Rebuilding from Genocide: Framing Development in Rwanda Post-1994

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SISU-306-001-2017S

Professor Field

May 9, 2017

**Abstract**

Since the 1994 genocide, Rwanda has made significant gains in terms of overall economic and political stability, yet also has failed to adopt the liberal democratic principles intended by its international supporters. Whereas the conventional peacebuilding perspective fails to account for this type of illiberal development, examining the role of identity construction in post-conflict situations can help to understand these contradictory results. This work seeks to consider how Rwanda has been represented as both an opportunity for democratic governance as well as one of wholesale reidentification. By employing a discourse analysis using texts created by Bill Clinton and Paul Kagame during the period from 1994 to 2001, development can be viewed within the context created by these central actors in the process. The interplay of national identity, domestic pressures to rebuild, and international assistance within these discourses provides insights and implications for post-conflict peacebuilding after episodes of ethnic conflict. Through this perspective, Rwanda offers an opportunity to evaluate how initial expectations meet on-the-ground realities in post-conflict situations that go beyond the preexisting theories of peacebuilding and reconciliation. This is not only useful in considering the history of Rwanda, but also the potential for future interventions in situations of genocide and broader instances of ethnic conflict.

**Introduction**

With the end of July in 1994, Rwanda had seen the end of a genocide that had claimed the lives of around 800,000 of its own along with millions more dispersed as refugees.[[1]](#footnote-1) In leading the Rwandan Patriotic Front to end the genocide, Paul Kagame positioned himself to be the main power in Rwanda to lead it into the new millennium with the help of international aid provided by the United States under President Bill Clinton and other western, democratic states. Since then, the efforts of Paul Kagame and the international community have seen some success. Economically, Rwanda is the 3rd most competitive in Sub-Saharan Africa with 8% GDP growth over the period of 2000 to 2014.[[2]](#footnote-2) Steps have also been made in achieving stability from violence as the violence of the period eventually drew down to a lower intensity outside of Rwanda’s borders. However, the country has made little advancement in terms of democratization.[[3]](#footnote-3) This undemocratic status quo exists in tangent with continued international material and political assistance provided mainly by democratic countries. The creation of this situation raises questions regarding the aims of this aid as well as that of the Rwandan state. Specifically, how has post-genocide Rwandan development been represented as both an opportunity for democratic governance as well as one of political reidentification?

This question is relevant in international studies research due to how it deals with the fields of post-conflict peacebuilding, justice of reconciliation, and political identity in the aftermath of genocide, which imposes its own set of circumstances on the post-conflict environment. While often studied at length with historical cases, the applicability of these studies is of increasing relevance as humanitarian actions become more commonplace with the guiding principle of the responsibility to protect.[[4]](#footnote-4) While conceptually disputed, its it has started a wider debate on the role of states in promoting human security at an international level in the face of potential violations of sovereignty. This example of international assistance after genocide in Rwanda provides an opportunity to consider the situation and its implications for future intervention.

To answer this question, I conduct a discourse analysis using primary texts created by the major actors in Rwanda beginning in 1994. These actors consist of President Clinton and President Kagame. These actors represent the primary leaders behind the procurement of international aid and domestic leadership of Rwanda, respectively. I will analyze speeches and interviews each of these leaders gave in English and French during the period following the genocide until shortly after the start of the 21st century.

In addressing this question, consideration must be made for the varying schools of thought in the fields of peacebuilding, justice of reconciliation, and political identification. Each of these fields hold schools of conventional thinkers as well as challenges to these conventions based on new works. The methodological section explains the choices made regarding this discourse analysis in terms of my own position as well as those regarding the selected texts. The following analysis considers the varying discourses on Rwanda’s path towards development as differing assumptions about the genocide itself inform the creation of new conceptions of peace and stability. The significance of such analysis can be seen with how post-conflict reconstruction after genocide a return to violence with far greater cost than other forms of conflict. With the reconstruction effort in this situation, failure of the state to confront the post-conflict situation in a comprehensive manner risks of collapse in the long term.[[5]](#footnote-5) The implications of this research have bearing on Rwanda’s long term development over the coming decades as well as the larger peacebuilding community, which influences policy on humanitarian aid and intervention in situations around the world.

**Literature Review**

In terms of a literary framework, post-genocide recovery works in a larger reconstruction narrative. Rwandan redevelopment following the 1994 genocide involved both ensuring stability from violence as well as rebuilding the government and its associated institutions. Reconstruction ultimately meant salvaging some institutions, establishing new ones, and rethinking how the state and society, could best be designed to minimize the potential for future conflict based on the justifications that came before 1994. The key areas that impact the experience of reconstruction include peacebuilding, the establishment of a justice of reconciliation, and the principles underpinning political identification within states.

*Peacebuilding*

Post-conflict peacebuilding incorporates the processes that mitigate new violence after an armed conflict. This includes developmental, political, and security components being jointly considered from a top-down or bottom-up approach to ensure advancements are complementary.[[6]](#footnote-6) With national ownership, where the responsibility for peace is the primary responsibility of the host country and its government, this provides a template for transforming from conflict to peace with an emphasis on internal context.[[7]](#footnote-7) In Rwanda, this is seen with international donors incentivizing specific development tracks through official developmental assistance, yet still acknowledging the sovereignty of the government to act on its own accord. With little dissention on conceptual issues, there are differing views on democratic governance. Proponents suggest that democratic institutions can significantly aid in the process of channeling violence into peaceful measures for a “social” peace.[[8]](#footnote-8) The origins of these arguments are found in democratic peace theory as well as changing perspectives at the end of the Cold War. Those that ascribe to democratic principles suggest they can be applied at every level of the peacebuilding process in order engender these principles at all levels of government.[[9]](#footnote-9) Critics contend that, within a regional context, democracy can’t take precedence over the local and regional demands of a conflict region.[[10]](#footnote-10) With Rwanda, detractors consider how the necessary fields of security, economic recovery, and statebuilding have still been significantly achieved even though there has been minimal democratic development.[[11]](#footnote-11) Furthermore, the perception of these principles can be manipulated in order to allow the appearance of democratic growth to outside forces while practicing undemocratic practices within the state.[[12]](#footnote-12) Much of this field underscores the conventional approach taken in the Rwanda case with democratic aspirations linked to reconstruction effort.

Conceptual differences can also be identified in how post-conflict peacebuilding efforts are approached with two major groups on a more general level. Scholars that propose to consider how to broadly apply and insert international norms into fledgling political systems are seen as transitologists while those holding that context matters with domestic political institutions and the experiences of local populations are seen as structuralists.[[13]](#footnote-13) Where the former often leads to the creation of illiberal democracies, the latter shows a different path to legitimacy in the long term.[[14]](#footnote-14) This reflects on the larger issue of universal and situational knowledge in understanding the social sciences. In terms of the discourses, the school focusing on applying international norms and democratic governance to states following conflict define the values and strategies in the Clinton texts I have identified. And while useful in characterizing differing approaches to post-conflict scenarios, these schools often lack specific discussions of the establishment of justice in these post-conflict regions.

*Justice of Reconciliation*

Reconciliation in the face of genocide requires defining justice in regional contexts with a local focus. With situations of genocide, this process is often complicated due to extensive institutionalized racial prejudice in the institutions and legal systems that are expected to enact this notion of justice.[[15]](#footnote-15) Whether referring to restorative or transitional justice, each are highly individualized within the scenario where they are being engaged.[[16]](#footnote-16) In this organizing framework, restorative justice emphasizes the active engagement of all parties in negotiations while transitional justice examines how to confront past political injuries.[[17]](#footnote-17) These underlying principles are determined by local factors with a heavy emphasis on prevalent understandings of historical narratives. Their goal is to achieve a justice which allows for victims and perpetrators to form relationships.[[18]](#footnote-18) In practice, this means using judicial systems in order to start forming customs embodying these values.[[19]](#footnote-19) The execution of transitional justice through developing legal systems can influence long term development in these states by instilling democratic values, such as that of questioning authority.[[20]](#footnote-20) As the case of Rwanda shows, the execution of this form of justice ultimately relies on which assumptions are dominant about the source of the difference that led to the genocide itself. This is due to how transitional justice chiefly addresses past conceptions of history in order to ensure protection for minority groups as well as facilitate a transformation of legal institutions. [[21]](#footnote-21) While both restorative and transitional justice are stalwart components of establishing broader themes of justice, there are those scholars who hold that these forms of justice can be misused and create the basis of future conflict. In this school of thought, the full commitment of local actors is required for judicial success, as partial applications of these principles can exacerbate the divisions that transitional justice was meant to stem.[[22]](#footnote-22) Just as well, the reality of executing this can be difficult when the perpetrators encompass large swaths of the population as with the case in Rwanda.[[23]](#footnote-23) With the Hutu in Rwanda, this meant bearing claims that as many as 80% had participated in the genocide against the Tutsi.[[24]](#footnote-24) Transitional justice is inherently linked to the debate over the role of international norms in post-conflict recovery due to the potential for these philosophies to align with those underscoring democratic legal systems.[[25]](#footnote-25) These notions of transitional justice are prevalent in the identification discourse created by Kagame in how it attempts to confront the terminology of Hutu and Tutsi within a historical context in ways that would be otherwise termed undemocratic. Establishing these various forms of justice and executing them often works directly with the process led by the state in reimagining the very divisions that underpinned the conflict that led to the current situation.

*Remaking Identity*

In contrast to political conflict, the genocide present in Rwanda was the product of a racialized society. The erosion of these divisions created during the colonial period is a multistage process that impacts politics and history. Through state efforts, this means beginning by leveraging past group identities as a framework for labelling perpetrators.[[26]](#footnote-26) Through the mechanisms of state bureaucracy, identity perception can be altered as new terminology is engrained in the interactions between citizen and state.[[27]](#footnote-27) This means that the state can apply this recategorization onto a national scale to both delegitimize the previous subgroup identities while gaining a consensus regarding the validity of the national identity, which represents a common ingroup identity.[[28]](#footnote-28) By doing so, it deinstitutionalizes the inequalities between the two groups by making one overarching political identity.[[29]](#footnote-29) In terms of achieving different understandings of identity in the state, this is part of the process of building long-term customs from immediate legal changes.

As with the other fields considered so far, there are also scholars here who hold that these methods are not a panacea for the larger problems facing these states. Resistance to the adoption of these new identities, as a pursuit of national unity, can be observed from the segments of the population not engaged with political elites.[[30]](#footnote-30) It can create a veneer of progress on the surface, yet still allow previous misgivings to fester in the private sphere.[[31]](#footnote-31) In effect, new laws and terminology may be formed, yet not respected in daily interactions of those outside major population centers. Similarly, its execution can also endanger civil society by giving the government the pretext for silencing opposition.[[32]](#footnote-32) This can be seen as individuals and groups are sanctioned as infiltrators by the state for unrelated activities. As part of the identification discourse, this is particularly useful in understanding the limits of the discourse itself in achieving immediate change within Rwanda. The issues identified within this wider field can also be seen throughout the Kagame texts I have identified. These concepts not only build on those areas left out of peacebuilding, but provide an examination on the major obstacles that exist to long term stability if not dealt with in a timely manner.

These bodies of literature help to visualize the complexity of post-conflict reconstruction with regards to the vast amounts of demands that are put upon states in these scenarios. While no single field encapsulates the massive nature of reconstruction on a state, the fact stands that the addressed areas consider those that are crucial to the Rwanda situation. Peacebuilding in particular shows the basis of interventions taken by western, democratic powers in recovering states with regards to aid and development goals. The failure to consider the history of identity in conventional peacebuilding, however, holds the field back from enacting fundamental change in post-conflict states as it fails to consider the existence of ethnic groups whose identities are at odds with one another. To move away from these identities, the process of achieving justice must account for them and aid the state in creating new customs that undermine the toxic ones that allowed for genocide to occur in the first place.

**Methodology**

They main collection of texts for this research is made up of speeches and other public addresses given by President Clinton and President Kagame during the period of 1994 to 2001. Under this timeframe, both the remainder of President Clinton’s administration and President Kagame’s rise to power with his eventual ascension to the presidency of Rwanda in 2000 are included. The relevance of these actors can be seen in their positions of power during the post-genocide period. With President Clinton, he represents the U.S. as a force for encouraging official developmental assistance for Rwanda and is also one of the country’s largest contributors.[[33]](#footnote-33) President Paul Kagame, as the leader of the Rwandan Patriotic Front both during and after the genocide, held an unparalleled power over Rwanda in the government during this transitional period. As for texts being employed here, these include speeches, press interviews, and translated works that focus on remarks made by these leaders on development in Rwanda during this period. These were found using online and print sources in order to have access to a wider breadth of texts.

In this discourse analysis, I address all necessary criteria to establish the methodological underpinnings of this work. In demonstrating cultural competency, which refers to the understanding a researcher has for the context they are studying, I have extensively researching the genocide that created this post-conflict situation as well as the development of political identity in the Rwandan population.[[34]](#footnote-34) While only fluent in English, I have employed a twostep system by which I translate French interviews using online translation services and follow up with a French language tutor. I have attempted avoid the “home blind” issue by considering Clinton’s speeches in the context of those of a national leader in charge of United States foreign policy rather than as a domestic political figure influenced by my own political beliefs.[[35]](#footnote-35) As for reflexivity, I must consider the characteristics that define me as a researcher.[[36]](#footnote-36) As an American student studying at an elite university, my audience must be aware of the distance I have from research subject. While I have no familial connections to Rwanda, I do retain an academic interest in the country and have taken steps to be exposed to primary sources rather than secondary interpretations. These considerations will be important in reflecting on how these affect the cogeneration of data with the actors I am researching.[[37]](#footnote-37) With trustworthiness, which refers to my ability as a researcher to determine if better options exist in explaining the question I am seeking to understand, it will be possible to ensure this by evaluating the consistency of evidence I collect, engaging in alternate interpretations, and examining the logic behind these interpretations in the analysis section.[[38]](#footnote-38) While these will actively impact the analysis and conclusion of this research, accounting for them here will ensure the process was as transparent as possible.

In addressing intertextuality, which examines the ways in which the texts in the discourses influence one another, Clinton’s texts regarding democratic values can be seen influencing Kagame’s texts in terminology, yet not application.[[39]](#footnote-39) For example, when Kagame used the term “election” in his inaugural address, he did not use it as a means of demonstrating democratic principles in his government, but instead to emphasize how the nation had brought him there.[[40]](#footnote-40) He puts less value on this concept and far more on the issue of unity, which is critical to his continued power of him and his party. This differs from the meaning and value that President Clinton gave the term in his 1998 speech where he publicly supported the government of Rwanda and offered to assist in “giving all Rwandans a greater voice in their own government.”[[41]](#footnote-41) With Clinton, this can be seen as part of a larger narrative where democratic development defeats “demonic divisions…of different races, religions, tribes, creeds.”[[42]](#footnote-42) In these examples, it is also important to note the role of constraints, which limit the ability of each of these actors due to the setting of their speeches as well as their audiences.[[43]](#footnote-43) This notion of contraints is useful in considering how these public leaders may have framed their use of terminology towards domestic and foreign audiences, which in turn may affect how they are interpreted. These discourses, and the actions they helped form, will be further discussed in the analysis.

The two main themes of my research include the utility of democratization as well as the construction of political identities. This issue of democratization can be seen in the push towards adopting democratic norms in post-conflict scenarios after the Cold War. This principle was a mainstay of U.S. foreign policy during the late 1990’s as the “doctrine of enlargement” under Clinton.[[44]](#footnote-44) As previously discussed, this suggests the notion of democratization as an active part of peacebuilding. The main assumption of this doctrine is in how democracy can be created in regions regardless of past divisions and histories between the citizens of the state. With the second theme of political identity, this is important to understanding Hutu-Tutsi tensions leading up to the genocide itself as well as how it is confronted in the aftermath. The main issue with these identities is how their existence after the genocide provides the basis for future conflict. Any development scheme to rebuild Rwanda would have to deal with them if their inherent tensions were to be subdued.[[45]](#footnote-45) While Clinton and Kagame propose solutions for this divide through the texts, each reflect different meanings of identity and, by extension, their ability to be altered by government means. As these texts will show, there are as many instance of these leaders speaking to one another as they speak past each other.

With these themes addressed, there are limitations that must be noted. In reviewing these texts, with an emphasis on those of Rwandan origin, there are inherent limitations to access here that would otherwise be accounted for with research in-country. Whereas Clinton’s texts were easily accessible through publicly available sources like the *Public Papers of the Presidents* collection, those regarding Kagame were more interspersed with essentially no central archive. What the texts in this research represent is a collection attempt of those texts which represent Kagame as an actor during the period through the use of a variety of sources created by himself. These shorter quotes from media sources are balanced with more expansive interviews that he gave to French speaking interviewers. While there is always the potential for undiscovered texts that could change the meaning of the analysis, they still represent a diverse enough body of work to work with in this research.

**Analysis**

In reviewing texts originating from President Clinton and President Kagame, the two discourses that become apparent include a democratic discourse and identity discourse. After reviewing these texts, several areas of divergence made these significant to investigate as parallel discourses.[[46]](#footnote-46) Through an examination of their speeches, interviews, and other public documents, these discourses framed the ultimate reconstruction of Rwanda from the genocide of July 1994. Each discourse addresses both the perceived sources of the genocide as well as an approach towards reconstruction. By using texts from 1994 to 2001, the critical years of development following the genocide are considered with President Clinton in office to dictate the democratic discourse and Paul Kagame as the power behind the Rwandan government and the Rwandan Patriotic Front. With the identification of these discourses, it is possible to frame the values embodied within as part of a larger historical narrative for Rwanda. Reconstruction from the genocide in Rwanda is thereby formed by these actors who are, in turn, shaped by the history of the region of Africa itself. As Table 1 shows, the two primary discourses originate in different assumptions about the 1994 genocide, which in turn inform their construction of Rwandan development as well as the end goals of said development.

**Table 1: Discourse Constructions of the 1994 Genocide and Reconstruction in Rwanda**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Origin of Genocide | Reconstruction Strategy | Reconstruction Goal |
| Democratic (Clinton) | * Tribal Conflict * Irreconcilable Differences | * Democratization with International Assistance | * Global Network of Democracies * International Participation |
| Identity (Kagame) | * Colonial Identity * Artificial Differences | * Political Reidentification through Legal and Economic Methods | * Politically Unified * Regionally Powerful |

With the democratic discourse, this is defined by the texts of Western actors with the focus of this research being on those of President Bill Clinton. The power that President Clinton could exert in this period can be seen with the leading U.S. contributions in terms of aid to Rwanda, with any comparable packages being seen with the United Kingdom and France.[[47]](#footnote-47) From the immediate aftermath of the crisis, this discourse constructs the notion that the violence of 1994 was the result of “tribal conflict.”[[48]](#footnote-48) Under this pretense, the division of Hutu and Tutsi were perceived to be as present in the region before Rwanda was even considered a political entity. Furthermore, this concept of tribal roots exists within the larger framework of an Africa defined by unsolvable ethnic and racial that only serve to bring about violence.[[49]](#footnote-49) This construction of the insurmountable obstacles facing Africa positions democratic development as the natural solution to these conflicts. As affirmed by Clinton, democratization in Africa would be “the precious soil in which peace and prosperity would grow.”[[50]](#footnote-50) Rwanda would therefore serve as a point by which democratization would be renewed throughout Africa in countries where such efforts had stagnated under the coups and military rule throughout the decades following independence for much of the African continent.[[51]](#footnote-51)

The use of democratic institutions, political or military, would solve the problems that had been so associated with Rwanda, as well as Africa, since the end of colonial period by allowing the international community to “work with the Government of Rwanda to achieve these goals” of accountable governance and democratic stability.[[52]](#footnote-52) Effectively, these institutions would also serve as the bridge to a “partnership for the 21st century” in order to prevent genocide and related crimes against humanity on a global scale.[[53]](#footnote-53) The immediate aim of this construction is to achieve human “dignity” for Rwandans through “freely elected, accountable governments” with long term aims being towards having Africa “reach its full potential in the 21st century.”[[54]](#footnote-54) This aim correlates with much of the peacebuilding literature in how it focuses on institution building along with legal developments so as to bring all parties involved in the post-conflict situation under one government.[[55]](#footnote-55) In effect, Rwanda was framed as an opportunity for which to spread democracy in the world, which would be able to deal with its problems at the international level while at the same time developing internally. Accordingly, it also bears the weaknesses of the field in how it ignores the question of identity construction in Africa and specifically Rwanda. This stands in stark contrast to the Rwandan identity discourse created by President Paul Kagame, which is heavily intertwined with this colonial history of identity in Rwanda.

With the identification discourse, this is defined by the many forums from which President Paul Kagame was able to deliver his public addresses; this includes public interviews, speeches, and interactions with the press.[[56]](#footnote-56) As the main power in Rwanda immediately after the genocide, he maintained his role in government first as vice president and minister of defense and later as President.[[57]](#footnote-57) This discourse frames the problems facing Rwanda as those stemming from the effects of colonialism. In that, the categories of Hutu and Tutsi were not inherently Rwandan, but instead created by colonial powers for their own interests to create a power structure.[[58]](#footnote-58) These divisions are “less than those which exist between the tribes of other countries” due to their origin in work occupation and how “different tribes live together” in neighboring countries.[[59]](#footnote-59) While democratization is mentioned within this discourse, it is often only discussed in the most general of terms. In that, those portions regarding legal and institutional matters were useful in advancing a technocratic government were discussed.[[60]](#footnote-60) This can be understood due to the concern that democracy and ethnicity cannot “overlap and create more problems.”[[61]](#footnote-61) These advancements would be useful in establishing a greater, regional sphere of influence with those “immediate neighbors” rather than countries “thousands of miles away.”[[62]](#footnote-62) This regional focus is important within the discourse, as it constructs Rwanda as a developing economic power regarding its neighbors.[[63]](#footnote-63)

Noticeably absent from this discourse and the component texts were mentions of human rights, civil liberties, and political freedoms. Criticism of human rights organizations was present as they were “unable to help or stop the genocide” and were not “helping Rwanda after the tragedy.”[[64]](#footnote-64) In effect, democratization and international assistance were used to the extent that they could ensure immediate stability and were not fully embraced. Furthermore, reconciliation through unification emphasized was valued above all else with a national identity through created through the apparatuses of state.[[65]](#footnote-65) This can be seen in educational forums with how the reproduction of this discourse could only be ensured through a general reeducation program in which the terms Hutu and Tutsi were used for discussing the past and not legitimate factors in categorizing Rwandans after the genocide.[[66]](#footnote-66) This effectively meant that history could not be taught in Rwanda to school students for a time due to this conflicted past.[[67]](#footnote-67) As this shows, the reidentification of Rwanda is an ongoing process that requires time as much as legal and economic development. Ultimately, this discourse constructs a reorganization of Rwanda around a single, national identity that addresses the fundamental inequalities between Hutu and Tutsi without the democratization of the previous discourse.

While comprehensive in nature, there is the potential for alternative discourses. The source of this stems in part from my own background as a researcher. In considering reflexivity, which constitutes the characteristics that impact my ability to research, I have most of my experience in this research from an academic background and not from in-country experience.[[68]](#footnote-68) This means that I became introduced to Rwanda through western academic journals, which often have biases against the Kagame regime. This western, pro-democratic focus could be interpreted as neocolonialist by those in the Rwandan government.[[69]](#footnote-69) In terms of main alternatives, this can mainly be understood in terms of audience and context. Each actor in these discourses to some degree tuned their public speeches the immediate context facing them as well as the audiences they were speaking to. This can specifically be seen in texts like Clinton’s speech in Kigali to genocide victims, where he cautions against attributing the genocide to “spontaneous or accidental” causes relating to “ancient tribal struggles.”[[70]](#footnote-70) In this text, Clinton acknowledges the audience in Kigali has a different understanding of the conflict than those in the U.S., which can help to explain this change in explaining the genocide in this speech. While explicitly identifying the origins of the conflict as colonial in this statement, the fact stands that this does not change values expressed outside of Rwanda; in effect, this could be seen as an attempt to connect with his audience and Kagame. Just as well, there are moments where Kagame embraces the general notion of democratization, yet warns against how previous democratic governments were used to exacerbate the ethnic divides that led to the genocide.[[71]](#footnote-71) In framing democracy as potentially dangerous, Kagame was speaking to a western audience with this text to alleviate concerns they may have about his style of government. In this period, his actions are generally acknowledged to be illiberal by non-governmental organizations.[[72]](#footnote-72) As these examples show, the audiences of the texts are important in understanding their meaning and importance. Kagame in particular was conscious of this, as his texts often discuss the role of international organizations when his audience was likely to be those in western states. Yet, the lack of access to domestic speeches due to language barriers could mean that there are alternative discourses out there that are currently inaccessible. While these current interpretations deserve scrutiny, they must be considered in the full context of those texts which were published in English and French.

**Conclusion**

Whereas both discourses identified the Hutu-Tutsi division as the source of conflict in Rwanda, the differing assumptions as to the origin of this divide created entirely different methods for perceiving the future of Rwanda. In terms of the goals of these discourse, the actions of the Rwandan government today show how the identification discourse ultimately defined the actions by the government since 1994. These discourses represent a clear division from the existing literature on the fundamental role and goals of peacebuilding operations. Whereas this literature suggests any approach to peacebuilding must focus on democratic institution building to reach a social peace, this fails to consider the role of identity in ethnic conflicts.[[73]](#footnote-73) As Kagame showed throughout the period, focusing on identity building with some elements of general institutional development is a viable option for avoiding instability. In trying to maintain peace without consideration for the role of identity in this type of violent conflict, outside efforts to intervene will face escalating obstacles to reaching their objectives. With Rwanda, this meant being forced to accept a situation vastly different from the original goals of those desiring to provide aid. In terms of current policy towards Rwanda, this research suggests that developing goals that acknowledge democratic goals within the context of Kagame’s vision may be more successfully achieved than those devoid of local considerations. This could also be applied to future instances of intervention, though further research would be needed with other instances of post-conflict situations in Rwanda before this can be fully developed.

While this discourse analysis is useful in framing development and the goals of the reconciliation process in Rwanda after 1994, there are clear areas for further research. Expanding text collection to those offered by Kagame which were aimed at the domestic Rwandan audience would be important to understanding the domestic-foreign divide in how Kagame’s texts can be interpreted. However, this would require working within Rwanda itself in order to acquire and translate these texts as they become available to the public. In terms of theoretical development, there needs to be serious reexaminations of the assumptions underpinning the field of peacebuilding. As this work has shown, this field has failed to consider the role of political identity in the reconstruction process. In order to make the field more relevant and practical for applications in future post-conflict scenarios, new work needs to focus on the intersection of democratization and identity creation. In doing so, this would offer more contextualized explanations for developments in these scenarios and options for policy makers to develop strategies that allow for both needs to be fulfilled. In doing so, this will leverage the democratic expectations of democratic donors and instill the actual beginnings of a respect for democratic values in post-conflict states. This new focus will also allow for a more thorough examination historical colonial identities within development scenarios. This will be crucial in taking context-specific approaches and building current theory into workable solutions rather than ignoring local realities to fit universal theories.

**Addendum**

While this paper does not the origins of those democratic norms being put forward by the Clinton texts in my research, there is an opportunity to consider how historical parallels between developing countries and established democracies. In considering why Rwanda could not immediately push for a fully democratic government following 1994, those concerns expressed by Kagame with ethnic pressures presenting conflict have similarly been seen in American history during the founding era. This issue was very much alive in the era, as the Declaration of Independence and Constitution both called for equality and freedoms for individuals, yet slavery still existed until the end of the Civil War. Many founders in the period, like Thomas Jefferson, viewed slavery as against the spirit of the founding, yet were concerned by the potential for the breakdown of the Union through a race war as seen in Haiti between 1791 to 1804.[[74]](#footnote-74) As Kagame is concerned with full democratic change because of ethnic divides, so to were the American founders because of slavery. Yet, as the founding era helped push the abolitionist movement towards a more democratic mainstream, so to may it be possible in Rwanda. This parallel could help to bridge an understanding between American officials in favor of democratization and those who would be the recipients of such efforts.

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24. 266 [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
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26. Mahmood Mamdani. *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 268. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities*. (New York: Verso, 1991), 163. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
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37. *Ibid*. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. *Ibid,* 108-109. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. *Ibid*, 86. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. See B9. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. See A9, 433. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. See A4, 1961. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Norman Fairclough. *Language and Power* (London: Longman, 1989), 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. “Bill Clinton: Foreign Affairs,” *UVA: Miller Center*, accessed April 10, 2017. https://millercenter.org/president/clinton/foreign-affairs. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers*, 274. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
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49. See A6, 1206. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. See A7, 436. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Meredith, Martin. *The Fate of Africa: A History of the Continent Since Independence*. (Philadelphia: PublicAffairs, 2005), 218. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. *Ibid.* [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. See A10, 696. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. See A8, 438. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Vincent Chetail, ed, *Post Conflict Peacebuilding*, 109. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
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57. Alan Rake, *African Leaders: Guiding the New Millennium* (Lanham, MA: Scarecrow Press, 2001), 187. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. See B3. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
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60. See B14. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. See B3. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
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