, his answer was unequivocal: "we want them to be a party to the national development agenda because they, too, are members of our society." In that rationale lies the conundrum Rwanda's civil society faces; civil society leaders face the choice of either participating in state-directed development schemes, or of opposing them, but if they choose the latter, they are immediately accused of opposing the common good. This is the dilemma that civil society has not been able to overcome, either ideologically or in practice. They have fully accepted the state's narrative that their appropriate role is to devote themselves to the state's economic development program.

An assessment conducted by the Civil Society Platform (CSP), an umbrella organization for CSOs, showed that the majority of major CSOs in the country willingly participated in implementing the state's development vision, EDPRS. The report presents achievements of national CSOs by development pillars outlined in the EDPRS. It also showed that CSOs alone had executed more than 20 percent of composite development achievements by 2010, including those in areas such as agriculture, health, and social

protection where they lifted the burden to a degree of 40 to 60 percent (Civil Society

Platform 2011, 32).   That indicates that even the most technically equipped and

knowledgeable leadership in civil society has no interest other than to follow the state's

lead, rather than offering a competing vision. The same report underscored the state's view

in a stark language: "*Given that CSOs in Rwanda have this level of expenditure in terms of*

overall national expenditure in the key EDPRS sectoral areas, it is recommended that the

government give close and further consideration to the formalization of interaction with

CSOs on a continuing basis in order that key sectoral investments are effectively

addressed" (idem). Clearly, unless there had been an alternative set of agenda that civil

society deemed better, and through which it felt more relevant or emboldened and

conducive to advance its cause, the CSB would not have been so eager to execute more

tasks on the state's development agenda. It would not have espoused or been praised the

state's agenda so ardently. It is not only because CSOs' power is inferior to that of the

state; it is also because the state has compellingly converted the population in believing

that only a state-led project in which civil society plays a subordinate role can deliver

development. In the sense that "development" is central to most Rwandans, the state makes

it difficult for CSOs to compete against the state in their appeals to the populace. As a

result, espousing state's programs becomes the only avenue for CSOs to reclaim self-

importance and relevance in the wider national order. Table 4.11 illustrates how CSOs has

moved with the government's development compass and benefited from its developmental

programs.

Table 4.10: CSOs expenditures by government's economic sector in FY2009/2010

EDPRS Sector	CSO Expenditure (% total)

04 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	22%
05 AGRICULTURE	41%
09 LAND HOUSING & COMMUNITY AMENITIES	22%
11 YOUTH CULTURE AND SPORTS	33%
12 HEALTH	46%
13 EDUCATION	24%
14 SOCIAL PROTECTION	60%

Source: Copied from the Rwanda Civil society Platform's Mapping Report 2011, p. 32.

Conclusion

There are three levels at which civil society intersects with political development in Rwanda, individual, group, and the macro national economic environment. On the individual level, people join *mushroom* or grassroots associations primarily to meet their material and emotional needs. Participating in associational movements bestows opportunities to socialize and help resolve economic needs of an individual; it is not a function of a natural call that individuals experience with the sole intention to challenge the political order. Individuals are generally poor and even poorer at the grassroots associational level. Therefore, associations are meant to address basic local problems that are outside the processes of countering the state. But in their endeavors, individuals within grassroots groups wind up, consciously or otherwise, building communities and constituting empowered structures that are useful in state building and eventually local strands of democracy. Yet, associations at the bottom of the society are vital forces of democratization (at the lower levels of the society) that receive little to no attention in the ways in which we think about democratization.

On the group level, CSOs that are financially viable are not likely to conduct themselves any differently. Some (relative) financial independence does not necessarily

make them change behavior or mission and hence make aggressive with the state. Quite similarly, financially destitute groups and those with a financial vitality all behave in a similar fashion in the ways they approach the state and its authority. Because of the leeway that the historical context and other cultural realities have given to the state, CSOs and the issues of democratization have become secondary in terms of what matters for the public. To the extent that development is creating real-life changing effect for the population, the work of CSOs on democratization is an issue that matters virtually among the elite only. That puts even more at odd the effort to construe civil society groups as a force that can truly challenge the state on the simple basis that economic autonomy will make it happen.

CHAPTER V

CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRATIC LIBERALIZATION IN RWANDA:
DO INSTITUTIONS MATTER?

In the previous chapter, I looked at economic explanations for the barren democratic relationship of civil society and the state in Rwanda. As we have seen, just as we saw analyzing historical accounts, economic struggles for civil society represent more an expression of some internal realities than an actual hindrance to liberalization. In this chapter, I move the focus to institutional accounts. I seek to understand whether there is any institutional answer to the central research question: *what has precluded civil society from democratizing the state in Rwanda?* The starting assumption is that the lack of democratic progress in Rwanda despite the expansion of civil society is explained by a lack of favorable political institutions. That is, are political institutions the independent variable that accounts for non-democratization? The goal here is to describe any constraining or enabling pattern embedded in the workings of institutions within the Rwanda's political trajectory since the beginning of an organized civil society.

Since the time of Aristotle, institutions were conceived as a disposition that could potently structure the behavior of both the governing and the governed individuals (Aristotle 1996). Thomas Hobbes, an exponent of the political thought during the devastating English civil war, advocated for the institutional Leviathan to save humankind from its destructive state of nature. John Locke then developed a practical framework upon which modern governments drew the conception of public institutions and built contemporary democratic structures (Hooker 1965). Political science, more so in the post-1980s, has accorded more attention to institutional function not just in policy studies but

also in accounting for all of the phenomena of the political world (Peters 1999, 3). There is a widely held view in the general field of social science that institutions are—in various capacities—potently linked to the mechanisms that produce better government or otherwise (Weaver and Rockman 2010; Weimer 1995; Weingast 1996; Shepsle 1986). Douglas North (1991) posited that the role of institutions was to reduce uncertainties.

But a facile connection of institutions to political phenomena belies the complex features of institutions that produce the actual good government. One problem with the ways in which institutions have been utilized in scholarship is the costly dismissal of the origin of forces that make institutions functional, either for democratic or other ends. That is, institutions might more properly be seen as an intervening variable than as a root cause of political behavior. One premise about the institutional benefits is that they shape patterns of social interactions; but at the same time, institutions also take shape and sometimes emerge out of such social interactions (Goodin 1998). If what produces institutional success lies in the interdependence with other social structures in the wider realm of societal order, then institutions cannot be not isolated from a whole range of constraints that affect individual behavior in the society, whether governing or governed. It also means that institutional analysis needs to extend beyond the implicit understanding of them as fundamentally autonomous of other impulsive forces that conditions behaviors.

A second problem—subsidiary to the former—with the ways in which institutions are analyzed is lack of cognizance of the limited explanatory power that institutions carry. Considering the panoply of competing organized entities in the society, each vying for social control and to impose a social order of their (Migdal 2001), institutions cannot offer us isolated and autonomous answers to the sources of political phenomena. This means

that institutions can only offer partial and hence complementary explanatory powers to such puzzles in the political world (Ostrom 2015; 1986) and in the use of its methods (Roth 1987).[72] Yet, factors interacting with institutions and hence affecting institutional results receive only little attention in our understanding of how institutions affect political phenomena.

The third problem is definitional and is about the wholesale application of the institutional approaches to the problems of political phenomena. "Institutions" is a generously loaded and a spaciously encompassing concept that often escapes distinction in analyses. Economic institutions, social institutions, cultural institutions, security institutions, religion institutions, can all be subsumed into the common usage of the concept. The biggest semantic problem is with "informal institutions." There is no sharp line between political culture and informal institutions. In this research, I have use a narrowed and specific definition of institutions. A functionally precise definition is more useful for understanding the true role that institutions can play in fostering good, i.e., democratic, governance.

Defining Institutions in the Context of this Research?

By institutions, I focus on the central role of *the law* in governing. That is, one must consider principally the ways in which the law is organically linked to the real world for improving governance. As such, my usage of the concept is about how the law is

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[72] No one single approach can fully provide explanations to all political actions (Peters 2011, 2). There are alternative and complementary explanative approaches to consider (cultural, economic, historical) that, as Hart argues, should "be appreciated for what they are and not what they are assumed to lack from […] the practices of the discipline with which [one is] most familiar" (Hart 2001, 11). Others have even argued for an "eclecticism of approach," which "is likely to pay greater intellectual dividends for political science than is a strict adherence to a single approach" (Peters 2011, 2).

applied through public institutions. It is a conception borrowed from Peters' (2011) theorizing of institutions that "the law is very much a formal institution of government, developing and imposing a set of clearly articulated norms and values for the society" (p.6). The idea, in this classical conception of institutions, is that the law is imbued in institutions, and that law is central and an essential element of governing for most continental countries. Peters contends that given the ways in which the law frames the government and how government affects behavior of its citizens, "to be concerned with institutions is to be concerned with the law" (idem). The focus here is not on the structure of institutions, as in the branches of the government or the aspects of a presidential or parliamentary, federal or unitary government. Rather, I will explore whether legal institutions were the basis for shaping and understanding the political phenomenon herein under exploration, i.e., the failure of a burgeoning civil society to bring liberalization to Rwanda. Or simply put, is there any way legalism of institutions was crucial for molding relational patterns that have characterized state and civil society interactions in governing the Rwandan society? This quest will lead to answering an important part of the central research question, that is, is there any dominant effect of law in the failures of civil society to democratize the state in Rwanda.

But treating law as an independent variable—effects of the law on unimproved state-civil society relations—is not enough of analysis and would tell us only a partially satisfying story. It is equally important to treat law as a dependent variable—that to understand other factors having affected the domination of law in civil society's quest to democratize the state. It is important to analyze law from a two-way vantage point because the association often made between law and institutions in the realm of governing is also

complex and can take different variations. As Peters (2011) argues, the relationship between the two (law and institutions) is, to a degree, a function of "different national perspectives on both law and governing" (p.7).[73] If institutional explanations of democratic phenomena constitute something that extends beyond just having law in place or applying it, then it is appropriate to assume that institutions alone do not always determine individual behavior. It also suggests that politically there may be other logics behind individual behavior aside from institutional demands. It also means that instituting institutions for democracy is not always tantamount to instituting democratic values. That raises the question of the origins of institutions and of whether institutions, by virtue of mere existence, are what civil society lack in order to democratize the state? I discuss that question in Rwanda throughout this chapter.

Civil Society in Pre-1990 Institutional Context

As we have seen in chapter 3, the pre-1990 laws governing civil society actions were instituted purposefully to bring civil society groups aboard the state driven developmental machinery. It was not a benevolent move on the part of the state to give an impetus to potentially dominant structures that were going to check the state's action or help it check itself. The first legal measure to ever allude to organized entities in Rwanda was the royal decree of August 16th, 1949, issued to meet certain demands of the colonial administration. The decree was enacted to give cooperatives the legal authority to operate, but only for a duration of five years. The first cooperative of the time processed milk

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[73] On the ways in which institutions of governing become effective as a function of citizens' perspectives on law, Peters (2011, 7-10) cites Germany as an example. The new generation of the German elite accepted the domination of the law and incorporated that belief into their socialization, which became a way of life upon which was built a civic responsibility and their collective commitment to the state. See also Konig 1993.

destined to serve the needs of colonial dignitaries and the royal family. Its location was not fortuitous. At the center of Rwanda's power locus, in Nyanza—where the kingdom, the education elites, and the colonial administration were based—was born the first organized group, not to oppose but support the power system which devolved into Rwanda's modern state. No other known group at the time in Rwanda adopted a different course of action and behavior than that of supporting the political system and its patrimonial programs.

A new law of June 24th, 1956, expanded the number of cooperatives and increased their legal authorization to a duration of fifty years. Following independence, the Rwandan state enacted a new law in 1966 that was geared toward promoting cooperatives and elevating peasants out of poverty through promotion of coffee and tea growth. The state launched the Office in charge of Cooperatives and Community Development in 1980. In 1988, the state decreed the creation of the Ministry of Youth and Cooperatives to streamline activities of development through cooperatives.[74] Out of this series of laws, was born a collection of economic development oriented organizations, including many coffee export companies commonly known as OCIR Thé and other minerals extraction and export companies. The government named 1989 "the year of self-organization of the rural world" (Uvin 1998, 165). Subsequently, a special presidential fund was mobilized the same year to incentivize and promote such initiatives through the provision of small loans and grants. Thus, Rwanda's legal framework harnessed the activities of the country's NGOs to the goals of the state from the beginning.

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[74] For an extended review of the history of cooperatives in Rwanda, see the work of Seruvumba (1992); Nzisabira (1992); Musahura (2012); Uvin (1999: 163-8).

Travail, Fidelité, Progrès (TRAFIPRO), a state created and dominated entity, was another innovative brand of cooperative, purely commercial, that derived from that series of laws that had begun in 1956. TRAFIPRO began as small in scope, but later became ubiquitous throughout Rwanda. Its secretary, Gregoire Kayibanda, later became the first President of the newly created Republic of Rwanda. Concomitant with his involvement in managing the business of TRAFIPRO, Kayibanda was also the leader of PARMEHUTU, a Hutu nationalist and major political party under whose hospice he ascended to presidency. Kayibanda was also a chief editor of *Kinyamateka*, the major national newspaper affiliated with both the Catholic church and the state.[75] While it was then difficult to separate church, economic, and state powers, the simple fact that the leader of the first *interest group* in the history of Rwanda's civil society was inextricably linked to the central power structures makes it difficult for institutions to have been independent or amenable for independent civil society groups to rise. It will always be known that the first civil society organizations in Rwanda did not arise independently of the state, and enjoyed no legal protection to act independently of the state's control. The history of institutional and civil society relationships in Rwanda has been one that channels them toward bolstering the state system, not to act outside the reach of its control.

When he became the president on October 26, 1961, through a controversial electoral process (Akyeampong *et al.*, 2012, 2), Kayibanda invented his own governing style. Rather than appealing to the afflicted parties or governing inclusively, Kayibanda behaved faithfully to the divisive ideals as he and his fellow Bahutu nationalists had

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[75] Kinyamateka was the oldest of the newspaper in Rwanda. It was founded in 1933 and a staunch channel of state's activities within the wings of the church (see Guichaoua 2010, 142-143).

elaborated in the infamous "Bahutu Manifesto" of 1957.[76] By 1965, PARMEHUTU was

the only legal party allowed to work in the new "democratic" republic of Rwanda. In the

same year, Kayibanda won an election, in which he was the only name on the ballot.

Without a single political opponent—not in the country nor on the ballot—Kayibanda

again won the next quinquennial electoral exercise of 1969. In those two elections—

electing legislators too—only members of the PARMEHUTU party were permitted to

stand for election and claim seats in the parliament.[77]

Considering the peculiar foundation of the Republic of Rwanda, it becomes

extremely complicated to determine how its institutions could have possibly served to favor

autonomous civil society. From a colonial system that nourished acute division and

ethnicized politics, to the first founder of the state with an atypical political trajectory,

through practices of monopolization of power, cooptation of virtually every other emerging

power center, and selectivity of governing, Rwanda's political landscape was by design

deprived of organic ingredients for an activist civil society. The simple fact that the first

president had emerged from a context of a "civil society," albeit a state-controlled one; that

he had worked in the media and understood the importance of self-expression values more

than many in the country, that he had the best education by comparison, and that he came

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[76] The Bahutu Manifesto was a political document put together by eight Hutu intellectuals on March 24, 1957, three years prior to Rwanda's independence from the Belgian colonial rule. In the document, the authors describe the problem of Rwanda as stemming from what they alluded to as an "indigenous racial problem," i.e., that caused by the Hamitic and foreign originating oppressors, the Tutsi. The authors sent the 10-page document to the Vice-governor general of Ruanda and demanded to save Hutu from the "exploitation" by the ethnic Tutsi. They also demanded liberation of the Hutu from the White colonials. The "Bahutu Manifesto"—a priori a rebuttal to Tutsi and their past—was, in a large measure, the basis and the site upon which Kayibanda defined and implemented the social, economic, and political agenda as it had envisioned within the Hutu nationalist movement. For details on this Rwanda's political episode, see Mamdani (2001, 43-4); see also Trotten *et al.* (2007, 33-4).

[77] See Akyeampong *et al.* 2012, 2; see also Nyrop 1985, 89-91.

from a historically afflicted background—all should have permitted him to govern in an accepting, tolerating, and inclusive fashion. He did not. His illiberal political behavior was not caused by lack of laws or constraining political institutions. Instead, there was virtually no separation between him, institutions, and the state. The president and the law were practically equals. And the state was a pyramid, at whose apex sat the President alone to know what was suitable for all. In the constitution of November 24th, 1962, Kayibanda openly forbid communist activities and propaganda on the territory of Rwanda.[78] Conversely, had Kayibanda used his political privilege to promote a culture of free institutions and instill democratic values into the public life as the country transitioned from a monarchy to a republic, a different consequence might have been possible for civil society. It would have meant for many in Rwanda that checking and engaging the state civically was possible. It would have cultivated activism as a culturally legitimate possibility in the processes of governing. But the behavior of the first president of this republic reinforced a longstanding pattern for state-society relations to run in only one direction—that is from politics to society, not as much society shaping politics. It hauled over the old unidirectional governing habits in the colonial system. To the extent that 1961—the year of independence and the first 'democratic' elections in the land—marked a critical juncture in Rwanda's public life, the behavior of the founders of this republic became paramount in shaping behavioral patterns in subsequent administrations, in other intermediary institutions, and in civil society.

That is indeed what happened when Habyarimana took power through a military coup that toppled Kayibanda on July 5, 1973. Only a day after that putch, Habyarimana

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[78] Article 39 of the November 24, 1964 Rwanda's constitution, enacted under Kayibanda, stipulated that "All communist activities and propaganda are prohibited." See also, Nyrop 1969, 89.

suspended all activities of the then unique party of Gregoire Kayibanda (PARMEHUTU), dissolved the National Assembly, and created a national unity and peace committee whom he tasked to advise the head of the state, him. Less than a month later, that committee gave way to a government, which was made up of civilians in majority and only four generals, including himself. In 1975, Habyarimana created the National Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND) to which every *Munyarwanda* had to be a party. The party claimed to encourage "responsible democracy," meaning "the free expression of ideas on condition that they are seen as useful to the collectivity and are articulated publicly" (Mfizi 1983, 161). On December 20, 1978, a new constitution was promulgated. The new constitution unambiguously gave precedence of MRND over any other structure to set and direct the agenda in the national development system of this second Rwandan Republic. It clearly stipulated that MRND was the unique organ through which views on the future of Rwanda would be channeled (Newbury 1992, 198). A week after the enactment of this new constitution, Habyarimana was the only candidate and was elected closed to 99% of population.

The paradoxes surrounding what was meant to be a harmony between an institutional order and the actual political practice in the pre-1990 Rwanda beg for reflection here. While the aim for the 1978 constitution was a return to institutional rule, where the population would have the last say on matters of power, and that the military's action would be subordinated to the civilian rule, things worked in a perverse order in practice. MRND, the unique party system, took precedence over pluralism of alternatives. In fact, article seven of the 1978 Constitution plainly mandated that MRND was the sole avenue where all political activities were to go expressed. The Constitution glued everyone

to MRND as the only label of political identity. The text in *Kinyarwanda,* the language of Rwanda, stated it better than its translation in French, the only two official languages then used, that "*Uwitwa Umunyarwanda wese aba ari muri Mouvement Revolutionnaire Iharanira Amajyambere y'u Rwanda*" (whoever called Rwandan is by default an integral part of the MRND). Another paradox is that while the Constitution meant to give way to the free will of the people and enable them to achieve, complete, and protect the gains of the 1959 revolution (see Gatwa 2005, 115; see also Reyntjens 1986, pp. 273-98), it also concentrated the privilege of power into one Habyarimana's oversight. There was no distinction between the Constitution, the President, and the party.

It is clear that, prior to 1990, a civil society aspiring to be a muscular democratic force in Rwanda's political space was not palatable to Rwanda's political leaders of the time. The state created a crescendo of legalistic dispositions with the primary purpose of bolstering the forces that implemented its developmental agenda. Institutional provisions were not meant to harbor a force that would operate outside the state's control. Cooperatives, agencies, and research agencies of the pre-1990 period, as well as the laws that decreed them, all served the purpose of strengthening the state and shielding it from eventual threats from society. They were not meant to limiting its reach. In a practical sense, there was virtually no separation between such institutions—the law—on the one hand, and the state—embodied by the President—on the other.

It is also unclear whether and how having different laws—those lenient to autonomous organized groups—would have altered the governing style and hence balanced the state or open the political space for social dissent. But it is equally plausible that such laws—had they been decreed, enforced, legitimized, and exemplified at the helm

of the central state—could have begun a new way of political life that all would have submitted to and practiced in the republic. It did not happen. Perhaps change could have happened, had both Kayibanda and Habyarimana given a good example. But it did not really happen anywhere else in Africa, including in Gambia, Senegal, and Botswana, among Africa's nominal democracies. Even un-colonized Ethiopia remained deeply authoritarian. All of these states coopted autonomous civil society organizations. That did not happen. But because of the simple fact that no such good example was given by leaders of the time, it undermined the importance of institutions going forward. And if institutions could not protect principles of democracy, then they could help civil society either. They became something that civil society cannot rely on to achieve it democratic goals.

Instead, when Juvénal Habyarimana—the minister of defense—took power through a coup d'état against President Gregoire Kayibanda on July 5th, 1973, Rwanda's authoritarian qualities were only reinforced. President (General Major) Habyarimana created the *National Revolutionary Movement for Democracy* (MRND and ruled under that single-party system until 1990. Habyarimana's ruling style differed in no way from that of his predecessor. It took five years to hold the first presidential election. And when that happened, Habyarimana run unopposed and alone on the ballot in 1978. He engaged in the same empty political theater again in 1983, and again in 1988 winning 98.98%, 99.97%, and 99.98% of votes in the successive "elections," respectively (African Elections Database, 2017). His political behavior did not stem from any democratic impetus, was not consonant with liberal ideals, and he did nothing to catalyze or encourage democratic governance during his rule. Until the democratization pressure of the 1990s gave him no room to wiggle, there appeared to be no other impetus for him to have launched Rwanda

on a pluralistic political path. There existed no provisions for presidential term limits anywhere in Rwanda's legal system. MRND was the sole legal party in the land, racking up the totality of parliamentary seats in the electoral cycles of 1978, 1981, and 1988 (idem).

During the Habyarimana regime, institutional dispositions were created to promote associational life. But just as during the first wave of organized groups to ever exist in Rwanda, the legal means deployed toward revitalizing associational life in Rwanda until 1990 aimed only to fulfill other goals than democratization (see Uvin 1998; Nzisabira 1992). The government decreed such laws principally to create a social force that supported its patrimonial development system and to draw the world's financial community into that agenda (Uvin 1998). The government named 1989 "the year of self-organization of the rural world" (Uvin 1998, 165). Subsequently, a special presidential fund was mobilized the same year to incentivize and promote such initiatives through the provision of small loans and grants. The Western aid community actually embraced this brand of state-society relations; rather than challenging the system, the donor community supported it. The World Bank report in 1987 hailed the government's faith in the associational movement and argued that "the widespread presence of cooperative, associative and risk-sharing groups…[was] largely responsible for the vitality of local communities" (World Bank 1087, 28).

Rwanda's ability to persuade CSOs into its development program makes Peters' question even more relevant, *where do institutions come from* (2011, 29)? One wonders whether law alone would have been enough to start a long pattern of mutual influence in the state-society interactions. To the extent that institutions are assumed to mold human behavior, one looks at Rwanda's case and wonders: what makes that kind of influence

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possible and what causes individuals and institutions to interact effectively? The rational choice approach to institutions thinks that behavior change is not a phenomenon that originates from a deep-rooted conception of national history, but rather from a purely rational calculation of utility or psychological reaction to stimuli (Bates 1988; Harstad and Marrese 1982; Chen and Plott 1996; March and Olsen 1983; March and Olsen 2010), and yet the behavior of Rwanda's political class and population in public life seems to come from the just opposite logic of that thinking. It appears that the sort of influence that institutions exert on individuals, at minimum, does not always happen in the same way in all political settings.[79] The relationship between Rwanda's political institutions and individual behavior (the governing and governed) legitimizes the theoretical question that Peters (2011) raises, that is whether institutions are something that can be designed purposefully, or whether they are an organic "outgrowth of human process that escapes designs" (p. 22). We will return to this question in chapter six, teasing out cultural explanations to this phenomenon. But table 5.1 gives a snapshot on the institutional landscape that civil society organization operated in prior to the introduction of democratization. Table 5.1 illustrates the legal environment in which pre-democratization groups functioned, as well as its limitative prescription, and the type of activities that such groups were circumscribed to.

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[79] On the limits of rational choice explanations (as in the context of Rwanda's institutional development), see the work of Rakner (1996); Peters (1993); Stein and Wilson (1993). On alternative explanations on sources of institutionalism, see Meyer and Rown (1977), Durkheim (2013).

Table 5.1: Pre-1990 Legal Framework For Civil Society Groups

	Mushrooms	*Balloons*	*Minions*
Laws exist to support C.S. action	n/a	Y	Y
C.S. take actions without other influence	n/a	N	N
Laws are respected by state	n/a	Y	Y
C.S. bargains with the state on policy formation	n/a	N	N
They channeled demands of people to the state	n/a	N	N
Examples of C.S. protesting any state's actions	n/a	N	N
Mechanisms for enforcing the law are in place	Y	Y	Y

Civil Society and Democratization in the 1990s: What Happened to Institutions After Opening the Political Space?

We now know that Rwanda's pre-1990 institutions had no pretention to promote an associational life meant to be a counterforce to the state in governing. But the end of the Cold War, i.e., frustration with one party-rule system across Africa, as well as the pressure from the world community for democracy brought about the hope that Rwanda, like other African states, was finally moving toward a political opening. In Rwanda, 1991 to 1993 became popularly known as the period of "democratic transition" (Guichaoua 2010, 3; Longman 1999). President Habyarimana opened the political space and implemented several institutional reforms, which on paper looked good enough to put Rwanda on a democratic path. In 1990, for example, President Habyarimana in a solemn speech called for freedom of human rights organizations to form and investigate the abuses of which law enforcement agencies and the army had been accused (Belga 1990). He had, a few months prior, constituted what later became known as "Commission Nationale de Synthèse," a body of experts representing various domains and socio-political forces in

different regions of the country, to examine requirements and how democratization would to be implemented (Kiesel 1991). The commission represented voices from youth, peasants, working people, academia, and the Catholic Church. The commission was tasked to consult with the population throughout the nation, generate major ideas for the new constitution, and recommend new legal dispositions that President Habyarimana later demanded the parliament "to approve such laws with no delay" (idem, p. 6).

As Longman has thoroughly described (1999, 339-243; see also Kiesel 1991; Ushatse 1990; AFP-BELGA 1991), the Rwandan parliament adopted a new constitution on June 2, 1991, after meaningful debate. The new constitution allowed multiple parties to operate and compete politically. It limited the presidential term to only five years, renewable only once. It also established the position of Prime Minister, an office to be occupied by a representative of the major opposition party. This new institutional order brought to life an opposition force stemming from both political and civil society entities. Opposition parties rapidly formed and freely begun to race in strategies to recruit the highest number of adherents in the country. The number of political parties grew from the only one (the MRND) to 23 in total (Freedoman *et al.* 2006, 197) in the course of less than four years. Up until the eve of 1990, there had been only one (state controlled) radio station airing statewide and two written newspapers in the land.[80] But as the democratization era unfolded in 1990, more media channels opened to give voice to various social forces. For example, a total of 72 newspapers were created (ibid.). Considerable popular gatherings organized and mobilized to put pressure on the government to address their demands,

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[80] Those were the national Radio Rwanda and two written newspaper, Kinyamateka (pro-state church edited) and La Nouvelle Relève, the only non-Kinyarwanda paper; see Guichaoua 2010, 142-143.

sometimes successfully.[81] Further, human rights organizations increased in number and prominence. Large public rallies across parties took place throughout the country, gathering as many as 30,000 people, each promising to be the ideal alternative to the Habyarimana's durable but oppressive system of ruling. Parties went to great strength and unified their determination to break away from the status quo era. They formed a coalition and demanded that President Habyarimana form a multi-party government to oversee the transition until a democratically elected government could be established. In response, a coalition government was duly constituted, and free elections were scheduled for 1993.

Simultaneously, Rwanda's associational life increased exponentially in both numbers and visibility. Rwanda's civil society of the early 1990s was viewed as "one of the strongest in Africa" (Uvin 1999, 163; see also Brusten & Bindariye 1997, 30; World Bank 1987; Longman 1999, 339). Ntavyohanyuma (1985, 198) has estimated that there was at least 1 farmer organization in every 35 households, 1 cooperative per 350 households, 1 NGO per 3,500 households, and that more than 12% of Rwandans belonged to some peasant organization up until the Genocide. As Longman (1999, 340-1) has argued, associational groups of that time represented new opportunities and alternative avenues for the people to the patrimonial structures of power that the state had for long successfully tied them to for regime support. News laws were adopted to provide a legal framework for that democratic transition. Proponents of democracy and Westerners who

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[81] One such success came about when Habyarimana released several Tutsi members previously arrested in connection to RPF attack of 1990 (Freedman *et al* 2006, 197). RPF had exercised pressure on the government of Rwanda since 1987 demanding that it accepts return of refugees, conducts political reforms, and institutes democracy. The intransigence of both parties led to the October 1, 1990 RPF attack in the North of Rwanda from Uganda. The government reacted with viciousness including attacks on Tutsi in the night of October 4, 1990 and massive arrests of some 8,000 people called "*Ibyitso*" (interior traitors) in Kigali, Butare, and other places (ibid.). The international community, embassies and NGOs such as Human Rights International Federation (HRIF), and the *Association Rwandaise pour la Défense des Droits de la Personne et des Libertés Publiques (ADL)* put pressure on Habyarimana, which resulted in their release without trial.

had recently visited Rwanda were unanimously optimistic that Rwanda was on the verge of a democratic transformation (Longman 1999, 339; Kiesel 1991; Braeckman 19). Following the normative logic of triumphant liberalism, everything was in order for Rwanda to experience that "democratic revolution" that Huntington (1991, 33) had predicted for continental Africa.

But in the end, Rwanda's political trajectory took a tragic turn (Longman 1999, 338). Rather than resulting in a pluralistic democracy, Rwanda's trajectory veered towards Genocide, culminating with a start of systematic killing on April 6, 1994. Instead of serving to support democratization, the political capital thus far mustered resulted in a political tsunami. Where ballots were about to replace bullets, the results went the exact other way around, in spite of Rwanda's new institutions. The re-distribution of power took place, but the change went in the worst direction. Not institutional norms that the *National Commission of Synthesis* had so worked to institute, nor the crescendo of organized groups could save the democratic project that Rwanda was promisingly transitioning into. Instead, insecurity, shaping along ethnic division, reigned throughout the country. The economy deteriorated as a result. Members of the inner circle of the president successfully scapegoated the opposition for the nation's problems and inflamed the population with a venomous rhetoric against the minority Tutsi ethnic group. On the evening of April 6, 1994, a plane carrying the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi was shot down.[82] That night marked the beginning of the Genocide instigated against the minority Tutsi ethnic group.

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[82] There is no consensus established to this date on who is responsible for shooting down the plane which carried Presidents Juvénal Habyarimana and Cyprien Ntaryamira (Burundi) on the night of April 6th, 1994. The pro-Habyarimana camp blamed RPF and successfully utilized it to fuel anti-Tutsi sentiments, while pro-RPF accounts blamed it on the extremists within the Habyarimana regime, purportedly because the President had weakened the country by softening towards RPF demands (see Longman 2010; 1999).

The presidential guard and other armed forces immediately took control of the capital city of Kigali and proceeded to systematically eliminate key opposition politicians and critics of the regime. The next day, a new president was sworn in and another government constituted. RPF—then rebels partially integrated into the regular army—resumed the fight declaring the Arusha peace accords forfeited. In the following days, *Interahamwe*, a trained military wing of MRND, directed by local authorities and supported by soldiers, hunted down and executed members of the Tutsi ethnic group wherever they hid, in the bush, in churches, and in other buildings. As they did so, extremists also engaged in looting, burning homes, and slaughtering their victims' cattle. As many as one million of Tutsi and ideologically moderate Hutu had died by July 1994. Around three million more people fled into exile into neighboring Zaire, including the remnants of the government, fearing reprisals as RPF was gaining displacing the embattled government forces. As Tutsi were being massacred by the now extremist regime on the one hand, RPF rebel forces were fighting the government army, on whom the international community had imposed an arms embargo, briefly precipitating some military set-backs. As RPF fought the governmental forces, the state and most of its institutional apparatus (ministers, the treasury, the national radio, etc.) moved from Kigali, then to the center, then to the south west of Rwanda, which became their last exit point into the neighboring Zaire. The war and the Genocide officially ended in the first week of July, with RPF seizing power, constituting another government, and ending the Genocide.

The ways in which the democratic transition unraveled in Rwanda raises three important questions for a hypothesis of institutional causes. Why were the institutional gains that Rwanda had achieved between 1991 and 1993 unable to save its democratic

experiment? What factors drove the newly effectuated institutional reforms to a quick

demise? And, in what ways were those institutions helpful or harming to civil society –

state relations? To understand this evolution, one needs to understand the advent of

(institutional) democratization as a phenomenon that was not happening in vacuum or

without a parallel system. Significant political reforms were *de jure* implemented during

the four years that preceded the Genocide, but *de facto* those did not result in a fundamental

political change. For example, while 72 newspapers were created during the four years

preceding the Genocide, virtually a third of them (n=22) were openly Hutu extremist or

belonged to the "Hutu Power" ideology (Freedman *et al.* 2006, 197). Of the 23 political

parties that were formed between the introduction of multiparty system on November 13,

1990 and April 1994, the majority were created from a regionalist foundation or strategy

and aimed to be effective by recruiting more members who shared the views of MRND

and came from the North (ibid.; see the list of the parties in appendix). In addition, while

the Habyarimana government opened up the political space and allowed competing forces,

it had less of a connection to his willingness to enable absolute working of democracy in

Rwanda's than to his strategic calculation for survival through foreign support (Freedman

et al. 2006, 197; Longman 1999).[83]

A few Rwanda specialists have explained the unexpected results of the new

democratic institutional rules and the resulting behavior only in the logic of power

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[83] It is often cited that Habyarimana (and many other African leaders of the Cold War era) opened the political space in 1990 because of the pressure from François Mittérand, former French President, the USA, the Bretton Woods Institutions, as well as other international organizations as a condition to obtain more aid. That is why, while the regime embraced the principles of democratization, it also radicalized and practiced violence in parallel. For example, after the attack of Ruhengeri by RPF rebels on January 23, 1991, Bagogwe (Tutsi) people were massacred in Mukingo (a commune in Ruhengeri) on January 25, 1991, and again in Kinigi on January 27, 1991, and again in Gaseke and Giciye on February 2, 1991 and again in Gigogwe in the night of 3 and 4 February 1991 (see Freedman *et al.* 2006, 197). The government created institutions of democratic governance while refraining and taking away liberties of certain groups of the population.

dynamics. For Longman (1999) and Straus (2013), there is no substitute to the unassailable nature of the state's power in political business in Rwanda. Because the state has always been strong, all attempts to balance that power are immediately dealt with because they are perceived by the state as diminishing, not empowering the same state. In a way, underlying the state's supreme place in the realm of governance is the suggestion that there can be nothing that should attempt to undermine that very principle (see also the description that Reyntjens 2013). Therefore, the conception that civil society as an institutionally enforced entity, along with other politically freed forces were truly going to be the guarantor of liberalization and democratization of the Rwandan polity proved to have been an illusion. To the extent that civil society and all other non-state political freedom fighters were able to constrain the state's power, they constituted a liability, not an asset, to the survival of the state's imminent nature. While the state opened that political freedom for such forces to work in the republic, it never truly permitted them to challenge it in any way. Indeed, the Genocide represented the ultimate recourse to which the state turned to regain and reassert the control it perceived as evaporating (Longman 1999, 390; 2009). The advent of democratization brought about a climate in which the state and its power structures were being challenged by forces represented by the civil society and the new political parties. Therefore, the failure of democratization in the 1990s was not a result of lack of institutional freedoms; rather, that failure is explained by something else located in the cultural habitus. It is precisely when such power reached the verge of its overthrow that the promises the democratic wave came to a crisis that produced mass murder.

Considering Rwanda's experience, the conception that civil society has the power to balance the state for the sake of good governance calls for a nuanced discussion. It also

calls for a reflection on the dominant, Western view of state – society relations. This view still conceptualizes democratic transition from the logic that "strong" societies give rise to weak states. Migdal (1988) contends that states tend to be weak when they come from stronger, more complex, and more independent societies. But that view has shown its limitations in light of Rwanda's democratic experiment. It is a purely zero-sum argument. What is to be clarified here is that Migdal's argument does not suggest that too little power for the state or too much power for the society is good. Instead, Migdal is describing the complex nature of competition that exists among a myriad system of rules (including the state) who, individually and continuously, vie for social control. He also suggests that it is when the state feels threatened by what he calls "centrifugal forces" (2001, pp. 72-75, 137, 144) that the risk of disintegration looms. He suggests that enough power is needed for the state to exercise control and contain destructive tendencies in the society. In light of Rwanda's experience, the ensuing question is how to determine when the state will use that power to be destructive instead of containing destruction; we know that talking about a strong civil society in Rwanda, as Longman (1999) describes it, meant a diminished state. It meant the suppression of the supreme state and the establishment of a constrained state. That is how "the growing strength of the society in terms of its independence and capacity was rapidly balanced by an increase of the coercive capacity" through its "expansion of military personnel and armament" of militia and other forces following the invasion of RPF in 1990s (Longman 1999, 340). The Genocide illustrated a continuation of the strength of the state "in a coercive sense" (ibid.). The Genocide was a means to which the state resorted to reassert control and eliminate challenges to the existing structures of power that civil and political societies were leveling against it (ibid.). The Genocide was a by-product

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of the inherent destructive tendencies stemming from the complete absence—real or virtual—of the state that Kaplan (2002) imagined when he wrote of "the coming anarchy." In a sense, Kaplan's (2002) argument implicitly supports the notion that the state ought to remain strong, so that the state of nature would not prevail. It also suggests that nothing, including institutions, is likely prevent the state of nature from prevailing in the case of a complete absence of a Leviathan, the state.

Post-Genocide Institutional Development: New Hopes for Civil Society?

As we have seen in chapter 3, the post-Genocide civil society faced more stringent challenges than in any other time before. That is because the post-Genocide regime has rendered it challenging for organized entities to vocalize individual freedom and civil liberties in the manner that does not border on the malevolent rhetoric and divisionism of the past. The regime has accomplished this partly through the institutional set-up for regulating civil society organizations. For civil society, the conundrum has been to strike the right balance between fighting for individual liberties, while remaining sensitive to the fragile inter-ethnic communal environment and to the state's centrality. To the extent that the state's power evaporated at the height of ethnic violence in mid-1994—despite recourse to extreme violence as the last resort to save it—the new government has learned a great deal from that episode. It has carefully curtailed forces conceived as threatening its eminent role in the society. That then raises two questions. First, in what way has the post-Genocide legal institutionalism engaged civil society aspiring to address the state? Second, what kind of civil society has emerged out of the new political conditions and how is it likely to remain?

Because the Genocide had destroyed the antebellum state and its institutions, the new environment offered hard choices for the new civil society to be a countering force in governance. Two competing end goals were in display. On the one hand, the state ought to permit democratic rule by keeping the political space open and creating an inclusive system of government and other state institutions to tackle the problems the citizens faced. But the state also had to reconstitute its authority by restoring order and addressing the pernicious problems of security in an environment that had become anarchical. There was a deep division on those two goals because one called for resuscitating the state's dominance over society, while the other aimed to erect a system based on real participation by social forces. As Khadiagala (2004) has noted, national security and restoring territorial order took precedence over all other state's priorities. Building a democratic governance in the post-Genocide Rwanda was secondary to state's power reaffirmation. That is why a wide-open governance scheme got underway slowly, cautiously, and guardedly. In fact, a participatory governance did not get underway in the post-Genocide Rwanda until the launch of the national decentralization and good governance (DGG) program in March 1999, five years after the end of Genocide.[84] The DGG plan claimed to regionalize the state's powers and resources, democratize local governance structures, and involve citizenry in the management of public affairs as well as in development (see GoR-MINALOC 2012). Under this post-Genocide administrative reform, the first popular

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[84] DGG was part of a wide array of reforms the new government of Rwanda began to put underway to address a dire political, economic, and security state since 1999. Those reforms stemmed from a series of national consultation ad hoc meetings on revamping the socio-economic-political status of Rwanda. In the end, those reflections were condensed in guiding national documents called "Vision 2020" and the Economic Development Plan for Rwanda's Sustainable Development (EDPRS). The government of Rwanda requires NGOs to reflect and document the way they fulfill the goals and activities highlighted in such national documents within their strategic and yearly planning.

election took place that same year and only at the local level. A similar process took place in 2001 at regional level. It consisted in merging the old territorial and administrative system of many *communes* into fewer *districts*, supposed to be more effective as opposed to dispersed structures of governing. The 2001 reforms thus involved electing mayors of the new 30 districts. Other legal reforms involved adoption of Gacaca, a new reconciliation-driven justice system rooted in traditional modes of arbitration, in 2000, and writing a new constitution during the months that followed.[85]

At the national level, a constitutional referendum and legislative and presidential elections took place on May 25, September 25 to 30, 2003 respectively. The new constitution institutionalized new initiatives for decentralizing governmental powers and democratizing the state. For instance, it proposed a semi-presidential political system and a bicameral parliament. It also integrated commemoration of the Genocide, proscription of the Genocide ideology and divisionism, as well as other special measures restraining political activities at the national level.[86] But while the new constitution took a vehement stance on ideological divisionism, it also subscribed to fundamental democratic principles of freedom that are of universal standards. The constitution is indeed quite precise on that

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[85] The Gacaca jurisdictions were tasked to try thousands of subnational cases related to the Genocide crimes and infactions.

[86] See The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda (approved on May 26, 2003). The constitution references, in a vivid way, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of December 9, 1948; the International Convention against all forms of discrimination of December 21, 1965; the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights of December 19, 1966; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of December 19, 1966; the Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women of May 1, 1980; the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights of June 27, 1981; and the Convention on the Rights of the Child of November 20, 1989. Such principles have been operationalized into subsequent national policies or laws (see for example, the *National Decentralization Policy* by MINALOC of 2012; the *Organic Law n°08/96 of 30th August 1996 on the Organization of Prosecutions for Offences Constituting the Crime of Genocide or Crimes Against Humanity Committed Since October 1, 1990*; amended by the Organic Law N° 40/2000 on January 26, 2001; and again by another Organic Law N° 16/2004 on December 31, 2004; etc.).

by unequivocally reflecting a textual expression of good governing principles in Rwanda. It even references and reaffirms adherence to such principles including respect for human rights and equality, anti-discriminatory measures, encouraging participation of citizens in public affairs and demanding accountability from public officials, free and fair elections, the rule of law, and principles of consultation and consensus building through dialogue.[87] In a normative sense, prerequisites for participatory governance—in its multifaceted form—have an institutional basis in Rwanda.

There is nothing, in the classical institutional sense, precluding freedom of civil society activism from taking place in Rwanda's governance. That is, fundamental institutional provisions exist and are in harmony with the fundamental legal texts in Rwanda. For example, article 35 of the 2003 Constitution stipulates that "freedom of association is guaranteed and shall not require prior authorization" under provisions of the law. "Freedom of peaceful assembly without arms is guaranteed if it is not inconsistent with the law" (article 36). Similarly, article 45, says that "all citizens have the right to participate in the government […], whether directly or through freely chosen" representation. It also prescribes, in article 47, the endgame for such participation. That is "the duty" of all citizens "to participate through work" for "development of the country" and "to safeguard peace, democracy, social justice and equality for motherland."

Because constitutional institutions of Rwanda do grant rights and civil liberties to citizens, civil society constituencies have the freedom to influence its governance. In a sense, Rwanda—by integrating the notions of participatory popular democratic governance into its most institutionally constraining document—has broken away from the classical

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[87] See al. nº 9 in the Preamble of The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda (approved on May 26, 2003).

regimes of pre-1990 Africa, and has hence avoided that an eventual recentralization of

powers or administrative despotism (providential and tutelary state) deracinates democracy

(Bienvenu 2006).

But only a fast reading of the constitution of Rwanda would belie the difficult

association that exists between rules and actual routines in Rwanda. It also sends us back

to Peters' (2001) question on the origins of institutions. By analyzing the relationships that

have characterized the state and civil society linkages after the Genocide, one wonders

whether institutional rules alone can commit institutional members to behave in ways that

may even, as March and Olsen (1989) reflect, "violate their own self-interests" (pp. 22-3).

The lingering question lies in whether new institutions in Rwanda can prioritize democratic

rules over national security interests (whether of the governing and the governed).

We have an example of that complicated duality from the past. In December 1995,

the government of Rwanda expelled 38 foreign NGOs and suspended the activities of 18

more (mostly locals) partnering with the former.[88] At that time, without a constitution yet

but a series of organic laws governing the transition instead, an estimated 154 NGOs were

present on the territory of Rwanda but the government was never truly enamored by their

activities (see the article written by Prunier in 1995). The government accused them of

inefficiency, divisionism, lassitude, and fomenting Genocide ideology, and did not hide its

unpleasant view of foreign NGOs. "There are probably not twenty of them who perform

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[88] The European Union made a public denouncing announcement but that did not lead to any concrete action. See Official Journal of the European Communities, C 17, Vol. 39, January 22, 1996, p. 0204. A report by USAID in 1996 also depicted the tumultuous relations that existed between NGOs and the government of Rwanda during that crisis era in the political life of Rwanda (USAID 1996, 54-57). The report particularly highlighted the complicated balance that was absent between an expression of freedom that such (well off) NGOs enjoyed in Rwanda while the state officials and personnel pained to even transport themselves to execute their duties. When state's interests clash with democratic activism, the former will unlikely lose the battle.

any kind of useful service," said Jacques Bihozagara, then Minister of Rehabilitation, to Prunier in 1995 (ibid). The Minister cast them as uncoordinated, duplicating government services and wasting resources, and selective in their focus. He also expressed that many of the NGO's expatriate personnel were too young, inexperienced, racist, and exploiting the NGO status privilege to avoid compliance with the state's laws such as that of registering their organizations on the ground that "[they] are an NGO and as such want to have nothing to do with a government" (ibid.). But more remarkable than anything else, the government consistently minimized the importance of the work of NGOs and questioned the quality of their relationship with the society, which delegitimized the importance of international NGOs as a whole. During that interview, Minister Bihozagara depicted to Prunier a dynamic mirroring two antagonistic interests between NGOs and the people. That, on the one hand, of rich and insensitive NGOs (4WD vehicles, cellular telephones, comfortable homes) and that of suffering citizens (emotional rawness, poor, physical affliction), on the other. To a certain degree, the government could not even make a distinction between NGOs and private business entities, insofar as the former were content "with taking pictures for fundraising purposes back home than with actually" helping people in Rwanda (ibid.). Similarly, Reyntjens quotes Denis Polisi, the then Secretary General of RPF, who on June 15, 1997 referred to NGOs as "those business enterprises called NGOs" and lampooned the "latest invention of NGOs, namely civil society" (2004, 185).

In the years that followed, that complicated relationship between the government and the NGO community became the basis upon which new institutional laws now governing the relationships of the state and NGOs were framed. For example, article 38-

40 of the NGO law No 20/2000 of 26/07/2000 states that *every Non-profit making Organization working in Rwanda must submit, by latest April 30 of each year, to the relevant government authorities, a detailed report of its achievements, its balance-sheet and financial situation for the ended exercise*.[89] The NGO law is supplemented by another Organic Law O.G. n° 7 of 01/04/2001 to govern the making of NGOs. The latter, which is an operational law for Civil Society activities, proscribes subversive political activities and orders all NGOs to renew their registration with government officials every year. Also, ministerial regulations on the work of NGOs require them to report information on the source of their funding, demographics of their personnel (domestic and foreign), and the nature of their work to ensure they are aligned with governmental vision for the society and are not division harboring.

Conclusion

To conclude, Putnam was right to assert that "institutions are devices for achieving purposes, not agreement" (1993, 8). He observed that developing institutionalism was important for democratic performance, but most important that engraining a type of institutionalism in system of order that is already established was the most difficult thing to achieve. Just as Arturo Israel has argued, it is a one thing to build a road, building the organization that manages it is another (Israel 1987, 112).

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[89] See the NGO Law No 20/2000 of 26/07/2000. The article states that "The governmental authority responsible for the nonprofit organization may at any time request data and documents on its activities, which must be delivered within a month. Additionally, every nonprofit organization in Rwanda must submit a detailed report on its achievements, balance sheet, and documentation of its financial situation to the authority by April 30 of each year. These reports are forwarded to concerned Ministries by May 31 and to the Cabinet by June 30. The non-delivery of reports can result in the suspension of an organization's activities."

In Rwanda's colonial era, institutions served to reinforce the power of the colonizers by closely regulating the role of non-state associations and channeling them to the purposes of the colonial state. This established in the political culture the role that CSOs should play vis a vis the state. The same role was re-produced during the one-party era of Kayibanda and Habyarimana, with institutions reinforcing the idea that CSOs organizations should serve state purposes. In the 1990-94 era, new institutions were adopted and adapted to the pressures of history—especially seeking to resonate with a traumatized, fearful, and angry population. But just as in the past, new institutions were crafted to reflect the traditional precedence of the state over other social structures. That reordering of institutions and of the society as a collective has restructured the role of CSOs, subsuming them into the execution of the state directed development agenda.

CHAPTER VI

FAILURE OF CIVIL SOCIETY – DEMOCRACY IN RWANDA: IMAGINING POLITICAL CULTURE AT THE CENTER

"Some writers have so confounded society with government as to leave little or no distinction between them, whereas they are not only different but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants and government by our wickedness. The former promotes our happiness positively by uniting our affections; the latter negatively by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse; the other creates distinctions. The first is a patron; the last, a punisher. Society is a blessing. At best, government is a necessary evil."

A passage from Thomas Paine's Pamphlet "Common Sense" written in 1776.

"What is government itself but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: You must first enable the government to control the governed and, in the next place, oblige it to control itself."

James Madison, from the Federalist Paper No 51.

In the previous chapters we have seen the limits of institutional and economic arguments about our central question, namely, "why is the growth of civil society unable to support the emergence of a democratic trajectory in Rwanda?" We initially thought of economic and institutional explanations as independent variables that might explain Rwanda's failure to start along a democratic trajectory. But in a way, the findings showed that neither of them provides us with compelling explanations as to why democratic tendencies have not emerged across the three post-colonial regimes that Rwanda has witnessed. Rather, the findings have shown us that institutions and the economic struggles and the democratic outcomes alike are affected by the variable I have previously alluded

to as "something else." That previously nameless variable is political culture. It is a force so powerful, with enduring influence over the ways in which the state has always related to the society (and to civil society or other opposition forces), that it seems to be at the center of a thick description of Rwanda's non-democratic political trajectory. In this chapter, I will describe the origins of the behavioral patterns and the ways in which that behavior has played an important role in the state's relation with civil society and the society as a whole. This will show how political culture has shaped the unchanging democratic outcomes in Rwanda.

But first, what is political culture and how do I conceptualize it in this chapter? There is no standard agreement on what constitutes political culture, but there is a broad (and hence loose) conventional view that it is a guidepost for thought and action, a conditioning agent, which encompasses the various patterns of orientation a specified group holds towards political phenomena whether cognitive, affective, or evolutionary (see Ross 1997, 74; Almond and Verba 1963; Elkins and Simeon 1979; and Wiatr 1980, 106).[90] But because of its expansive broadness, scholars have, over time, adopted a more singular approach to defining and deploying the concept of political culture, choosing to focus on one or two attributes, such as trust (Putnam 1993), tolerance (Inglehart and Norris 2003), efficacy (Diamond 1999), or secular and post-materialist values (Inglehart 1990; 1997; 2000).[91] For practical purposes, I use a conception of political culture in this chapter that

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[90] Lane (1992), for example, asserts that "a major difficulty in achieving a clear overview of the field of political culture has been the fundamental failure to settle on an operational definition of the internal structure of political culture, that is, of the variables of which it is composed" (p. 363).

[91] Given that my purpose here is to link political culture to political outcome (democracy), I want to also acknowledge that not all scholars are in agreement on the relevance and ways of using political culture as an explanatory variable. The debate on the place of 'political culture' as both a concept and a tool for explaining political events is a field of wide contestations and contradictions. For example, Muller and Seligson (1994) refute Inglehart's (2000) as well as Almond and Verba's (1963) contention that civic values or culture impact

follows Pye's (1968) definition of it is a product of both the *collective history of a political history* and *the life histories of members* (or events) of that system. I found that both 'historical events' and 'culture' were good elements of the concept for analyzing and describing political outcomes in Rwanda's political system. As Inglehart and Baker (2000) have argued, major events in a society leave markers of enduring effect. They shape new social realities and people adapt to the changes left by such events; they behave in reference to such events and these become an important part of their overall belief system. Therefore, events of the past produce a collective memory, which becomes a condition for subsequent human behavior. Or differently put, "values can and do change [but] they continue to reflect a society's cultural heritage" (idem, p. 49). Therefore, a mélange of events in the evolution of a society, culture, and other social forces produce a value system that either reinforces or constraints self-expression and the subsequent inclination for collective action (Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 135-145; 210-230).

Describing and explaining Rwanda's political system through the lenses of 'political culture' offers a unique advantage to our effort to understand the workings of politics there. It is an important concept in this analysis considering that many students of Rwanda have used a wide array of empirical evidence and other theories, but no one has yet taken a cultural approach to the Rwanda's political evolution. That is, there has been no interest in describing democratic events in Rwanda as something phenomenologically

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democracy and not the other way around. In their own cross-national regression analysis, Muller and Seligson (1994) find no impact of civic values on change in democracy. Rather, they find that one of the variables, interpersonal trust, is actually affected by democracy. Similarly, Wilson (2000) agrees that through quantification of culture Inglehart gives us a more practical framework for studying modernization, "one that is not linear, deterministic, or tied to Westernization or democratic theory" (p. 259). But in the same logic, Jackman and Miller first question the analytic usefulness of the concept and cast doubt on its return in the political science analysis (1996a); they also (in 1996a) disagree with Inglehart and Baker (2000) that cultural change is a slow process; they don't find culture as significant for economic development, and hence.

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sunk into their cultural evolution. Reyntjens (2013), for example, the most-published scholar on post-Genocide Rwanda, offers only simplistic (and one-sided) narrative materials and descriptive accounts without extending the answers beyond the immediacy of the current regime. His studies of Rwanda also lacks broad comparative perspectives on political regimes (Day 2017). From a rational-choice approach, Straus (2006) and Straus & Waldorf (2011) have described the structures used by an authoritarian state, but have not taken interest in seeking the genetic patterns or origins of structural violence in Rwanda. Only Peter Uvin (1999) nearly touched this missing link in the studies of Rwanda when he noted "*the vision of Rwanda as a country—its challenges, its priorities, its people, its politics—is remarkably similar across agencies and people*" (p. 9) and lamented that "*… there is almost no information on what people think, feel, hope for, believe in, dislike, or dream of; their social relations and conflicts; their perceptions of development, the state, or the aid system; or their resources, networks, capacities, or aspirations*" (idem) against which his scholarship could provide "only indirect, occasional glimpse into the realities of Rwandans as people" (idem).

It is this element that cuts across political events, epochs, and outcomes that I refer to as *political culture* and that this chapter examines. In Rwanda's political system, a succession of momentous events have taken place, leading to considerable political evolution since the end of the monarchical system in 1959. Yet there appears to be one thing that is not fundamentally changing, namely, the patterns in power relations between the state and the people. The pattern has always been that of a supreme role of the state, which is reflected in the ways people respond to and participate in presidential elections, mobilize in political parties, prepare before presidential and parliamentary elections, and

respond to presidential election outcomes. As Figure 6.1 and Tables 6.1-2 show, the unassailably supreme place of the president in electoral process has been a constant in the history of Rwanda since independence.

Outcomes of Presidential Election Since Independence
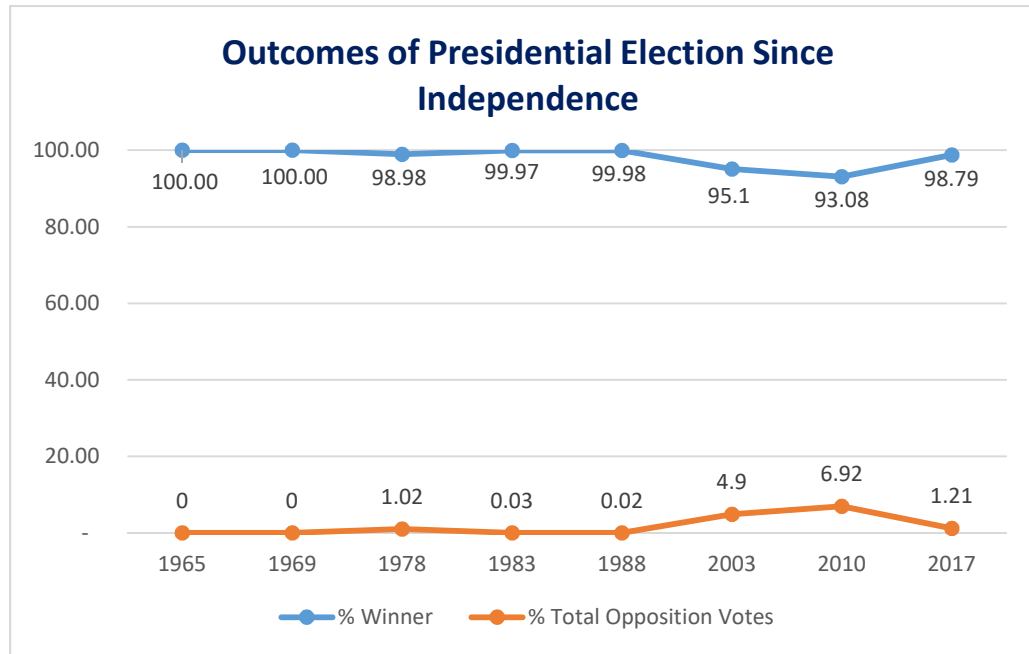
Figure 6.1 Presidential Election Tendencies Since Rwanda Became a Constitutional Republic Source: Compiled from the "African Election Database" and Rwanda's Electoral Commission

Table 6.1 Trends in Popular Participation in Presidential Election Since Independence (Rwanda)

	Total registered voters	%	Total vote turnout	%	Invalid/blank votes	%	Total Valid Votes	%
1965	1,440,440	100.0	1,261,458	87.57	24,804	1.97	1,236,654	98.03
1969	1,578,704	100.0	1,434,977	90.37	8,276	0.58	1,426,701	99.42
1978	2,091,688	100.0	2,070,562	98.99	21,126	1.02	2,049,436	98.98
1983	2,433,265	100.0	2,364,592	97.18	68,673	2.90	2,295,919	97.0
*1988	2,740,920	100.0	2,740,677	99.99	243	0.01	2,740,434	99.99
2003	3,948,749	100.0	3,812,567	96.55	58,001	1.52	3,754,566	98.48
2010	5,178,492	100.0	5,049,302	97.51	65,912	1.31	4,983,390	98.69
2017	6,897,076	100.0	6,769,514	98.15	12,310	0.18	6,757,204	99.82

Source: Compiled from the "African Election Database" and Rwanda's Electoral Commission. ***Mean data are for legislative elections; presidential data are unavailable.

Table 6.2 Trends in presidential winning and power distribution among political parties since independence (Rwanda)

	1965	1969	1978	1983	1988	2003	2010	2017
% Winner has been incumbent	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Winner's party is the majority in parliament	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
# of official parties registered in country	3	3	1	1	1	9	10	12
Total # candidates in the race	1	1	1	1	1	3	4	3

Source: Compiled from the "African Election Database" and Rwanda's Electoral Commission.

What ones notes from Figure 6.1 and Tables 6.1-2 is a type of social conformity that is unvarying irrespective of change in ideology, leaders, and ethno-political structures. They also show a social proclivity not to challenge authority. For example, at the dawn of independence, there were at least three opposition parties, including UNAR (Rwandan National Union), APROSOMA (Association for Social Promotion of the Masses), and RADER (Rwandan Democratic Rally), as well as independent candidates. Yet, Grégoire Kayibanda (Hutu) ran twice unopposed (1962-1973), racking up the totality of votes (100%) each time. Then came Juvénal Habyarimana (Hutu) who took power through a military coup in 1973. Habyarimana created the MRND party and run unopposed every five years until 1990, each time winning 100% of the votes. In fact, his MRND was the only party that the Constitution allowed to exist in Rwanda. When political space opened throughout Africa in 1990, thanks to the wave of democratization, the number of political parties in Rwanda grew from 1 (MRND) to 26 in 1994 but elections that were supposed to take place in 1993 never did. The country quickly descended into civil war, which culminated in the Genocide early the following year. Following the end of Genocide in 1994, the RPF has been the single dominant party. The next presidential elections did not occur until the end of a transition that was sanctioned by a popular referendum, resulting

in the Constitution of 2003. Paul Kagame (Tutsi) has averaged 95% of votes in the last

three elections. His 2017 re-election owes it to constitutional amendments of 2016 which

were also approved by a popular referendum.   Recent constitutional provisions permit

Kagame, in theory, to remain the President of Rwanda until 2034. Most opposition parties

of today are members of a club called the *National Consultative Forum of Political*

Organizations (NFPO), a constitutionally mandated platform aiming to regulate and

balance political ambitions and the lessons of history.[92] To this day, most political parties

have not chosen to send their own candidate to contest the presidential race. Instead, they

have each time endorsed the candidacy of Paul Kagame, even though they have regularly

participated in parliamentary elections and won seats in the parliament.

By Which Variables to Measure Political Culture in Rwanda?

I explore political culture and how it has shaped political outcomes in three separate

dimensions: *social capital* (social trust and institutional trust), *risk aversion*, and *deference*

to the state. I examine the forces of trust as both vertical (citizens versus government) and

horizontal (social trust) and the ways in which they manifest and create social realities that

have historically translated into certain power configurations at the national level. I also

describe ways in which institutional trust has legitimized the state's supreme role in

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[92] The National Consultative Forum of Political Organizations (NFPO) was established by the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda of June 4th, 2003 in its article 56. It began its activities on July 25th, 2003. From its website, the mission reads as "*The NFPO works as a platform where Political Organisations recognized in Rwanda meet and discuss on the country's problems and national policies, in the purpose of consensus building and national cohesion. The NFPO is a permanent framework for capacity building for member political organizations in the development of political activities and political service provision. It is also a framework for conflict mediation between political parties and for the promotion of the code of conduct which should characterize the political leadership in Rwanda*" (NFPO 2018, accessed on March 8, 2018, at http://www.forumfp.org.rw/?HISTORICAL-BACKGROUND-OF-THE-NFPO).

governance. Second, I explore "risk aversion" as another determinant of behavior that is rooted in collective cultural norms. I describe ways in which the aversion that Rwandans in general and active civil society participants in particular have for political risk based on past events. This risk aversion has empowered the state and given it legitimacy to act on their behalf without popular demands for accountability and how that has shaped state-civil society relations in general. Third, and consistent with the previous arguments, I examine the extent to which deference to the state has always been a force even within civil society itself. I show how the principle of challenging the state is culturally foreign to the history of political citizens of Rwanda, and how it proved incompatible where tried in the past.

Rwanda's Civil Society and Democratization Through the Logic of Trust and Social Capital

From de Tocqueville (1945; 2000) to Putnam (1993; 2000) through Fukuyama (1995), we understand the importance of trust in building a democratic governance.[93] That is—by virtue of proximity, interaction, collaboration, and mutual reciprocation—a process of horizontal networking leads to the formation of 'social capital,' or positive social forces that permeate institutions of governance. As a consequence, such forces, fundamentally stemming from the principles of inclusion and wide participation, allow widespread social mobilization and partnership. The formation of social capital permits the creation of a

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[93] Both Inglehart (2001; 2005) and Fukuyama, 1995 (and also Putnam, 1993) have established a connection between 'social trust' and development of 'democracy' in the sense that trust promotes liberal 'self-expression' values and leads to citizens' participation in 'decision-making.' Fukuyama (1995) even posits that 'low-trusting' societies are disadvantaged in the realm of development because they are unable to develop large, complex, and social institutions. Briefly, interpersonal trust, tolerance, and participation in decision making all correlate with democracy. And in a sense, building a strong civil society transits through a sense of strong trust, civic virtues, and communal belonging. This is the 'civic culture' that Putnam discovered in Northern Italy, or the 'communal republicanism' that Tocqueville ascribed the success of the American Political system to.

democratic culture in the society and gives society such benefits such as peace, mutual tolerance, education enhancement, children's welfare, economic prosperity, reduced ethnic violence, and good institutional performance (see Norris and Inglehart 2004, 181; Tilly 2004, 103, 134-136; Tilly 2005; Brown and Ashman 1996; Paxton 2007, 50). In a sense, it is difficult to imagine a democratic culture in the absence of a high level of social capital and widespread social trust.

But if trust is such an elemental recipe in the production of a democratic culture— because without it people and groups cannot mobilize, consult, discuss, build consensus, or make policies—then there is a problem we should not ignore in the ways in which civil society has developed in Rwanda. In the sense that CSOs draw on trust to mobilize forces that alter the unchecked character of state rulers, then what does it mean for such groups to mobilize in an environment that lacks trust? Importantly, what makes for CSOs' possibility of success if there is no trust on both intra- and inter- group levels, what Praxton (2007) describes as "the glue that binds a social system together" (p. 47)? In addition, how is it possible to build an autonomous civil society in a country where associational life or any other form of group representation on the basis of ethnic identity or minority group is prohibited? Again, this is another example of the type of difficulties that the work of democratization faces when it is done outside of contextual considerations.

Dynamics of Trust Within Balloons and Minions

Let's examine this problem and the ways in which it became a turning point in the development of civil society in Rwanda. And to stay at the national level, let us focus on just *Balloon* and *Minion* CSOs in Rwanda, the two leading strata of civil society that most international donors have continuously expected to be at the forefront of the struggles for

democratic change. Before multiparty-ism came to Rwanda in the 1990, this class of CSOs had nothing to do with democratization by vocation. Traditionally, they were grouped into faith-based (FBOs) and development-oriented organizations (see Uvin 1999 and Longman 2010). Democratization or the idea of challenging the state was a foreign a concept that they quickly embraced and learned to integrate into their business.

Political space did indeed open up and just like political parties, numerous CSOs took off later in 1991. Those are, as their names indicate, the CSOs whose activism looked to address the state directly. They were *Balloons*. Such organizations included, for example, PROFEMMES in 1991 (to promote women), ADL in 1991 (association for human rights defense), CLADHO in 1993 (an umbrella and a league of associations defending human rights), LIPRODHOR in 1991 (a league that built notoriety on promotion of human rights in Rwanda), CCOAIB (a concertation council of organizations supporting local initiatives), ARDO in 1991 (yet another organization to promote defense of human rights), AVP in 1991 (to promote peace), Kanyarwanda in 1991 (to promote coexistence), and more.[94] For an extensive list of CSOs that emerged at the dawn of the democratization era, see the work of Peter and Kibalama (2006, 58-67).

At the start, these organizations exuded hope and a vibrant vocal spirit that was going to challenge the highly personalized tradition in Rwanda's politics. But unique to their rise and the way they conducted themselves shortly after they formed mirrored the fragility of the very political climate out of which they surged. They rose practically at the same time as the RPF attack from Uganda, on October 1, 1990. Human rights-oriented CSOs and a civil war were two competing and incompatible forces that emerged

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[94] French abbreviations to these acronyms are provided in the list of acronyms.

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contemporaneously. Numerous arbitrary arrests took place throughout the country; it was sufficient for one to be suspected of sympathizing with the principal enemy, RPF, to evoke arrest. The arbitrary was commonplace. The most used term in the public discourse at the time was *ibyitso,* the interior enemies. That pervasive notion, combined with repetitive massacres on Tutsi, including seminal ones in the communes of Kibilira, in the North, and Bugesera, in the East, defined the identity of the new CSOs and the trajectory they took together.[95] At the pick of this conflict, media spread day and night that Rwanda was on the verge of collapsing because of, as *Kangura*, a prominent regime's mouthpiece newspaper put it, RPF was planning "genocide, extermination of the majority Hutu."[96]

While these events represented one of the core problems that civil society was theoretically going to help moderate, they ended up shaping that very civil society. The environment between 1990 and 1994 was so tense that democratization struggles conflated with the height of an ethnic conflict that shaped every fiber of the emergent CSOs. Relationships between any of these newly formed CSOs and the government were defined based on whether they supported or criticized it. Opposing the government denoted that CSOs had rejected its effort to halt the danger that the nation faced, meaning the collapse instigated by Tutsi invaders who had attacked it from Uganda. CSOs that opposed the

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[95] On the arbitrary massacres in the communes of Kibilira and Bugesera, see Desforges's *Leave none to tell the story*, 1999, Pp. 106-111 by Human Rights Watch; see also Human Rights Watch report of "Rwanda Genocide, How it was prepared, 2006, Pp. 7-8.

[96] See Association des Femmes Parlementaires pour la Défense des Droits de la Mere et de l'Enfant en collaboration avec Dr. Mugesera Léon, "Toute la Verité sur la Guerre d'Octobre 1990 au Rwanda," Kigali: February 1991, p. 5.

regime and that had a different reading of the political events of that time were conveniently cast as enemies of Rwanda or *'inyangarwanda.'*[97]

Those constraints made the environment such that CSOs lined up according to that political divide. Even in the absence of the civil war, however, would not political culture have asserted itself, and prevented civil society from engaging in a pro-citizen dialogue with the state. Two opposing camps were formed among those CSOs, just as the political parties were. One set was pro-government, and the others were anti-government, meaning the enemies of the state. Ethnicity and messages of terror became a unifying factor on the side of the government, while fear, distrust, and uncertainties shaped those who opposed it.[98] In addition, CSOs were trapped in between, leaving them with almost no other choice than to pick one of the two. Freedom of ideas and of choice was far from the guiding principle in the ways that multi-party politics was taking shape. Because of the social polarization of society, it was impossible for CSOs to fight objectively for human rights for all victims and objectively. In general, supporting the government denoted being pro-Hutu and fervently defending the Hutu cause. Similarly, opposing the state meant that they were pro-Tutsi, supporting the invaders and the war which aimed to obliterate the existing political order. That wide political environment is that which begun and then shaped in the

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[97] The term *Inyangarwanda*, initially used by the regime of Habyarimana to label RPF rebel forces, soon became an ethnically coded word for Tutsi or the enemies of the country and the regime that represented it.

[98] That dual fragmentation (nationalist majority versus minority opposition) permeated every sphere of influence in Rwanda, including academia, media, the military, political parties, the public itself.   The height of an ethnic conflict The pro-government elites and other leading voices owned up that strategy and redefined priorities in their own sub-environments.   For example, the vice-rector and professor at the National University of Rwanda was first to propose that all men train and use traditional arms to defend the interior frontiers while the professional army was busy driving the enemy outside of the country; see for example Association des Femmes Parlementaires pour la Défense des Droits de la Mere et de l'Enfant en collaboration avec Dr. Mugesera Léon, "Toute la Verité sur la Guerre d'Octobre 1990 au Rwanda," Kigali: February 1991, p. 5. See also, Human Rights Watch and the International Federation of Human Rights Leagues (FIDH), "Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda" (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1999), p. 66.).

public conscience and so went CSOs. Their identity and the ways they calculate risks, and the ways in which they strategize and set priorities are rooted in the political climate of that begun in 1990. To the extent that organizations are not idealist institutions that shape outside the influence of ideas, human sentiments, and interests, that was a natural outcome in the life of Rwandan CSOs. There is no evidence that membership in the CSOs correlated with the ethnic divide of the time, meaning Hutu and Tutsi never coexisted in a CSO, but it is clear that the ethnic dynamic of that time became an important driving force for mobilization within CSOs. It hence makes it even unclear whether Rwanda would have democratized in the absence of the war. In responding to the ideological constraints and the political forces of the time, CSOs fast lost their battle. To the extent that inter-personal and inter-CSO trust, all necessary for mobilizing, was built on jingoist sentiments and ethnic affinities, there is a case to be made that both *Balloons* and *Minions* hurt more than helped the prospects of true democratization in the near future. The ethnicization of the war context by the regime nurtured ethnic "bonding" in lieu of ethnic "bridging" social capital during that time. In so far as ethnic identity was such a seminal element in ways CSOs emerged and fragmented, it meant that a competitive multiparty politics necessarily exacerbated ethnic animosity in Rwanda. Distrust and mutual suspicion, across individuals and groups, replaced the norms that would have been the sources for cooperation and initiatives. The norms of alliances were absorbed by conditions created by the ethnic conflict and the way the state securitized the conflict. Allying with a CSO whose leader (and consequently the whole CSO) was labeled *icyitso* or wrongly accused of supporting the *enemy* meant that there was no such thing as "general trust" or "depersonalized trust,"

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such as that described by Yamagishi and Yamagishi (1994, 139) and that Yuki *et al.* (2005, 50) define as the product of collaborating CSOs in vibrant societies.

After the Genocide, ethnic plagued the environment in which CSOs functioned more than ever. The new political environment was equally if not more constraining than that of the previous era. A new government emerged, led by RPF, the ex-rebels who were, shortly before, the enemy of the country. Yesterday's "good guys" became the new villains and vice versa, depending on which ethnic side you were. The tables had turned, but the context remained contentious. It was a contentious context. In the processes of dealing with Genocidal criminals and other remnants of this human tragedy and of instituting a new order, the new regime arrested numerous Hutu alleged of committing the Genocide, some of which were arbitrary. There were also numerous cases of disappearances of Hutu citizens who, mostly, held some influence where they lived previously. Arbitrary became the rule in town once again (Amnesty International 1998; Front Line Rwanda 2005, 40).[99] The environment was even more complicated because there were no state institutions to regulate this chaos. It was estimated that by 1998, over 140,000 Genocide suspects still filled the prisons of Rwanda awaiting trial to be performed by only fewer than 50 members of the Bar (see Kamatali 2014; see also Peter and Kibalama 2006, 43). Judges had been assassinated in the Genocide or fled the country. Retribution by armed members of RPF, some of whom were teenagers who had lost family members to the Genocide, were sometimes beyond control. At the village level, both true and false accusations of Hutu members took place based on Genocide driven sentiments of anger or retaliations by the

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[99] See Amnesty International. 1998. *Rwanda: UN Human Rights Field Operations must keep investigative role,* AI Index: AFR 47/28/98. See also Front Line Rwanda, *Disappearances, Arrests, Threats, Intimidation and Co-optation of Human Rights Defenders 2001 – 2004,* p. 40.

survivals. Simultaneously, RPF, the new master of public order, faced insurgent chaos caused by former *Interahamwe* militiamen and ex-Forces Armés Rwandaises (FAR) who infiltrated from Zaire across the Western borders of Rwanda, and the general proliferation of arms in the region (see Bizimana (1999, 98ff). Old CSOs were confronted with this new reality. LIPRODHOR is one of the few CSOs that confronted the new regime amidst this judiciary chaos, arbitrary arrests and disappearances of prominent Hutu members who stayed in the country.

Another effect produced by the new environment was that it attracted a set of new CSOs (responding to the new socio-economic constraints) into the new political landscape. Organizations such as IBUKA, which means *remember* took off in December 1995. It aims to preserve the memory and honor the victims of the Genocide through extensive documentation on the victims where possible. As the name connotes, IBUKA's undergirding principle is that "the Genocide should be remembered." It is also a body that represents and defend interests of the survivors; that is why it has been very present and a major witness at the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). Other reactionary CSOs include the AVEGA Agahozo (Association of Widowers of the Genocide, *solace*); the association of students who survived the Genocide (AERG), the Community of Indigenous People of Rwanda (COPORWA) was created in 1995 and is the only organization representing the members of the third ethnic Twa minority people to ever exist in Rwanda. As their names denotes, all these new organizations represent a new wave of socio-political interests that the new political landscape has had to accommodate. They came into existence primarily as a response to the environment that had been structurally unfair to them, and hence formed as tools for surviving and ways of asserting resilience.

For example, when I interviewed the head of AVEGA in Kigali in 2015 and asked her about the genesis of their organization, she told me that women like herself chose to be proactive because "*ak'imuhana kaza imvura ihise,*" a local dictum to denote that 'once it is convenient for others, then one can expect help.' One important observation here is that the majority in this new wave of CSOs were produced by a socio-political context that would not have made sense if their leaders did not politically support the Kagame regime. For such CSOs, choosing to be an outright force of opposition whose work would involve to villainize a regime that had unquestionably saved them from the hands of murders would have been rationally unparalleled.

Fundamental to the rise of post-Genocide CSOs—especially those made up of members who survived the Genocide—was the pressing need to articulate constituencies' rights that had been absent in the previous political periods. But that articulation also became a source of disharmony among the wider CSO community. The ethnic dynamics that had produced them in the first place did not fizzle out. Rather, they continued and made it even more difficult for the wider CSO community to harmonize their interests where necessary, form strategic alliances, and put aside their ethnic cleavages to view the problems of their aggregate constituencies in some objective way. As such, pre- and post-Genocide CSOs could not mobilize nor unify a voice on virtually anything insofar as they were still entrenched in their ethnic grievances. That in return made it difficult to draw the line that connects them to democratization. This dual cleavage had of course started before the Genocide. The Genocide naturally amplified them, and eventually wound up creating a new socio-political reality and, by extension, shaping the new environment that CSOs had to conform to and work in. The cultural implication for this has become that ethnicity

and ethnic nationalism are even more deterministic criteria for Rwandans to choose to take part in politics or otherwise. Ethnicity and the historical references that Rwandans have about them are now and onward an indelible marker in how they think about politics, processes of appointing public officials, and participating in such processes.

But remarkable is the way CSOs fragmented, realigned, and reoriented after the Genocide. Just as before, a dual typology continued to distinguish them, but this time in an inversed order. One group of CSOs were pro-regime and another were in opposition. On the one hand, the action of LIPRODHOR and that of the likeminded CSOs represented anti-regime activism especially in the early years that followed the end of the Genocide, while that of IBUKA was an overt expression of support to the regime. During that time, the government accused opposition CSOs of harboring divisionism and the Genocide ideology. The common phrase to describe that type of activism that LIPRODHOR was leading and that the public was sensitive to was *"kubiba amacakubiri"* (sow divisionism). People subtly were saying that LIPRODHOR was speaking for *Abahutu*, just as IBUKA was speaking for *Abatutsi*.[100] This was, and to a degree still is, a profoundly difficult atmosphere for CSO activism because 'speaking for *Abahutu*,' in a sense, also implied that *Abahutu* too were victim to a systematic massacre done by RPF akin to that done by the previous Hutu extremist regime, supporting further that there were two Genocides, which is incorrect. International NGOs too fell into this dual divide. Those supporting LIPRODHOR and of whom actions somehow appeared as insensitive to the question of the Genocide were foes to the government. In chapter five, section on *Post-Genocide Institutions and Civil Society Freedom,* I have described the tumultuous relationship that

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[100] From an interview with a civil society expert. I was in Rwanda during the period that my interviewee is alluding to; I concur with his recollection because it corresponds to what I, too, heard at the time.

characterized foreign NGOs and the government in 1995, when 38 of them were expelled and 18 suspended. Bleak ties between the government and the group of organizations (local and international) that challenged it heightened between 1996 and 1998 when Rwandan officials expelled the press and the information officer of the United Nations Human Rights Field Operation in Rwanda (UNHRFOR). This UN body had recently criticized the execution in public of the five persons previously convicted and sentenced to death by Rwanda's courts (Bizimana 1999, 97).[101] Again, this context is important to understanding the difficulties for civil society to be autonomous in the sense that while the government opposed it and that the international community rebuked the government, the population was deeply divided on those questions.

There is no doubt that ethnic conflict in Rwanda is not what it used to be in the years following the end of the Genocide, as in 1995, but these events are still fresh in the minds of many citizens and have profoundly redesigned the social and political realities that activism within CSOs is conditioned upon. For example, when USAID gives a $100,000 worth grant to a local *Balloon* organization, logically it gets involved in the process of hiring team members who will implement that project. When they hire, they are looking for competent candidates as opposed to reflecting ethnic balance within CSOs. It is a merit-based process. That means they do not ask which ethnic background candidates come from. In fact, outside the conscious act of the employers, they often bring people from both sides together. Moreover, chances are that they may hire two people of

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[101] The UNHRFOR deployed to Rwanda in September 1994 to carry out investigation over human rights violations, respect of human law, and help rebuild Rwanda's judicial system and civil society institutions. This role did not fulfill well considering the nature of relationship that this UN body had with the new government in Rwanda. In February 1997, its employees were ambushed while on duty. The following year, the organization withdrew from Rwanda in response to a "context of mass human rights abuses" (see Amnesty International 1999).

whom one may have relatives in jail over the Genocide related crimes while the other may well be a survivor of the Genocide. Then, irrespective of such social enigma, USAID puts them together and expects of them to reconcile interests, history, and feelings, and to form alliance and a strategy on counterbalancing the state. For those two locals to coalesce, unify views, and decry the misdeeds of the government is a more onerous task than one could reasonably expect to be performed. While representation based on ethnic identity is prohibited in Rwanda, interpersonal trust is still challenged by recent events in Rwanda's history. It has certainly gotten better than in the past, but it is still forming across individuals of the Rwandan society. Therefore, to task CSOs composed of two groups (individuals and CSOs) to decry the state over human rights abuses will accomplish nothing other than exacerbating a confrontational environment. Again, this new social reality and the ways in which it continues to play among members of civil society is a reinforcing factor to a political culture that is notoriously deferential to the state. The complicated nature of ethnic relations in the post-Genocide Rwanda has added to the rationale of why people—in the public realm and in civil society alike—yield to the will of politicians; it has not undermined it.

Dynamics of Trust Within Mushrooms and Their Utilitarian Function at the Community Level

While ethnic anxieties still plague intra- and inter-CSO relationships at the national level, the dynamics of trust plays out differently within the *Mushroom* associations that I visited. Contrary to the state oriented CSOs, grassroots-centered associations reflect a pragmatic convergence of interest among members, which can be a good recipe for building and democratizing communities. Like *Balloons* and *Minions*, *Mushrooms* include

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members from both ethnic stripes but unlike in the former, ethnicity is not a barrier to networking, working, and achieving common goals together. Of the eight *Mushrooms* that I visited, all of them had at least one member from the opposite ethnic group and that did not appear to affect the group dynamics as within the CSOs I inquired about. Two of those groups had *Twa* ethnic members. In three *Mushrooms*, members included former prisoners of the Genocide who had been released from jail in exchange for confessing their crimes, and had completed the 'general interest duties,' referred to as TIG, then voluntarily integrated that *Mushroom* whose members were survivors.[102] In other instances, the *Mushroom* CSOs that I met gathered both widowers of the Genocide and wives of husbands who were still in prison. "*[...] One member in our association is a Hutu who married a Tutsi husband. She was two-month pregnant when her husband died. We bought everything that that child needed to go to school because the mother was poor. The child has always been a good student and recently got a scholarship to go to 'Amerika'* [USA]," said the president of one association in the Southern province. "*[...] I am a godmother to three Hutu children. They spend overnights at my house whenever they want; I also spend overnights at their parents' homes. When I was hospitalized for three months, they did not leave me. My children are in secondary school far away from me. On my way from town, I sometimes stay at their house because it is too dark at night. [...] My hopes are in God, my children, in the people of this association, and in my neighbors,*" said one Genocide victim in another *mushroom* association.

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[102] In 2003, one the ways to deal with the consequences of the Genocide included President Kagame's decree to release prisoners came forward, confessed, asked for forgiveness, and helped with identifying the locations of the remains of the victims. Estimated 60,000 detainees had been released by early 2007 (Asiimwe 2007). Further articles on this topic, see Vasagar (2005); and The Telegraph (2005).

Just as the groups I have described above, this set of *Mushrooms* too rose after the Genocide in response to socio-economic conditions that individuals lived in. The associations that I visited formed between 1998 and 2005. They also tend to be fairly large with a membership ranging from 59 to 101. Table 6.3 illustrates the dynamics of origins and how that shaped trust among members. Table 6.4 synthesizes their focus in terms of activity and commitment.

Table 6.3 Processes that lead to the creation of Mushrooms and trust at the intra-group level

	North	South	West	East	Total
ORIGINS AND INCLUSION					
Ethnically diverse membership: members are not bothered to talk about uncomfortable issues such Genocide survivors and prisoners living together	Y (n=15) N=15	Y (n=14) N=14	Y (n=16) N=16	Y (n=14) N=14	n=59 N=59
Independence of birth of association: at members' own volition, individuals with similar concerns (economic, psychosocial, social) launched the association	Y (n=15) N=15	Y (n=14) N=14	Y (n=16) N=16	Y (n=14) N=14	n=59 N=59
Membership					
*How many total members does your group have?	77 and 82	59 and 52	71 and 92	78 and 101	n=612
TRUST					
Do "weak ties" exist within the *Mushroom*?[103]	Y (n=15) N=15	Y (n=14) N=14	Y (n=16) N=16	Y (n=14) N=14	n=59 N=59
Members have, in the previous year, offered a day to work in the farm/field of another member without pay	Y (n=13) N=15	Y (n=15) N=15	Y (n=15) N=15	Y (n=15) N=15	n=57 N=59
Children of members play (and do other activities) together	Y (n=15)	Y (n=15)	Y (n=15)	Y (n=15)	n=57 N=59

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[103] Gipson (2001, 52) defines "weak ties" as those criteria that aim to pull together heterogeneous segments of the society in a group. They are healthy criteria, a social capital, for building society in the sense that they serve the purpose of bridging disconnected members of that society. In contract, "atomizing ties" (idem) are those restrictive criteria of grouping that are based on clan, family, kinship, and other segregating ("bonding") affinities, which isolate rather than unify diverse alterities. Putnam (1993, Pp. 90, 175-176) also describes trust from the lenses of social capital. He contends that out of a culture of associational institutions, which are governed by norms and trust, develops cooperation, a condition for members to preserve and protect both "private goods" and "public goods" simultaneously.

	North	South	West	East	Total
	N=15	N=15	N=15	N=15	
Parents help each other to watch over children (including sleep overs)	n/a N=15	Y (n=4) N=15	Y (n=3) N=15	Y (n=3) N=15	n=10 N=59
Other indications of "bridging" ties within the *Mushroom:* • Member is a Genocide survivor who married a member a Hutu and they have children together	n/a N=15	n/a N=15	n/a N=15	Yes (n=1) N=15	n=1 N=59
• Member lives in a home whose next door is a member from different ethnic group. Members share rainwater catchment system	n/a	n/a	n/a	Yes (n=6)	N=6 N=59

Source: Compiled from the eight FGDs I conducted with members of *Mushroom* associations in all the four provinces of Rwanda (North, South, West, and East). N signifies the cumulative number of FGD participants in the province. Members openly discussed individual testimony, subtly clarifying whether they were Tutsi or Hutu and hence whether the demographics of the group were both-sided or not, but because ethnic statistics and such form of representation is prohibited in Rwanda, I did not include proportion of ethnic representation of my sampled groups in this table. The asterisk (*) encapsulates only the sum of members composing each of the two groups that I met in each province.

Table 6.4 Activities promoted by Mushrooms and their Engagement in Community

		North	South	West	East	Total
Participation in local governance	Member to any counsel or committee at sector level?	2	2	1	2	7
	Attended some executive meetings at sector level last year?	2	2	1	2	7
	Attend JADF meetings at district?	2	1	1	2	6
	Member to a local teacher-parent association?	2	2	2	2	8
Mutual support initiatives for members	Farm (with hoes) for one another periodically and benevolently	Y	Y	Y	Y	8
	Support one another to raise children	Y	Y	Y	Y	8
	Home visits to support the sick	Y	Y	Y	Y	8
	Support one another to run other household chores	Y	Y	Y	Y	8
	Regularly visit one another and give comfort to one another	Y	Y	Y	Y	8
	Share food with fellow group members occasionally	Y	Y	Y	Y	8
Self-reliance activities (economic)	Commercial farming activities?	2	2	2	2	8
	Rotating loans and saving schemes	2	2	2	2	8
	Livestock projects	2	2	2	2	8
	Sell vocational and technical services (e.g., construction, stove making, electricity, ..)	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1
	Mill	1	1	n/a	n/a	2
	Others	2	2	2	2	8
Building society	Give messages on reconciliation in various settings by using personal testimonies	1	1	n/a	2	4
	Conduct other social activities (traditional dance and singing) aimed to promote coexistence	1	1	n/a	2	4
	Promote social justice by pleading and caring for the vulnerable (e.g., orphans, other vulnerable ones)	2	2	2	2	8
	Participate in *umuganda* every month[104]	2	2	2	2	8

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[104] *Umuganda* is a local term describing the community work consisting in cleaning up the environment and neighborhoods by all adult members of the society. It consists in draining trenches, cutting down excessive tree branches and bushes, reconnecting a destroyed bridge, or ridding streets off limbs and debris. It is done morning to noon on every last Saturday of the month and is government mandated.

		North	South	West	East	Total
	Conduct other activities aimed to educate and promote solidarity of community members (e.g., student competition games, girls education, diseases prevention, …)	2	2	2	2	8
Horizontal networking	Conduct inter-association coaching visits in the same district	2	2	2	2	8
	Conduct inter-association coaching visits in other districts?	n/a	1	1	2	4
	Have signed agreement of partnership with other groups?	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1
Cooptability and vulnerability	Have received some aid from the GoR?	2	2	2	2	8
	Have traveled elsewhere to teach coexistence under auspices of the GoR	n/a	1	1	2	4
	Have received visitors from GoR for follow-up?	2	2	2	2	8
	Have received aid from foreign donors?	n/a	1	1	2	4

Source: Compiled from the eight Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) I conducted with members of *Mushroom* associations in all the four provinces of Rwanda (North, South, West, and East). GoR stands for Government of Rwanda. *Umuganda*

There was no indication that the government had forced them to be together from the start. It is after they were functional that the state begun to take interest in them and in how their social values matched political ends. Precarious circumstances stemming from poverty, low health conditions, and general need for survival brought *Mushroom* members together. Their stated goals and mission is a wide spectrum of activities ranging from rotating home visit to console one another or taking care of the sick one to teaching reconciliation and building a bridge between two villages. They promote education and leaders are active members of school associations as both parents and community resources for such schools. They also all run economic activities, dominated by farming

commercialized foods and livestock. Benefits are equitably shared even though for the most members choose to transfer surplus into different investments such as buying land or cows. All too often, *Mushrooms* conduct activities with other associations from the same community and sometimes those of other districts. Children of *Mushroom* members have clubs in which they meet and conduct social activities, sometimes with alongside their parents.

One of the successes of *Mushrooms* is reflected in the ways in which their members have overcome the problem of ethnic conflict that is still plaguing CSOs at the national level. While it is difficult to break through ethnic differences that separate two professionals who meet in *Balloons* and *Minions*, it is a different experience for members of *Mushroom* associations. One of my FGDs took place in a village in the Eastern province of Rwanda. Most participants lived in community houses akin to that of twin-houses. Every two homes were separated by a rainfall water catchment system that they both shared. In one side lived a survivor and in the other a formerly Genocide prisoner released from jail upon confessing to killing. They shared water from the rain tank and other household living experiences. The leader of another *Mushroom* was a Genocide survivor who married in the family of his culprits; both have children together and are involved in teaching about coexistence. Much to my surprise about the participants from these *Mushrooms* was not the very fact that these two previous enemies had been together (either a façade or a true reality), but the degree to which their social lives had intimately and practically interlinked as a function of proximity and the desire of individuals to continue to be relevant in their communities. They spoke to me about each other without detectable pretense. They are sensitive to one another. They clearly are all broken individuals, which

may belie their actual degree of individual healing, yet exude a remarkable resolve to work together as a way of improving themselves and theirs, because, as they repeated to me, "*ntawigira,*" a dictum to the crucial importance for 'interdependence' in their life.

For such *Mushrooms* as the ones I interviewed, teaching reconciliation was not the core of what they looked to promote at the start. But later after their activities had proven appealing to the interest of many, then the government began to recruit them. The government has sometimes called them to participate in national events and other programs geared for domestic or international audience on both policy and political fronts. Some of the *Mushrooms* have subsequently received benefits from such exposure from international donors. In the end, such groups are not going to extend their activities and initiatives beyond immediate interests of the members and the group. They do not carry a propensity to challenge the government beyond its parochial structures. Actually, the government gains political credit out of the work that *Mushrooms* do in the sense that they are seen, in the eyes of the wider society and that of the external audience, as reflective of the state's effort to promote peace and reconciliation. But essential to the traits of such grassroots groups is that basic democratic principles exist in their internal governance and regulations. They all have written and transparent mechanisms of appointing members. Members are elected on the basic criteria of competence such as education level, past experience, and other individual skills, not of their ethnic background. Proper financial management systems exist and all of them keep books.

To wrap-up this section, we have seen that the link between trust and the effort of civil society to democratize the state presents problems at three levels. One, the general environment, out of which *Balloons* and *Minions* developed and still work in, is

problematic. Elites and rank and files alike are pulled into these groups primarily as professionals trying to meet their economic needs as all ordinary Rwandan citizens. In that sense, a CSO for them is first and foremost a place for personal advancement in an economic sense. It does not represent an opportunity to change the state into an organization freely open to rivalry and aggressive criticism. As members make their way into this kind of organized channels, they come in with a baggage of history that is both helpful and unhelpful at once. It is helpful in the sense that interests are dispersed and hence views can be richly utilized if well and strategically vocalized together. But it is also unhelpful because, in Rwanda, there is not yet a social contract among all representations of CSOs (*Balloons* and *Minions*) with regard to both the question and ways of challenging the state. Such CSOs are composed of members who have families and most instance with additional members of the extended family financially depending on them. Therefore, that puts their financial obligations above the necessity for the CSO to make Rwandan leaders democratic ones.

Second, the environment is still dominated by interpersonal distrust, with remnants of a collective trauma in the Rwandan society as a whole. Members of CSOs have contentious backgrounds; they are products of an ethnically cleaving environment. There are constraints deriving from various uncertainties individuals may have. One may wonder why it would be worth throwing their trust at anyone and speak up on very sensitive issues in the nation based on the simple fact that they are members of one organization. That makes a CSO an unideal place to open up, to form alliances, and to build inter- and intra-group trust. The binding duty for CSO members is not a result of an organically cultivated social capital; rather, it is contingent upon historically constraining conditions

that affect members dispersedly. All that challenges the potential for inter-CSO activism vis-à-vis the state. It splits members over what should be the priorities for their CSO. As a result, it becomes even illusive to attempt to connect *Balloon* and *Minion* CSOs to state democratization processes in Rwanda. By pushing CSOs towards challenging the state, certain international NGOs have not been helping mitigate that challenge that is fundamentally tricky within *Balloons* and *Minions*. They remain constrained and hence stuck by lack of trust to mobilize members so as to achieve any (political) objectives. Distrusts chokes off their ability to converge interests, decreases the zeal of members, erodes the potential for building a social capital within and across groups, and ultimately keeps individual effort from prioritizing the larger interest of the society.

However, when one looks at the question of trust within and across *Mushrooms* at the community level, it appears as less problematic than how it is within *Balloon* and *Minion* CSOs. While all groups share the same broken wider social environment (of low trust), *Mushroom* members have built a social clout that is needed for mobilizing that their *Balloon* and *Minion* counterparts lack. The degree of intra- and inter-*Mushroom* trust that exists at the community level has enabled them to build the society in the way that upper regional and national CSOs have failed to achieve. At the grassroots level, because groups are built on the "weak" as opposed to "atomizing" ties, it has become possible for them, as Putnam (1999) would put it, to "unite the energies of divergent minds and vigorously direct them toward a clearly indicated goal" (p. 190). Because of "group interaction and cross-pressures," (idem) members are moderating their attitudes towards achieving common goals. Moreover, another study funded by the EU in 2004, one year after the first post-Genocide Constitution and presidential and parliamentary elections, asked 10,831 people

in Rwanda whether "*associations of a cultural nature such as choir and prayer groups strengthened trust among members and whether they encouraged participation in the local community's activities?*" (NURC 2004, 34) and 86% of them agreed. The fact that there is a wide popular belief in such potentiality, *Mushrooms* can indeed be a focal point for building consensus, trust, resolve dilemmas of collection action, become laboratories of local democracy, and organically develop the society. Yet, even though they are incomparably numerous and do more to build the society compared to *Balloons* and *Minions*, grassroots *Mushrooms* receive less attention from the aid community. Most attention from the development and democratization community has been directed to the wrong components of CSOs. It should be reversed and redirected to the grassroots organizations.

Risk Aversion: How Events of the Past Have Prepared Subsequent Political Adventures

In the section titled "*Why Did the Political Opening of 1990 Not Help Civil Society*" in chapter three, I gave a historical account on why the then contemporary civil society failed. In the section titled "*Civil Society and Democratization in the 1990s: What Happened to Institutions After Opening the Political Space?*" in chapter five, I discussed the implications of the political freedom of the early 1990s on the institutions of the state in the years that followed. In this section, let us focus on the conditions that political liberalization of 1990 and its outcome have created for individuals seeking to be politically active through civil society. As a reminder, 1990 produced mixed results in the world of activism. On the one hand, allowing freedom (in which civil society became a vibrant force in Rwanda) did not result in a change of the state's elite behavior. Rather than

liberalizing the state, freeing all kinds of political forces resulted in violence. But other implications have also been that anyone seeking to change the ways Rwanda's future political elites behave would have to learn and adapt from that episode. The wave of political liberalization that Rwanda experienced in 1990 and the results that it produced have meant that civil society would have to factor caution into their subsequent political calculus.

When I asked CSO persons and academic specialists and other civil society experts in Rwanda, most of my interlocutors did not believe that a post-Genocide civil society has a chance to reverse the order of things because *"ntawe utinya ishyamba, atinya icyo bahuriyemo*," or 'it is not the jungle that is dangerous, it is what one has encountered in the jungle in the past that is dangerous.' In this dictum, we see three separate and yet conjoined subjects. There is first an imaginary person, a trekker, an adventurer, or a wildlife activist. Then there is the jungle itself, a social space, a locus where the first object searches for life, or some form of peace. Last and most intriguing, the "what" denotes an unidentified 'thing.' Unique to this third *icyo* is its unpredictable characteristic and its assuredly menacing nature. It is impersonal and gender neutral, but there is also the possibility that it could be an event, a happening, or a circumstance that is a worrisome one. At the same time, the dictum is also a warning over the eventuality that something bad from the past might occur again and that the risk for that is still there, in the same old locus, the jungle. While it is difficult to label that *icyo* ("what") and who or what it exactly represents for political activists seeking to challenge the political order as it now is, the usage of that phrase also expresses a capitulation on the part of CSOs to the diktats of the state. I should mention that the *Kinyarwanda* lingo is replete with proverbial maxims. One

of the ways to understand how Rwandans think is through their axiomatic usage of the language to respond to a question. That is one of the answers my interviewees gave me as we spent time exchanging on the question of why civil society is extra cautious in its political activism. More maxims my interlocutors used to qualify and justify the attitude of civil society, of political parties, and of all opposition forces in general include: *"utaranigwa agaramye agirango ijuru riri hafi"* or "the one who has not yet been choked off (by another person) while laid on their back believes that heaven is closer to them" to denote that the one who has not yet faced hardship may think that others get it the easy way; or *"ubuze uko agira agwa neza"* or "you give in when there are no other options left.

It is the sentiments expressed through that axiom about 'the jungle' that many civil society experts must think about concerning how the political order in Rwanda can be challenged. However, what is also remarkable is that it is also consonant with the wider opinion in Rwanda. In 2007, a study by the Unity and Reconciliation Commission, funded by USAID and implemented by the International Rescue Committee (IRC), asked the population (n=9,980) to agree or disagree with the statement that *"it is necessary to limit the right of association and the right to form political parties since we have to fight divisionism tendencies"* and 92% of them agreed (NURC 2007, 37). Twice previously, they had asked the same question and the intensity of this opinion had even increased overs years because it had been 84% in 2005 and 90 in 2006.[105]

Aversion to the risk that too much freedom might attract another mid-1990s has not only stopped civil society from acting with aggression, it has even lengthened the state's reach and control over the society. The state officials know well that citizens are averse to

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[105] See, NURC. 2007. *Social Cohesion in Rwanda – An Opinion Survey, Results 2005-2007.* 38.

an eventuality of violence as the one that political freedom of 1990 attracted. President Kagame and RPF understand well that power struggles could easily unravel, and that recapturing power after opening the political space and losing power would mean another quagmire akin to that which shipped the Tutsi population in regional countries in 1959 in the first place. Therefore, they hold a tight grip on it and do the best to expand and legitimize it through practical development programs. President Kagame has for the last two decades taken supreme control and crafted the new Rwanda in staunchly Leviathan lines. Again, for Rwandan citizens, there is no difference between the President and the State; the two are tantamount to the same thing. The alternative to Kagame, should there be forces seeking to displace him, is anarchy. That is what many Rwandans see or have been made to see by the state in considering their overwhelming support to policies that restrict and control freedom. And when they vote, they are confronted with the choice between 'stability' or 'regression'. That is why slogans go as, *"gutora Paul Kagame, ni ukwiteganyiriza ejo hazaza,"* 'to vote Paul Kagame, is to secure your tomorrow.' Memories are still sharp, minds are always alerted, and behaviors are conditioned whenever violent conflict is a possibility. That has legitimized actions done by the government and its institutions. The state is widely accepted as the guarantor of the security as the elemental necessity of the population. The reconciliation barometer, a scientific opinion survey periodically conducted by NURC with a sample of over 10,000 respondents each, funded by USAID and implemented by the International Rescue Committee (IRC), revealed that 97 percent (in 2005), 96 percent (in 2006), and 98% percent in (2007) of the population trust the ability of the government to protect them.[106]

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[106] Taken from NURC, *DROS* 2004; NURC, *LAROS* 2005; NURC, *Social Cohesion-Opinion Survey.* 2008.

The same study also revealed that 96% (in 2005), 98% (in 2006), and 97% (in 2007) of the population agreed that "the government is doing its best to improve the standards of living in Rwanda" (NURC 2007, 34) respectively. These numbers can, in appearance, gloss one's eyes over and they may not carry a scientific impression, but for one thing, they correspond to general voting behavior (participation and outcomes) in Rwanda. There is clearly a force driving collectively Rwandans' responses and anticipation to their state officials in an unvarying way. There is no evidence that such force is caused by people's fear of the government—because there is no indication that the government of Rwanda terrorizes its people—but what appears plausible is that that force may be deriving from a collective anticipation of how the government would react should another "1990" emerge to disrupt the current political order and the political status quo it has erected.

And civil society is not acting outside that collective sensor. There is sufficient awareness among members of civil society to the risks, and the historical and political sensibilities whose past experience still daunts in Rwanda. Democracy activist CSOs are concerned that their action might be portrayed by the government as "oppositionist" (Mukamunana and Brynard 2005, 12). Hence, many organizations have surrendered to the government line and chosen to do development work, leaving advocacy, lobbying, and other human rights issues secondary to the mission of other members of civil society (see USAID 2001; Kelly 1999; Nizeyimana 2013, 71). This aversion to risk loomed neat throughout my interviews among key informants. "*The problem is that the birth of civil society and the birth of a military rebellion* [RPF] *happened at the same time. From the start, those two things have been equated. Criticizing the government means starting a rebellion against it. Also, this regime was once a rebellion and a civil society before that*

[…]. It is not because people don't want to talk, it is because they don't want to be dealt with as a rebellion," (interview with a key informant in Kigali in July 2015).

When I asked another key informant about the future of Rwanda's civil society, he responded "*it is difficult* […] *because many issues do not come from civil society. It is to do with the overall context of Rwanda. We do not have a culture of debating the 'Shefu'* [chief]. *Whenever one evokes something that is wrong, new terms are born.. 'igipinga'* [renegade, connoting an extremist denier of such events as the Genocide]*, 'ikigarasha'* [the useless of the society]*, and many of that sort. Who would like to carry such label? Even Kagame himself, we do really not know whether he sees that as a danger or not"* (informant in Kigali, July 2015). In addition, "*[…], you see when we go to the government, we ask them to listen to us but they say we too must learn how to address them in the right manner. Protesting means you don't like what the government is doing. It also means that you are going to war against the government on the street. [...] It is only logical in the mind of a foolish that defeating the government is a goal that is achievable,*" (from an informant in Kigali, July 2015). Furthermore, "*...the opposition in diaspora makes some noise and some of the questions they evoke make sense because they reflect real concerns of people here in the country. But civil society does not say anything...[...], ...because members fear being conflated with that opposition. Individual behavior cannot be dissociated from the organizational behavior,*" (from another informant in Kigali, July 2015). What we see in this political environment of Rwanda in which civil society lives is that absence of a culture that debates the chief has been detrimental to the democratization struggles that civil society has attempted to carry in Rwanda since the 1990s. And the government has not enabled the "internal controls" that oblige it "to control itself" that Madison (1969, 326)

deemed necessary in the processes of framing a political system. Rather, the government of Rwanda has successfully structured its powers in such a way that it remains a beneficiary of popular support in exchange for stability in the country. Previous governments were also successful at wheeling power to that end; that which is led by Paul Kagame has outperformed its predecessors.

Deference to the State: Upright Naïveté or a Utilitarian Recipe for Public Ordering?

Rwandans have been described as manipulable, obedient, and "easy to mobilize" (Straus 2006, 14) people. Kamatali (2014) has even pointed to how indifference to a culture that prefers obedience over choice is partly an answer to the aching question of why Rwanda descended into its own destruction in 1994. But before I engage in a discussion on why Rwandans choose to defer to supreme authority in everyday life rather than relying on confrontational options for popular expression and channeling their demands, I wish to make a theoretical connection to this paradigm. Why citizens choose to defer to state officials is an unsettled debate. First, it is unclear whether they do so as a conscious benevolent boon to leaders that corresponds to cultural mores of a people, or whether it is a rationally calculated choice to achieve collective goals in the collective imaginary, or even more confusing, whether the unquestioning obedience is a phenomenon that comes and goes and that when it comes at a particular time, it is a response to perceived threats that leave one with no other choice than to bend to the will of the authorities. We will not be able to answer all these questions, but what I want to tease out here is a descriptive account on behavioral patterns on how Rwandans receive and respond to superiors and how such responses have created habits and engrained in daily behavioral norms.

Again, there is no unified theory on this phenomenon but the work of Migdal (2001) helps us look into it reflectively, albeit in a limiting fashion. He posits that, in the ongoing processes of interaction between the state and the society, meaning is created and people become consumers of such meaning. In return, that meaning "naturalizes" (p. 137) people to the idea of the state. That is, it becomes almost impossible for them to imagine their lives without the state. State and state officials become as natural as the natural landscape around them. Hence, officials become synonymous with the political Leviathan that the state embodies. Deferring to the state in Rwanda carries a multitude of truths, but here I examine this anticipatory obedience to authority as an expression of primarily rationally calculated exchange for personal stability (be it socio-economic, security, and even justice).

In Rwanda, the word "Leta" (state) implies the same meaning as "President." There is nearly no cognitive dissonance between the amount of power vested in the state as a conglomerate of institutions and the individual at the apex of it. In the "*U*mukuru w'igihugu" (head of the state) lies the unassailable authority, the reverence that is considered "kirazira" (sacrosanct) to dare defy. That is why, when a "Shefu" (chief) speaks, others are expected to listen, ask question to better understand, suggest to improve, mobilize to unify, but never to decry, dissent, or revolt.[107] *Kinyarwanda* is a hard-coded culture with respect to how people view leaders. Most respondents throughout my interviews used proverbial maxims as we continuously bounced exchanges off one another

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[107] The title "Shefu" is a rwandanized derivative of the French word "chef" (chief) which comes from the old (Belgian) colonial administrative structure of 'chefferie" (chieftancy) that was headed by a 'chef.' The term is ubiquitously, and loosely, employed to denote those who are superior to you. The term is also utilized interchangeably with 'umukuru' (superior) 'umuyobozi' (leader), 'umutware' (commanding one), 'intore nkuru' (the head of the initiated,' 'kizigenza,' (commander), and more, are all codes that are linguistically power charged expressions of the attachment people have towards the president.

over the reasons why Rwandans are lenient to the will of leaders. Answers, which these analysts knew I understood and was able to decode, included for example: *"ntawe uvuguruza umukuru"* (no one *can* contradict *umushefu*); *"uko ingoma zivuze niko zitambirwa"* (as the drum bits go, so goes the dance), *"intero nyir'urugo ateye niyo wikiriza,"* (the tune that the head of the household launches is that which everyone in the house follows), *"umwera uturutse ibukuru bucya wakwiriye hose,"* (the vibe which comes from 'above' spreads all over overnight).

People are expected to obey because in the words of the leader, just as in those of the father of every home, is the permanent belief that the "umukuru" is always well intentioned towards his people. The *Shefu*'s primary concern is the wellbeing of all his people. That is why Rwandans say *"Umwami ntiyica, hica rubanda,"* "the King does not harm, the rank and files do." As such, people naturally and positively almost unreflectively link the power of the leader to their destiny. Each time I asked members of *Mushroom* organizations in the four provinces of Rwanda to tell me what they ascribed their achievements to, effortlessly and instantaneously, the response was uniform: *umubyeyi wacu, Kagame Paul.* I should acknowledge that the term "our parent" is such an impoverished equivalency in English because it does not carry the versatility that the original language imbues. "Umubyeyi" is such a semantically versatile moniker. Primarily it denotes a 'mother,' usually a breastfeeding one. But in this context, *Umubyeyi* conveys endearing maternal and fatherly sentiments both simultaneously. It also denotes the august and imminent, majestic at the same time protective, dignified and impressive at once, and grand and noble and imposing qualities resting in the leader altogether. In Paul Kagame is the rendition that it is right that there is no one else *"uzatugeza ku majyambere arambye,"*

(the one who will deliver us enduring development). Such is a powerful force deep seated in the psyche of the most average people, and which is perhaps more openly expressed in rural than urban areas. That is why, people often travel from far regions of the country to speak to the president and bring questions directly to him when they feel that judicial institutions or lower leaders at the village and district levels have improperly treated them. It is also true that often the questions that the population brings to the president are legitimate ones and reflect the need for proper responses. But CSOs are unable to channel them through standard mechanisms of arbitration, which partly stems from the fact people do not generally believe in the ability of CSOs to deliver them finite advocacy. Bypassing intermediary structures seems to be important in the ways in which the Rwandan society and the state have always connected to one another. The term *umubyeyi* that is today used to describe President Kagame was similarly used during the time of President Habyarimana. People used it to praise and enchant him during the *animations populaires*—forms of popular adulation of the leader—that members of the MRND had imported from the neighbor Mobutu's Zaïre and introduced them into Rwanda.

The 2003 Constitution granted that Kagame would run for only one additional seven-year term in office, or only until 2017. He once said that if no alternative to him existed by 2017, then "it means that I have not created capacity for a post-me Rwanda. I see this as a personal failure" (quoted from Economist 2017).[108] Just as Rwanda approached the expiration of Kagame's second term, the parliament had received four million signed petitions to amend the constitution and to allow Kagame to run after 2017

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[108] The Economist. July 15, 2017. "Many Africans see Kagame's Rwanda as a model. They are wrong" available and retrieved from online at https://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21725000-its-recovery-after-genocide-has-been-impressive-land-ruled-fear-can-never-be-happy on March 8, 2018.

(idem).[109] Parenthetically, that number represents nearly 60% of the Rwandan electorate (see Table 6.1). All the 75 parliamentary members voted in favor of the constitutional amendment. The referendum proposal for that change was approved by 98% of the popular vote thereafter.

I witnessed this development in person during my summer 2015 fieldtrip. When I attended a parliamentary session, open to the public in July 2015, the petitions thus far received at the floor had reached three million. Towards the end of the session, the Speaker of the house called on "Honorable Bamporiki Edouard," of RPF, to address the session. It was unexpected, and visibly unscheduled, that yet another person would speak at that juncture while the session neared closure. Before him several other members had one-by-one made a case on why constitutional change was necessary. They all referenced testimonies gathered from previous interactions with rural people while on fieldtrips. But as Bamporiki was about to speak, the atmosphere in the assembly quickly changed. I could see all cameras turned to him and that all the attention converged towards where he sat. "*Kindi* was a certain man from the Eastern region of Rwanda," he began his tale. He went on to recite that *Kindi* was admired for his strength, courage, values of integrity, and many other virtues that he earned enough trust and favors from the King, including that of stewarding the royal army. The story ends when *Kindi* is removed by the king as a result of jealousy from his peers and intrigues that they concocted against him, which then caused the royal warriors' health and morale to shrink. Later the king would probe into the causes

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[109] From another article of the Economist of July 15, 2017, "Paul Kagame, feted and feared. Rwanda is a more prosperous country than ever before. It is also a repressed one." Retrieved from web at https://www.economist.com/news/briefing/21724982-rwanda-more-prosperous-country-ever-it-also-repressed-one-paul-kagame on March 8, 2018.

of unhappiness of his troops when he was told that they had suffered because of "amabura*Kindi,*" now a popular dictum to denote a regret expressed over lacking the right option. It is commonly used in an instance where, for example, children would be forced to drink water because there is no milk, or eating unsalted meal because the money that would have been used to buy salt was paid against a pill to treat a sick family member. Bamporiki ended his tale cautioning that someday Rwanda might experience famine, that would cause a syndrome he called "amabura*Kagame*," or a self-brought drought era on the nation by ridding it of Kagame.[110] In the few minutes that followed, the MP received a sander

Bamporiki's metaphoric plea was, in effect, a reminder that Rwanda's moods, survival, and wellbeing were always linked to an admiration of the steward. He also meant to remind that altering the steward was not tantamount to betterment of living conditions in local context. By cautioning about the uncertainties that might arise with changing the routine, the tale is also a suggestion that satisfaction, in Rwanda's history, always came from the status quo or restoration of the status quo but that change always led to uncertainties. It was an implicit suggestion that the choice for everyone ought to be clear. The economic element to the metaphor is also an important one in this political ramification. It is a reminder that the association that exists between the *shefu* and events such as drought, hunger migration, barrenness of the cattle, unfilled granaries, deaths, diminishment of progeny, and other calamities is deep and central to human conditions in Rwanda.

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[110] This story was published by Girinema (2017) pm a local online newsletter.

One morning of summer 2015 during my field research, I hopped down to a local village in the East to meet members of a local *Mushroom* association. I had spoken over the phone to the leader of the association days before the meeting. He knew about my research, who I was, and the kind of atmosphere in which the interaction would occur. My contact person at a mother-organization in Kigali, whom they interacted on a regular basis, too, had spoken to the leader of this association that he knew me and about my research and that they could meet me. We agreed that we would meet at a local public market before taking me to meet his peers. When he showed up, he told me that plans had changed and that the meeting had to be cancelled for 'I' had not informed the leadership of the Sector, the next administrative structure after District in Rwanda. He added that he and his peers would meet me only if the "officials" cleared me for it. He then took me to the head office of the Sector to speak with the Executive Secretary. In the office, I presented every piece of paper on me, including my Rwanda, Florida, and student ID cards, to her to prove that I was innocuous and no stranger in the area up to no good intention. She did not fall for my effort not to have to reschedule my interviews. "I am conducting these interviews as a Rwandan citizen," I implored. "This is just what His Excellence [President Kagame] ceases not to repeat," she retorted, "'*umucengezi*' will not come from some country from afar."[111]

While I was upset at the stern Executive Secretary for intuiting that my advent was comparable to that of an insurgent, she was justified in her action to avert my interviews. She wanted to remind my key informants, their peers, and to me, that deferring to authority

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[111] *Umucengezi* is a Kinyarwanda term to denote "infiltrator." It became commonplace during 1995-1996 to describe the insurgency led by *Interahamwe* militiamen who entered and committed murders from Zaïre in the aftermath of the Genocide.

has no alternative in the ways Rwanda, across structures, is ordered. And by connecting her action to the views of the President of Rwanda, she meant to remind us that there is no matter, however trivial in appearance, that should be severed from the central authority of the state.

Is Rwanda's Political Culture Inimical to Liberal Democracy?

How Nefarious to Democratic Culture Rwanda's Political Culture is?

Imagining Rwanda's political culture and the place it has always occupied in the processes of state building as well as in the efforts to democratize the state leads to conclude that this culture is a double edged sword. On the one hand, evidence shows that it has consistently tolerated the unchecked power of the President over time. Over time, there has seemed to be virtually no distinction between what the President wants and the daily behavior of state's institutions or of other branches of the government. Kayibanda, the first leader of Rwanda as a constitutional Republic, run alone even though there were eight contemporary political parties. He viewed and ruled Rwanda as an exclusively singular *Bahutu* nation. After him, the Constitution of 1978 granted that Habyarimana and his MRND party be the only channel through which every political idea be expressed. Today, there is no other political alternative practically imaginable in Rwanda than Kagame and his RPF party. The recent constitutional amendments yielded to his third term reelection, clearing a path to him for two additional terms thereafter. These three regimes have of course been fundamentally different in both origins and power structures, but the one thing that parallels them is the optimal degree of political latitude along with the overwhelming popular legitimacy that each has enjoyed. The popular support has always been legitimate

because it is not coerced.[112] Whoever is the President of Rwanda always enjoys the latitude and freedom to shape the meaning, spearhead the action, and behavior of political institutions without significant opposition to it. That means that the power of the President is constantly maximal and, in all practical purposes, unassailable. No other organized power structure has successfully transcended that of the President in the country. That has always been the case. Of course no President is there forever, but such has always been the trend in Rwanda's political arena.

The implication is that there is no threshold on when the President (along with all the institutional power he wields around him) ceases to be utilized to the best interest of the citizens or otherwise. Some presidents in Africa started off as promising good reformists (e.g., Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe or Yoweri Museveni of Uganda) who attracted wide international support but later morphed into systems dominated by human rights abuse, self-aggrandizement, corruption, and personal and regime security.[113] One other challenge in the ways we gauge the trajectory of leaders who begin as good and pragmatist reformists is that their popular support tends to remain significant regardless of the direction they pull their states into. A significant proportion of the population is likely to muster a strong support around them; and that is important in the sense that there is a risk to descend into acute ethnic division in certain countries. Not just that, they also are likely to go to great strength to support and justify even the most abysmal culmination of their government. Habyarimana was virtually unanimously portrayed as a role model in the developing world. He was seen as a "good manager" (Foka 2015) who used

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[112] See the description I make at the beginning of this chapter on how popular support to Presidents has manifested throughout Rwanda's presidential election history.

[113] See Leggett 2001; Ofcansky 1996; *Ihonvbere et al*. 2003.

development aid to advance his people and promote good governance, stability, fight against corruption, with a serious vision for the country (Schürings 1995, 495; Renard and Reyntjens 1993, 11, 18; Reyntjens 1994, 35; Guichaoua 1995a, 33; Willame 1995b, 436, 445; Brusten and Bindariye 1997, 12; Voyame *et al.* 1996, 61, 64). But along with this development success of Habyarimana also was the unwavering popular support in the months that followed his death trying to save the central authority that he represented in Rwanda. Kamatali (2014) explains, from the interviews he held in the Northern province of Rwanda, how several convicted Genocide criminals connected their motive to kill to the principle of "following orders" that is prevalent in Rwanda's culture. Those inmates would say "bari badutegetse kwica abatutsi," 'they had given us the law to kill *abaTutsi*' (Kamatali 2014, 2). *"Bari badutegetse"* also translates as 'they had ordered us.' He further explains the confusion that *Kinyarwanda* carries on informal and formal ways of following orders. For example, the word "order" and "law" means the same: "itegeko." And the words "law-giver," and "order giver," denote the same thing as "authority" or "official" (idem). The most important of risks stemming from that cultural attitude towards the *shefu* is that it leaves no boundaries between the presidential leeway and independence of other institutions of the state. It gives credence and hence legitimizes the belief that the President is *ipso facto* the superior judge who transcends every sphere of governance, who has the ability to do, undo, and hence shape the character of institutions, and ultimately thinks and sees better what is in the best interest of the nation than all others in the land. That unquestioning trait (towards superiors) is, therefore, a key factor in the forces that drove the country into the abyss in the 1990s.

What's Good About Rwanda's Political Culture?

On the other side, however, Rwanda's political culture begs for a different look than that just castigating it as purely nefarious. In the next few paragraphs, I will analyze factors that precluded it from supporting democratization in the 1990s in the first place. Second, I will assess the evolution of that political culture and make new arguments on how it—as it stands today—could be utilized to advance democratization efforts in a manner that avoids another 1994 from reoccurring. But before I do that, let us remember that by Rwanda's 'political culture,' we understand a mode of acting and behaving—politically—that is a confluence of historical events and cultural beliefs. Throughout this dissertation, I have treated it as the dominant variable in the outlook of Rwanda's political development today.

First of all, in this political culture is the benevolent boon that every President has always enjoyed in the republican history of Rwanda. Deference to the central authority has always been an element central to how the state functioned. And as I showed in chapter two and three, various changes—be they political reforms, external pressures, or within civil society entities—have never truly succeeded at diminishing the centrality of the President and his invulnerable leeway in shaping. We have also see, in chapter three, that when efforts to reduce the power of the state reached the peak in the early 1990s, horror replaced the democratic outcome that had been hoped. A pluralist democratic rule was in sight but instead of it the worst happened even before the first election happened. In late 1950s, transitioning from monarchy to a Republic had yielded practically the same results. Multiparty-ism took off as the colonial rule ended but one party rule, ethnocracy, and violence dominated the lifetime of that first government. After the Genocide, the foremost

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priority for the incoming regime was to resuscitate the central authority of the state then lost. In so doing, human rights were violated, political competition shrunk, opposition was and is still muted, the freedom of media and of civil society restrained and at times repressed, and the same centralized and personalized power configuration as in the past returned. At the same time, there is a return to normalcy in the republic today. I have extensively described the positive reforms and socio-economic gains that the post-Genocide state has accomplished in chapter four (see section on civil society and the macro-economic environment of Rwanda). Which takes us to our next reflection issue about Rwanda's political culture today.

Is it possible to preserve democratic principles in Rwanda's political order alongside with that culture? And most importantly, what does the future of democracy and civil society look like in Rwanda? To answer these question, let us focus not on how to change this political culture because it is pervasive and has been deeply engrained in the political routine since ages. Rather, let us focus on the elements that it carries that are good in an ideal democratic order. The assumption is that such elements could potentially be redemptive of democracy in the future. We know from past experiences that confrontational attacks to the state in the hope that its behavior will change leads to nothing but an absolute uncertainty. Efforts to perturb the central authority are not a guarantee that civil society will successfully engrain democratic norms in Rwanda's polity. The power relations between civil society and the state do just not measure up. I have identified three ways in which Rwanda's political culture is not incompatible to democratization effort. That is, the synthesis between a liberal democracy and Rwanda's political culture

corresponds to the principles of "responsibility-accountability," "consultation," and "stability."

The current regime has learned lessons from the history of exclusion and division that previous regimes harbored. The new government has been addressing some of the pressures stemming from that past. For example, education under Habyarimana systematically excluded thousands of Tutsi using the ethnic quota policy; today, 'education for all' is the norm (Obura 2005, 1). Education is one of the counter argument brought forth by the government of Kagame to argue that it does not practice exclusion as its predecessors. RPF dominates the economy and possesses a large bulk of the domestic private equity, but most of the wealth it accumulates is reinvested and stays in the country (Cheeseman 2018). Diversity of media is repressed but at the same time, the government has availed and made Internet accessible to all (GoR 2010, 54-66). In addition, rules are strictly applied to the extent that ministers have gone to jail over corruption (Bachorz 2009; Economist 2012; East-African 2016).[114] Universal education (22% of the national budget) combined with governmental investment in other sectors of economy (technology, agriculture, health, etc.) will all lead to development of entrepreneurial skills.[115] New conditions will form to give financial opportunities to many young Rwandans in the future. That, in return, will create new possibilities for social mobility for many and a cultural shift will occur in favor of liberal values. The new working class will expand and strengthen. The rule of law, fight against corruption, and other measures conducive to economic

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[114] See the Economist. 2012. "Africa's Singapore? A country with a bloody history seeks prosperity by becoming business-friendly"; the East-African. 2016. "President Kagame sacks health minister of corruption"; and Bachorz, Boris. 2009. "Rwanda gets tough on corruption," *Telegraph*.

[115] The statistic on education budget comes from Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN). 2017. *The National Budget. Citizen's Guide for 2017/2018 Budget.* p. 29.

growth, mixed with pro-gender policies, will support such progress and work as a synergy that future governments will need to pay attention to. Consequently, a middle class will become an important group to arbiter the polity in future.

In addition to the above referenced sectors that the state has heavily invested into, because they are Rwanda's "foundation issues" (MINECOFIN 2017, 29) worth 47% of the national budget, the state has continuously showed that it takes interest in the needs of citizens and it commits to addressing their demands. The ministry of local administration (MINALOC) recently launched a toll-free number for citizens to file complaints from their telephone devices (Niyonzima 2018). The online platform is meant to channel and expedite complaints of individuals who are victim to negligence or injustices by their local officials. The complainant dials a number and directly prompted to instructions. Once filed, they receive a receipt notice. The complaint is then forwarded to all appropriate officials, including those in charge of following-up and accountability.

The system was introduced following the citizen outreach tour in February 2018, when president Kagame scolded his ministers for not ending issues that people keep bringing to him. He asked his Ministers to go out of their office and spend more time solving citizens' concerns given that "it looked like people do not trust their grassroots leaders" (idem 1). To the extent that cellphone permeation rate is over 77.8% in Rwanda and that 99.1% of national territory has cellphone network coverage (NISR 2016, 84), this mechanism has the potential to be successful and to execute an important bulk of the work that civil society has challenges accomplishing.

In this political culture, the Head of State serves as the ultimate recourse and guarantor for major change within the country. It is at the top of the realm that the tone is

set, which would suggest that interactions are always vertically unidirectional. But there is also an element of reciprocity to this political culture and the ways in which state-society relations play. While the president enjoys unreserved obedience from the people, he is also expected of them to serve as the buffer and to shield them against perilous doings, including when they come from his subordinates.[116] We see this through the ways in which president Kagame has interacted with his subordinates across structures of the government. During the recent leadership retreat, an annual event gathering the political elites to evaluate governmental programs, president Kagame reincarnated in his Leviathan position not just to admonish his subalterns but also to show the country that he is watching for it and that his action suited the wellbeing of citizens.

"The cost of [adoring] protocol on us is steep," he said alluding to leaders obsessed with attention and the honors the positions they occupy bequeath them. He implied that his ministers and other leaders within his administration repeatedly show lust and desire for attention rather than being characterized by a sense of duty (Girinema 2018, 1). *"Your love for protocol is a bad habit...you would, for example, find five people racing to find one chair for one person, or a Permanent Secretary fighting others to secure one specific seat […] for [their] Minister. […] or many officials including high ranking police offers and managers of an airline abandoning their duties to salute and run behind a minister at the airport after landing from a foreign mission," (idem) he continued. "I took a phone and called one of such ministers and told him that 'the next time I see you allowing it,' I will have fired you the following morning" (idem). "[…], when they go out in the community, it is as if the heaven has descended. …, they don't spend time on the primary*

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[116] The usage of the subject "he" for a general statement is only meant to describe past presidents of Rwanda (all men), not to masculinize the presidential function.

reason for the trip, rather on the protocol. Other tasks must stop because people have to abandon their office to put attention on welcoming him. He then sees just that, not what is behind the wall of protocol [..], he only sees what they have prepared him to see. […] This culture must stop. It is too expensive; it accomplishes nothing, and it means absolutely nothing. Your personal importance should be gotten rid of from this. If you are truly professional, you don't get lost in these useless things," (idem) he ended his lecture.

Again, in this political culture there is a contrast that separates the strong-man syndrome from conventional norms for channeling and responding to people's demands. But insofar as Rwanda's cultural context dictates it as such, my analysis here has subsequently stayed on the outcomes. The presidential function remains central in the ways in which society interacts with the state. The president is symbolic of the political Leviathan for channeling grassroots' aspirations for change. He rationalizes political action and events along the binding Leviathan – strong expectations relationship that the state maintains with the society. Rwanda's polity is therefore defined, in theory and practice, by the degree to which the president lives up to his role as the Leviathan in executing what is considered good for the people.

When he attended a panel at the Wall Street Journal – Investment in Africa Summit in London in March 2017, President Kagame was asked by the panel discussant to contrast his development success and the change of the Constitution (that later allowed him to win a third term in office). "*We have at no occasion been involved in doing anything wrong against our people*," he responded.[117] In a sense, he meant that "*being bad to the people*" was the metric by which all events and behavior ought to be gauged.

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[117] Cited from YouTube video on the panel that President Kagame held in London on March 7, 2017 retrieved at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TjZQisyGSWA (28:25mins) on March 8, 2018.

His response suggests that, by virtue of the contract that binds his Leviathan role and the Rwandan people, recent constitutional change is not tantamount to "bad," and that it is rather a 'good' political routine insofar as it enabled him to continue to 'develop' them. Or differently put, out of this state-society relationship comes the pressure on the Leviathan to act they ways they do.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

"…The vision of Rwanda as a country—its challenges, its priorities, its people, its politics—is remarkably similar across agencies and people […]. There is almost no information on what people think, feel, hope for, believe in, dislike, or dream of; their social relations and conflicts; their perceptions of development, the state, or the aid system; or their resources, networks, capacities, or aspirations. [documents available] offer only indirect, occasional glimpse into the realities of Rwandans as people. This is the case for all African countries and the people living in them."
(Uvin 1999, 9).

Throughout this dissertation, I have sought to spur a new discussion on ways in which we think about the project of the democratization of African states. Since the 1990s, the debate on the attributes of civil society and on why it has not enabled states to democratize has come to a dead end. The arguments I have made herein aim to illustrate the contextual complications that applying ideas and policies of democracy (in Africa) encounter in societies as challenged and challenging as Rwanda. *Conceptually*, my arguments have shown that domestic cultural realities are too important a factor to ignore in the analysis. That is, understanding the outcomes of democratization in Africa requires us to pay attention to the interior logics of why the project of democratization—civil society being the medium—has faced longstanding resistance. There is a need to take an inward look at the workings of politics and at the organic ingredients that have shaped it, not simply at the outer forms of democracy or the structures of the state.

Theoretically, I wanted to show that de Tocqueville (2001) and Putnam (1993) were correct to connect sociocultural traditions to political practices. In a way, what de Tocqueville meant was that democracy in America had been a function of a hard,

conscious, and inward work which, in the sense that civic associations reinforced the "habits of the heart," became foundational to stable and effective institutions (Tocqueville 1969, pp. 525-528). In return, civil associations produced a "culture congenial to democracy" (Tocqueville 2000, 190).[118] Yet, the ways in which African civil society has been theorized and connected to democracy follows a different logic. That it, the focus has been the numerical, economic, and institutional aspects of groups. We continue to treat CSOs in Africa as if they have similar evolution and maturation as those of their Western counterparts. The evolutionary logic of civil society in Africa differs profoundly from that it had in the West. Therefore, my arguments here have been to highlight that the civil society – democracy model (in Africa) is one that is built on inadequately predicated theory. That is to stay, the ontological conditions for what truly make civil society – democracy relationship work do not yet exist and that has not received proper consideration in academia. That state and society in many societies, as it is the case in Rwanda, are produced by a different cultural logic than that which produced democracy in the West.

Previous scholarship on civil society and its incidence on democracy in Rwanda has not produced ideas that can truly help advance political development in Rwanda. The discourse on political development in Rwanda has led to a divided and divisive impasse. It leaves the reader stuck between the 'villain' and 'hero,' or a pro- versus anti- choice, which is harmful in a society whose ethnic dynamics align well with that duality. My arguments are centrist and realistic. I recognize the fundamentality of liberal democratic

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[118] It is true that then America was riddled with controversies associated with its treatment of Black people and other minorities and women, but the singularity of its political system is that its original design carried neutral principles of communal republicanism deriving from parochially driven civic virtues that the founders successfully turned into institutions. It was made to evolve and be correctible while preserving the sacrosanct individual liberties and rights (see Needleman 2003).

values, but take a different view of how they can be realized, and the pace at which they can be applied. Rwanda experienced an externally enforced transition in the 1990s, but the outcome was disastrous, particularly because the socio-cultural and historical context was not ripe for it. The challenge presented by previous scholarship and various projects of democratization stem from the fact that they examine the problem from only one point of view. Democratization (and all its sustaining forces) need to be re-conceptualized beyond universalizing standards; it needs to take into account socio-political and cultural realities of the context as well.

The civil society and state relationship does not have to be binary, ranging (as Migdal has argued) between "disinterest" and "outright hostility" (Migdal 2003, 133). As he observes, when the state and society interact, it is a more complex process than it appears, and hence, it cannot be reduced to duality. The two morph with one another in a continuous way. Therefore, "states do not succeed in establishing their own domination by default. In fact, they may end up as much the transformed as the transformative state" (idem). For that reason, scholarship on democratization needs to treat both the state and the society as two equal sides of the phenomenon. That is what I have attempted to do in this dissertation: to analyze the democratization work of civil society from within Rwanda's political cultural framework. In the next paragraphs I offer a summarized account of my arguments and of what challenges building civil society and democratization in Rwanda have been. At the end, I also offer a reflection on what should be done as far as the future of civil society and democratization is concerned.

History

Going as back as far as pre-colonial times, we do not find ingredients of autonomous forces whose primary goal was to counter or undermine the state's action. Strong social capital always existed in Rwanda, but it was always in support of the central authority. That is as true in pre-colonial order as well as throughout the systems that followed it. Before colonialism, Rwandans were religiously deferential to authorities; that cultural trait is still pervasive in contemporary politics. Colonialism did not alter that structure of social order. Instead, it reinforced it and did not institute recipes for a liberal constitutional democracy by allowing veritable independent organizational movements. More than anything, the colonial order complicated the chance for a democratizing civil society when it first reinforced the existing order, and then switched sides, perpetuating risks of unstable institutions while perturbing the stability of existing social order. That instability is still an important ingredient in the ways Rwanda's political culture has historically adapted and changed in response to democratic pressures. President Kayibanda, propelled to prominence by the colonial power, governed as an 'ethnocrat.' He failed to lay the first foundational corner stone that would have disrupted old political traditions. He was the chance for Rwanda to cultivate new civic virtues that he would turn into institutions, but he did not. Habyarimana, taking inspiration from previous political orders, followed the same governing logic. His MRND party and regionalist rule excluded a segment of the population, exacerbating ethnic tensions that eventually plunged the country into chaos. Kagame, a product of the previous political anxieties that eventuated into the Genocide, was not expected to adopt a political behavior different than that of his predecessors with respect to handling oppositional forces. Historical patterns that continue

to characterize state and society relations in Rwanda come from the fact that the elites never truly had organically grown constraints, nor the desire, or the incentive to create a competitive liberal order in which civil society has a significant voice.

The first rise of organized groups in Rwanda—in 1943—did not come out of popular desire to contest the power of the colonial state. It was a creation of the colonial state to channel economic needs of the colonial elite. Subsequent associational movements were always viewed and treated as such. This pattern took root and during the democratization era the Genocide exposed the weaknesses and the danger of enforcing democratization through archetypes that are not organically grounded in the contextual cultural realities. Before and after the outbreak of the Genocide, civil society split into both "constructive" and "destructive" forces, and in remarkable number of instances turned against the very population it claimed as its own constituencies.

Economic Arguments About the Failures of Civil Society in Democratization

There are three levels at which civil society intersects with political development in Rwanda, individual, group, and the macro national economic environment. On the individual level, people join *Mushroom* or grassroots associations primarily to meet their material and emotional needs. Participating in associational movements bestows opportunities to socialize and help resolve economic needs of an individual. Like in most societies, members feel a natural urge to enjoy freedom, and also have the state serve their needs. Associations are an alternative to achieving those needs or those that the state cannot meet for them. Rwandan associations are not joined primarily to serve members' intention to challenge the political order. Individuals are generally poor and even poverty-stricken at the grassroots associational level. Therefore, associations are meant to address

basic local problems that are outside the processes of countering the state. But in their endeavors, individuals within grassroots groups wind up, consciously or otherwise, building communities and constituting empowered structures that are useful in state building and eventually local strands of democracy. Yet, associations at the grassroots are vital forces of democratization that receive little to no attention in the ways in which we connect civil society to democratization.

On the group level, CSOs that are financially viable are not likely to conduct themselves any differently. Some (relative) financial independence does not necessarily make them change behavior or mission and hence make them assertive vis-à-vis the state. Quite similarly, financially destitute groups and those with a financial vitality both behave in a similar fashion in the ways they approach the state and its authority. Because of the leeway that cultural and other contextual realities have given to the state, CSOs have no other choices than to be a labor force that the government has utilized to implement its development vision. And as long as members of such CSOs continue to benefit from it, they have, by and large, remained content with that arrangement. That puts even more at odd the idea that CSOs are a force that can truly challenge the state when they are financially vibrant.

Institutional Accounts

Putnam was right to assert that "institutions are devices for achieving purposes, not agreement" (1993, 8). He observed that developing institutionalism was important for democratic performance, but most important that engraining a type of institutionalism in system of order that is already established was the most difficult thing to achieve. Just as

Arturo Israel has argued, it is a one thing to build a road, building the organization that manages it is another (Israel 1987, 112).

In Rwanda's colonial era, institutions served to reinforce the power of the colonizers by closely regulating the role of non-state associations and channeling them to the purposes of the colonial state. This established in the political culture the role that CSOs should play vis-à-vis the state. The same role was re-produced during the one-party era of Kayibanda and Habyarimana, with institutions reinforcing the idea that CSOs organizations should serve state purposes. In the 1990-94 era, new institutions were adopted and adapted to the pressures of history—especially seeking to resonate with a traumatized, fearful, and angry population. However, just as in the past, new institutions were crafted to reflect the traditional precedence of the state over other social structures. That reordering of institutions and of the society as a collective has systematically structured the role of CSOs, subsuming them under a state directed development agenda.

A Political Culture to Be Embraced

As we have seen, there are several challenges to analyzing the relationship between civil society and democratization through the lenses of institutionalism and the economics in Rwanda. As we have equally seen, the variable that is more important in this analysis is political culture. That is, Rwanda's state-non state actors relations cannot be understood without understanding the workings of its political culture. But if Rwanda's political culture dominates explanations for its democratic trajectory, that too poses a dual dilemma. On the one hand, it leads us to imagine it as purely exclusive of and antagonistic to liberal democratic principles. On the other hand, that political culture is and remains the social foundation that has held the state up, keeping it from crumbling and enabling it to redevelop

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across various tumultuous episodes. Without it, Rwanda might have been reduced to the collapsed-state condition of contemporary Somalia. There is also the fact that the hope and the hard work done to liberalize politics in Rwanda in the 1990s has not altered that political culture; it has survived and barely changed. As a matter of fact, Rwanda's political culture has even been strengthened after the Genocide. There is then a case to be made that such political culture should be recognized in the future processes of democratizing Rwanda via the medium of civil society. Putting civil society at the service of democracy in Rwanda is going to have to take an integrative approach with respect to Rwanda's political culture. But before I develop this theme in the next section, let us look at the place that Rwanda's political culture has given to civil society in the overall political order.

First off, in Rwanda, civil society as a concept and an important element in democratic order is rarely seen as a policy field. And here I am referring to *balloon* and *minion* organizations, which for the most part are based in the capital city, whereas *Mushrooms* are remote, grassroots entities. There seems to be no sense of urgency or pressure within either the ruling class or the public conscious that civil society is a public issue needing national attention and mobilization. My research suggests that public officials do not imagine it as an element of state advancement if it contradicts them. Rather, state elites have always seen and managed to keep CSOs as convenient partners for executing developmental agenda. That constricts its significance in setting national priorities and in the general processes of ordering the society. Similarly, advocacy— usually political and sensitive of issues—weighs less than the issue of development. Professionals within civil society conceive of it the same way. There is a general recognition that civil society is too weak to influence national issues that are political in

nature. Consequently, there is no impetus to engage on issues that carry such sensitivity, and hence people do not commit beyond the intention to fulfill personal interest. On the other hand, the government is aware of civil society's vulnerabilities but also knows that the best profit of their relationship lies in their ability to execute development programs, as suggested by a part of the former Minister of Local Government in Chapter 4, section on "civil society within Rwanda's macro-economic environment." That is, members of civil society are so attracted by the economic incentives that the development agenda offers them that the mission to challenge the state stays secondary. For that reason, CSOs have become the most reliable development labor force which, besides executing the state directed programs such as health, education and agriculture, poses no real threat to the state imposed political order.

NGOs in Rwanda are overwhelmingly service delivery oriented. The primary force behind this tendency is that they are still building their economic capacity. The demographic makeup of this civil society reflects the needs of an average Rwandan, seeking to better his or her life every day. In a democratic sense, there is too little that civil society is accomplishing, but in an economic sense, most CSOs have found comfort in the development agenda set by the state. In the future, meaning after they have built themselves, civil society NGOs will need to play a bigger role of bridging the state and the society. They will do so by embracing and increasing work on all means of the society through a bigger, peaceful, and enduring discourse. They will, for example, need to make the mayor explain about the budget to the people. They will have to mobilize forces and advocates to work on questions related to water, transportation, equitable access to

resources and energy and other environmental protection issues by building bridges across interests, and not just in their usual capacity as service delivery vehicles.

But that also means that CSOs will have to work within the dispersed strands of democratization. That is, civil society will need to tackle democratization issues by starting at the bottom structures of government, which do not threaten the regime. It is a problem when they vilify the President, but it is ironically encouraged by the President when they denounce a Minister, a Mayor of a District or an Executive Secretary of a Sector for embezzling public funds or for misbehaving in any way that would be inacceptable if done by the President. This is demonstrated each time President Kagame effectuates one of his "popular outreaches," at which citizens bring to him various complaints that local leaders often have failed to resolve. In many instances, such complaints are directed against those leaders. People are eager and fearless to denounce the vices of a local leader whenever the President visits their community. There is also the fact that civil society often fails to denounce them before citizens bring them to the attention of the President. But such is a contextual reality that has always linked the state and the society. Civil society has not truly ever embodied the channel through which ordinary citizens' demands are taken to the upper echelons of the state, notably the President, in Rwanda. The state appears to have a greater sensor of where the needs of the people are going (and the appropriate instruments for that) than civil society does. That is a challenge that Rwanda's civil society still faces and needs to learn to work through in its democratization struggles. As of present, CSOs' greater strength lies in executing development programs and it is likely to remain so for a long future. And until it has the organizational and financial grit that is commensurate to the might of the state, then this civil society will first have to stay and work strategically

within the decentralized arenas of democratization and team up with all the *Mushroom* organizations. That is where the hope and the impetus to counter and balance the state by CSOs seems to lie. After all, the fact remains that 80 percent of *Balloons* and *Minions* NGOs are based in Kigali, but 80 percent of the population is rural. Therefore, concentrating in the capital city because it is where the financial capital is will not help civil society to achieve significant change. They have a tough road ahead because, for a CSO to be strong, they need constituencies and communities and organic mechanisms of raising resources and hence the financial autonomy. International NGOs will need to recognize the challenges weighing on local CSOs and therefore support them to function within Rwanda's socio-cultural realities. Power is centralized and personalized, and deference to the central authority is still a culture potently engrained in Rwandans' routine. And the Genocide has re-legitimized it. As a result, civil society is differently organized in Rwanda than it is in Uganda, Burundi, or DRC.

By giving less attention to rights to food, education, education, clean water, safety of mining laborers, and other parochial components of rights, organizations such as Human Rights Watch (HRW) take a very narrow view of human rights. The context is important in Rwanda. Let us take an example of such agencies as USAID, DFID, SIDA. In their mission to develop civil society in Rwanda, put priority to the "independence" aspect of it. But power, throughout different regimes that have followed one another in post-independence Rwanda, has always been ruled in such a way that freedom of non-state actors means to be anti-state. Therefore, other than creating jobs for members, there is not truly a whole set of change one can hope and expect USAID to accomplish in terms of using democratic strategies to alter the political order. When USAID gives a $100,000

grant to a local *Balloon* organization, it naturally gets involved in the process of hiring team members who will implement that project.[119] When they hire, it is always a merit-based and competitive process, which means they do not ask whether the candidate is a Hutu or Tutsi. They recruit individuals on the basis of their competence. But such individuals may have different ethnic backgrounds. In fact, they may put in one office two people, one of whom may have relatives in jail over Genocide related crimes and the other of whom is Genocide survivor. Next, irrespective of such social conundrums, USAID puts them together and task them to reconcile interests, history, feelings, and views, and hence form alliance and a strategy on countering the state. For those two locals to coalesce, unify views, and decry the government is the onerous of demands one can be asked to execute in Rwanda. Interpersonal trust is still challenged by recent events in Rwanda's history. It is still forming across individuals of the Rwandan society. Therefore, to demand the two individuals such a task accomplishes nothing other than setting up a confrontational environment. Especially so because the government is not impressed or amused by such approach. Another challenge stemming from that is also that international organizations—who have more power, instruments, qualifications, and protection to voice anything improper that the government of Rwanda engages into—do not say anything. Yet, they are the first to demand such a task from the weak CSOs that are bereft of some kind of solid protection that are not equipped or prepared should their action backfire.

One other recurrent complaint about Rwanda's political system is that there is no space for dissenting opinions about the government allowed in the public square. It is true: Rwanda's political arena is tightly controlled by the state. And such has been a pattern

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[119] A though formulated based upon an interview I held with a U.S. government officer in Kigali in spring 2012.

since before Rwanda became a Republic and after it obtained independence in 1962. However, it is also true that CSOs have not accomplished anything using current strategies for countering the state. In the past (1990-1994 and shortly after the end of the Genocide), confronting the state head-on has produced nefarious results.[120] Considering the fluidity and risks of these mobilization tactics, CSOs should adopt a less confrontational approach in attempt to accomplish something different than it has been the case in the past. Rwanda's public has consistently showed that it is tolerant towards dominance of the state's authority and civil society is has never truly been able to reverse that social order. And because the environment remains constraining for liberalizing that order, then new strategies are essential. CSOs will need to re-conceptualize their role and seek to effect political traditions from within the system, not through outright hostility towards it. They need to do so by acting as part of the society (and thus the system), not separate from it. The opposite has not led to change.

On the other side, it is unlikely that the state will change or give them a leeway that could cause a perturbation to the public order. For example, when I interviewed the head of RGB on his view of CSOs and the place they should occupy, his answer would not have been any blunter. The envisaged relation with CSOs is that of both "business partners" that are "citizen centered," and "not as opponents." He specified that the government wants CSOs to be "good clients." He also indicated that the government was not against CSOs' "talking, speaking, and criticizing" as long as [all that] was in conjunction with "doing," which means doing what is in correspondence with the government's vision. The head of

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[120] I have discussed this topic in Chapter 5, section titled "Civil Society and democratization in the 1990s: what happened to institutions after opening the political space?" and also in Chapter 6, section titled "Rwanda's civil society and democratization through the logic of trust and social capital."

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RGB added that one of the reasons why local governments (districts) were successful in bettering lives of their citizens was in part because CSOs were actively involved in the monthly Joint Action Development Forum (JADF), to plan and budget development activities. He explained that JADFs had traditionally been presided over by the Vice-Mayor in charge of economic affairs, but that between 2012 and 2015 (my interview time), only 8 out the 30 districts were still led by district officials, others by volunteers stemming from international NGOs. What that means is that aspiring to total autonomy of CSOs outside of the state's control is practically unforeseeable. Clearly, the state does not envisage to free them from its grand development architecture. It wants them to be a party to the state development plan, not autonomous actors upon it. Therefore, if there is a change that must come from CSOs, it is going to come from community-centered approaches by such organizations. CSOs are going to utilize the community space to convey messages to the state and they are going to need to do so strategically, creatively, intelligently, but non-confrontationally. My interviews suggested that the government is receptive somewhat only when complaints are courteously delivered, hard evidence supported, credibly built, and thus compellingly presented.

But as CSOs operate within those parochial and dispersed strands of democracy, challenges for them will remain insofar as they are still heavily dependent on external funding. Absence of financial independence affects the quality of skills and hence the personnel they wind up with. They are unable to run effectively their offices. There are no unions or other systematic mechanisms through to raise resources. CSOs are always looking for resources. Most of them are concentrated in the capital city or want to work at the national level. Many of them are "briefcase CSOs," meaning their opportunistic start

creates ephemeral results, and that is in no way a recipe to advance the liberalization of society and culture.

Trust also still poses a challenge in ways in which civil society would like to mobilize and assert its independence from the state. At the central level (district and national)—where international NGOs support is concentrated—interpersonal trust is still problematic. Individuals involved in civil society are mostly professionals that circumstances have randomly brought together. That creates a reality whereby individuals, not knowing very well the person they are called to engage with, are reluctant to open up to one another on all political matters. That is, people say one thing in public (media, academia, community meeting) but say another in a private setting. The only level where trust is not an impediment to the workings of civil society is within the *Mushrooms*. Some interpersonal trust at the grassroots level—what one could call *intra-associational Mushroom* trust—exists. At least enough trust among members of *Mushrooms* to work together exists. But on aggregate level, the question of *what does it mean to mobilize civil society constituencies (as a united front) and coalesce them around issues of communal interest when there is no trust* still lingers. Elites at the CSO (national) level are motivated more by the desire to meet personal interests (material goal) than communal vocation (collective goals). And, when collective and altruistic values are outweighed by self-serving interests, in addition to other challenges arising from domestic context such as ethnic, regional, and political conflicts, then it becomes an impossibility for such civil society to reverse the democratic trajectory Rwanda has been on.

I do not think that the term 'political culture' has done semantic justice to this phenomenon (the inability of civil society to alter state behavior regarding democracy).

Nor do I believe that describing it as such conveys enough features of knowledge that this culture embodies. But in it, I wanted to convey that there might be a sacred and sacralizing element in the conscience of Rwandans about 'authority.' The origins of this culture may be traced back in precolonial times, but most puzzling is why Rwanda's critical junctures (colonialism, the revolution of 1959, independence, the coup d'état of 1973, democratization in 1990, the Arusha Peace Accords of 1993; and the Genocide) were unable to alter its patterns. I do not believe that it is because Rwandans are gullible or servile and incapable of standing up to totalitarian behavior, but it appears hardly deniable that many Rwandans are comfortable abiding by the leaders' way. They have always believed leaders to be generally just and right. This is not unique to Paul Kagame, the latest leader. Each of his predecessors has enjoyed the same level of cultural legitimacy. For that, he is a perpetuator of traits of statecraft that predate his advent into Rwanda's political arena. The 'you don't challenge authorities' seems to be deeply planted in the imagination as a cultural norm in Rwanda. Kayibanda was described as "an ethnic autocrat" (Scherrer 2002, 77), Habyarimana as "an educational totalitarian" (Guichaoua 2010, 44), and recently Kagame as "a transformative authoritarian" (Straus and Waldorf 2011, 5). Whatever their goals or their methods of achieving them, however, all have reflected, in the eyes of many analysts, the authoritarian norms and expectations of the wide Rwandan population.

Can African Civil Society Be Made to "Work" for a Liberal Constitutional Democracy?

Three decades ago, enforcing civil society in Africa was an idea that gave hope to the world. Throughout this dissertation, I showed and described factors hindering and dissipating that hope in Rwanda. At the fall of USSR, both insiders and outsiders made copious efforts towards making democracy work in African states. But rather than closing the debate, the ubiquity of instruments of democratization has added even more questions. Out of the 54 states in the continent, fewer than the number of fingers on a hand are recognized as true democracies by international agencies rating democratic progress. In spite of an increase in democratic norms and reforms, modes of governing and ordering African societies have rarely moved away from the status quo. Going forward, there is no assurance that developing civil society in the same ways as it has been the case will produce a different outcome.

Yet, the old ways are still the dominant approach to promoting democracy in Africa, i.e., through development of a strong civil society. The development community has not absorbed many lessons from the past. For example, just between 2007 and 2013, the European Union (EU) channeled nearly U.S. $6 billion (€5B) of its development aid through civil society in Africa (Piebalgs 2013, 2). Prior to that, several summits gathering the EU and the ACP countries (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) resulted in creation of the "Cotonou Agreements" (European Commission 2014).[121] The EU, through this partnership, mandated that African states receiving its aid (to national budget) allocate a

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[121] This series of summits established and then modified the Cotonou Agreements over the years. There was first the Lomé Convention (Togo) in 1975, which was then updated in 2000 in Cotonou (Benin), and again in Luxembourg in 2005, and again in 2010 in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) (see European Commission 2014).

certain percentage to local CSOs, so as to allow participatory policy-making domestically (idem Pp. 21-40). Most states of sub-Saharan Africa (48) are parties to the Cotonou Agreement (idem Pp. 8-10). In addition, At the Lisbon Summit in 2007, the EU and 54 African countries adopted the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) with, among others, the goal of "moving 'beyond institutions' by working towards a people-centered partnership, ensuring the participation of *civil society* and the private sector and delivering direct benefits for African and European citizens" (EU-AU 2014, 31).

These efforts are the same old methods that viewed civil society as a phenomenon capable of developing in a linear progression. Implicitly, the Cotonou Agreements and the JAES assumed that because it worked well in one place, therefore it must work the same way elsewhere, regardless of individual contextual conditions. That approach has seldom changed or adapted even though the social, cultural, and political contexts in many African states have clearly changed. Associational movements are still a route to democratic change in the Western imagination. As Andris Piebalgs, the EU Commission for Development, put it, "civil society organizations form a vital part of any truly democratic system" (Piebalgs 2013, 1). The West clearly believes that the stronger civil society is in Africa, the stronger and more democratic the African states. In turn, strong and democratic states make better economic partners for the developed West. But, given the Rwanda experiment in previous decades, we have seen the limitations of this philosophy of democratization. Each context is equally essential in the analysis, and hence worthy examining. At glance, one may naturally think that civil society was vital to events such as 'the Arab Spring,' whose only real success story is Tunisia (Feuer 2017). Likewise, 'the Citizens' Broom' in Burkina Faso which brought an end to the 27 year-long rule of Blaise

Compaoré, as well the 'Enough is Enough' movement in Senegal that averted Abdoulaye Wade from instituting lifetime and nepotism-based rule fit the Western view of civil society's potential for political transformation. But the *sui generis* nature of each of these countries' social, historical, political, ethnic, and economic context is equally important in the analysis.

Therefore, amidst these efforts still lingers the question of how the development community's approach to civil society can learn how to circumvent the serious challenges posed by rigid social norms and politico-cultural realities in some African states. After all, the EU's model for civil society is, a priori, and feeds into the quintessential liberal argument premised on Huntington's faith in the "global democratic revolution" (Huntington 1991, 33) proffered since the 1990s. And if democracy, be it on local or global levels, is a system that many states are struggling to integrate and to which civil society's vibrancy appears as a good remedy, then the questions of a) why has it not yet happened, and b) why has this three-decade old debate not closed yet remain legitimate and unanswered.

But that too, leads to another question: why does civil society behave differently in Africa and West? To me, understanding the causal relationship between civil society and democracy in Africa calls for a shift in approach. It requires a transposition of normativity on traditionalism. The examination of civil society and its role in political reform needs to take an inside-out approach. That is, because of the ways in which complexities surrounding civil society in Africa unfolds, there is a need to move beyond the simplicity that connects CSOs to democratic rule. There is a need to gauge civil society not just against the international and normative standards, but against domestic environment too.

That is what I have attempted to do throughout this dissertation and that is how we can truly understand the factors of acceptance and resistance to democratization in Africa.

Understanding the workings of civil society in Africa, as in this specific case of Rwanda, cannot be decoupled from the local cultural context and how that context has historically conditioned the political orientations of citizens. There are strong cultural artifacts historically embedded in political practices at both the state and non-state actor levels that a normative civil society cannot hope to change in a swift fashion. Obedience to authority in Africa is more cultural than misusage of rationality in most African societies. Following orders and submission to the supreme authority of the nation is a powerful social characteristic that pervades all spheres of influence. It is thus dubious that one dominant model for civil society can prevail in such settings. In addition, in Africa, the state-society relations are, by and large, conceived as an expansion of family ruling system, in which the father is the ultimate guarantor of the ontological security, i.e., a provider and a protector (Schatzberg 2001). In return, this father figure—whom I have referred to as the political Leviathan—receives loyalty from members of that family institution. In Rwanda, even the shock created by the Genocide has not altered this mode of living and relating to those in power.

Consequently, in a way, to the extent that the African political culture remains a powerful social force in fashioning these state-society relations, and to a degree, remains a fundamental instrument of ordering the society. Therefore, there is a need not to subjugate, squash, or exclude that cultural context from our knowledge of democratization and its variations across the globe. Effective support of civil society in Africa needs to find a good balance between services and advocacy, between traditionalism and global normative

standards, and between societal and political aspirations. Advocates for making civil

society ever more vibrant must make it work from the bottom towards the middle of the

spectrum before seeking to effect an overall transformation of state-society relations.

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VITA

FIACRE BIENVENU

2017 – Present	Adjunct Professor of African Politics & Comparative Politics Florida International University Department of Politics and International Relations Affairs
2015 – 2017	Ph.D. Candidate of Political Science Florida International University
2010 – 2017	Teaching Assistant Florida International University

Recipient of Philippe Jean Monet Miami European Union Center for Excellence (MEUCE) to conduct field research in Rwanda in Summer 2015.

Recipient of the Online Course Lecturer's Development grant by the FIU's Stephen J. Green School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) in August 2017.

Recipient of the Jewish Federations of North America's 'Academic Partners for Peace' sponsorship to travel to Israel about the Israeli – Palestinian Conflict in June 2017.

Recipient of the Morris and Anita Broad Fellowship to conduct field research in Rwanda in Summer 2015.

Recipient of, through the FIU African and African Diaspora Studies Department, the Karell Travel Grant in spring 2012 to conduct field research in spring 2012 in Rwanda for 4 weeks.

Recipient of the Certificate in National Security Studies by the Jack D. Gordon Institute for Public Policy at Florida International University in Spring 2014.

Recipient of the Certificate in Human Subject Research Training (by Institutional Review Board 'IRB') in June 2011.

2010 – 2014	Master of Art in Political Science from Florida International University, class of 2014

Master in African and African Diaspora Studies from Florida International University, class of 2012.

2009 – 2010	Master of Business Administration (MBA) Executive MBA from Adam Smith University of America 2010
2002 – 2006	Bachelors in Sociology Université Libre de Kigali (ULK) Kigali, Rwanda
1999 – 2010	Researcher and Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist in International NGOs in Africa: *The International Rescue Committee (IRC)*, *CARE International*, *CHF International*, *Social Impact, Inc., VOXIVA Inc., IREX.*

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Bienvenu Fiacre. 2006. *Mesure de l'Impact de la Réforme de la Gouvernance sur la Cohésion Sociale au Rwanda 1999 – 2004*; Université Libre de Kigali (ULK), Rwanda (BA Thesis).

Presented a paper titled "*Civil Society and Political Liberalization in Rwanda: Do Institutions Matter?*" at the 75th Mid-west Political Science Association in Chicago, IL, 2017.

Gave a lecture at a seminar on Political Violence titled "*Political Violence in Rwanda: Imagining Gender and Power Struggles at the Center of the Genocide*" at FIU, 2016.

Gave a lecture at a seminar on Cuban Politics titled "*Cuba and Africa: Meaning and Impact of the Angolan Intervention on the Cold War, Decolonization, and Future of Africans*" in collaboration with Professor Dario Moreno, 2014.

Presented a paper titled "*Social Trust and Civil Society Vibrancy in Post-genocide Rwanda: Examining the Potentialities of Intra-society Civic Participation*" at the 57th African Studies Association's 57th annual conference – Baltimore; 2013.

Presented a paper titled "*Gender, Hybridity, and Genocide: Intersectionality and Metabolism of Sexual Anxieties Since the Colonial Politics of Race and Body in Rwanda*" at the 21st African Studies Center annual conference at Boston University – Boston; 2013.

Presented a paper titled "*Un-producing Good Governance? Embracing the Uncomfortable Middle Reality of a Post-ethnic Civil Society and Potentialities of Good Governance in Rwanda,*" at the African Studies Association's 56th annual conference – Philadelphia; 2012.