

Possibility of Morita Therapy in Civil War Affected Areas Part 1: Travelogue from **Rwanda**

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History

Pre-Colonial Rwanda

3 tribes Lived in peace and harmony

1. **Twa**: the aboriginal tribe

2. **Hutu**: the original agricultural farmers of the land of Rwanda

3. **Tutsi**: the settlers with a "hierarchical" structure, positing their own king, "Mwami"

- own border system - consisting of both Hutu and Tutsis

- own tribal council, Gacaca – acting as their justice system to resolve conflicts

Colonial History of Rwanda

1893: Beginning of German Colonialism

- **European racial classification** system was prominent
- Considering Tutsi as a “superior race” as they are more “European” than Hutu.
- **Horizontal** tribal relationships – turned **vertical** for the first time by European settlers
- Reigning by consultation

1916: World War 1 and its impact

- Belgian army and local allies invaded Germany's East African “colonies”

1923: League of Nations Mandate

- Belgium to take over the colony to rule.
- Continued relying on Tutsi power structure

Colonial History of Rwanda

1923-1962: WW2 & **Belgium** Colonialism

- Reigning by education and agricultural supervision (forcing profit making via coffee)
- Solidified racial divide - combined with **Eugenic** movement
- “Scientists” measuring skulls, skin color
- Judged Tutsi as superior as they related more to “Caucasian”
- **Racial Identification Card** (= SA Apartheid; Holocaust – Star of David)
- From 1935 on, "Tutsi", "Hutu" and "Twa" were labelled on identity cards

1950s and early 1960s: **Anti-colonial sentiment**

- **Hutu "emancipation" movement** led by Grégoire Kayibanda, later to become the first president – **Militarized to PARMEHUTU**

1959: **UNAR** party was formed by Tutsis

- who claimed the existing Tutsi regime to become the basis of independence – also **Militarized**.
- By 1959: Tutsi power extinct, estimated 150000 Tutsi refugees

Post-Colonial Rwanda

- Post-Colonial Scar
- Interethnic divide, ethnic hatred, anger, fear

1962, July 1st : Declaration of independence

- governed by the majority Party of the Hutu Emancipation Movement (PARMEHUTU)
- Grégoire Kayibanda - Rwanda's first elected president

1962-1994: Continuous civil conflicts btw Tutsi and Hutu

- Numerous **prequel massacres** – escalating to 1994 genocide

1994 Genocide

- **April 6, 1994**: the airplane carrying Juvénal Habyarimana, the President of Rwanda was shot down as it prepared to land at Kigali
- Hutu government military and militia groups (Hutu extremist group = **Interahamwe**) attempted murdering all Tutsis.
- Death squad swiped the land from Kigali to all rural areas of Rwanda
- Duration: btw April 6th – mid-July (app. **100 days**)
- Estimated victim: between **800,000** and **1,000,000** Tutsis and moderate Hutus (UN Report)
- **10,000 murdered per day / 417 per hour / 7 per minute**
- Major means of killing: **Machetes**
- RPF (Rwandan Patriotic Front) led by Paul Kagame (Now the president of Rwanda) seized control by late July.

Rwanda Today

You are welcome, to “Le Pays des Mille Collines”



- Capital: **Kigali**
- Official languages: **Kinyarwanda**, English + French (Commonly Used)
- Government - Republic
 - President: **Paul Kagame**
(Former leader of Rwandan Patriotic Front)
 - Prime Minister: **Bernard Makuza**
- Area
 - Total 26,338 km² (147th)
- Population
 - 2009 estimate 9,998,000 (83rd)
- Currency: **Rwandan Franc** (RWF)
- Kinyarwanda: Igihugu cy'Imisozi Igihumbi.
= Land of a Thousand Hills

Safety in Rwanda Today

- “After the Genocide, we take pride in our country’s security, genocide was a ... horrible memory.”
- “We are still poor in English. We would like to learn more.” “You are welcome.”
- “Even walking around and traveling in the night, our country is safe here.”

Ongoing Safety Concerns

- Extremist Hutus who started genocides are starting to come back from DRC
- Ongoing incidents of retaliation homicides.
- President is fighting against Hutu extremist group.
- “Every year during 100-day mourning ceremony (April-July) someone has thrown grenade somewhere.”

Aftermath of 1994 Genocide

Aftermath of Genocide

- Up to **55%** of the pre-genocide population of about **7.5 million** Rwandans were directly affected (Chauvin et al., 1998).
- Almost **ALL** Rwandan children were exposed to severe traumatic incidents (Dyregrov et al., 2000; Chauvin et al., 1998).
- **600,000** children became **orphans** as a result of the genocide (Rollins, 2007).
- The Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre identified three major scars of genocide: (Personal Visits, July 8th, 2009)
 1. high prevalence of **HIV** as a result of war-rape
 2. an overwhelming number of **orphans** and the **shortage of orphanages**
 3. severe individual **psychological trauma** of survivors (Chauvin et al., 1998; Hagengimana et al., 2003; Perrier, 2003; Sezibera, 2009; Shaal, 2006;)
- **Broken harmony** between Tutsi and Hutu (Meierhenrich, 2007; Staub et al., 2005)
- Continuous tension between the two ethnic groups (Staub et al., 2005; Hilker, 2009)
- Ethnocracy to democracy (Drumbl, 1999).

Post-genocide Trauma Care

“Sustaining psychological, physical, and emotional support for the victims of trauma has been almost impossible to provide because of the numbers of survivors and the prioritization of resources.”

“Post-traumatic support has been minimal, considering the vast numbers of people who witnessed multiple deaths of close family members.”

“Many survivors are young and will carry the trauma of their childhood through the rest of their lives – and probably the lives of their descendants.”

Prof.K

- “We are still far, far away from recovery. If you see our hospital, it is full of people with trauma and PTSD symptoms.”
- “[When it comes to personal trauma,] No one listens to us, we are asked to provide information for the TR process, but no one listens to our personal story. (Personal communication, July 10, 2009).”

Stories from Survivors

Personal Narrative

- A student. Has a wife and a child of 5mths.
- “Genocide is an issue that people do not talk about it at all now.”
- “It is ok to share my story with you, because of my mission and you are a foreigner.”
- “Otherwise, if I point at you and say you are Hutu or Tutsi, then I will be sent to a jail.”
- “Tutsi people still carry unhappiness for Hutu, but Hutu people have already feeling ok about the genocide.”
- “story of genocide is still a taboo which we carry its scars around.”
- “we were told that Hutus and Tutsis are now one as a Rwandese.”
- “but how an I forget? I am afraid that things like that will happen again.”

Personal Narrative

- a business man of Tutsi descent.
- “I was born and raised in the exile in Uganda when Tutsi’s were seeking help as refugees.”
- “We as a nation are trying to recover from the trauma, but reconciliation...it’s not easy...perhaps more so for us Tutsis’”
- “My family uncle & aunt were killed via genocide.”
- “people who were interned in the prison after the “war”, were sent to the same village.”
- “Believe me it’s not easy.”
- “the son of a murderer of my relatives goes to the same school and church as my son.”
- “I cannot say anything, we cannot say anything. because we are all Rwandese now.”
- “If I mention Hutu or Tutsi now, I’m going to be put in jail.”
- “Believe me It’s not easy.”

(B. C. B., personal communication, July 8, 2009, permission granted).

Personal Narratives

- “Recovery is hardest to those who were the actual victims of rape and other forms of torture, who continue to struggle via emotional as well as physiological trauma (literally scars, HIV+).”
- “After we learned that even the Hutu people were manipulated and threatened and forced to continue the genocide, otherwise they, too could become the victim of genocide.”
- “Since the moment we had learned this fact. I used to blame Hutu people 100%, but now I can only blame them 40%.”
- “It is always the colonization, political propaganda, and the few numbers of people at the top of political system who stir us up.”
- “We citizens are always the victim of politics.”

Personal Narrative

“Hey D, how are you? What are you doing today.”

“I’m going back to my home, I am re-building my house.”

“Oh, do you live with your family?”

“...(smile disappears).”

- 3 of his siblings & his parents were killed by genocide.
- A house is what is left for him to feel close to his family.

My Impression on Trauma

- Trauma is **raw**: Genocide is happeninging.
- Trauma is **hidden**: Great deal of hesitancy in people to share stories...understandably.
- Trauma is **private**: We, foreigners, had more access to information seeking.
- Trauma is **silenced**: Safety and stability achieved over silencing & political & legal pressure.
- Trauma **takes years** to heal: generations to heal.
- Trauma is **real**.
- Trauma **takes smile away**. Beautiful smile disappears when the issues were raised.
- Trauma care is **not a priority**: de-prioritized under other necessities (e.g. economical recovery and development, infra-structure and basic-need supply) and **is far from adequate**.

My Learning

How can they forget?

“I cannot forget the scene, my family being massacred, babies ... I cannot forget.”

“I see a baby thrown to wall.”

“what do you see? Machete...”

“People were ordered to kill their own brothers and sisters. If you refuse, you got killer. Lots of people couldn’t.”

“How can they forget?”

How dare can we ask them to forget?

What trauma repair...?

- What does it mean to recover from trauma?
- Meaning of repair: What does it mean to repair trauma?
- What does healing look like?
- Political-Economical reconciliation **VS**
- Bio-psycho-soio-spirituo-enviro-contextual **reconciliation**
- Reconciliation & forgiveness.
- Meaning making.

“Traumatic” Reactions

- Trauma affects body
- Traumatic reaction as legitimate affective experience & reaction to circumstances.
- Problem of psychopathology: Symptoms needs to be honoured as respectful products, not as cause of psychopathology.
- Signs that they live and adapt to env..
- Change victim or change env.?
- Change of affect, or change of action?

Tomato and Cucumber for Tomorrow

I realized...

It is not the healing that is moving people on. It is the cucumber and tomato that they need to eat tomorrow, that moves them on.

A life goes on...

- Whether the person can or cannot engage in field work, their life goes on.
- Tomorrow will come.
- Sun will set and rise again.
- Are people left behind...?
- Absolutely No!!!

And so do people.

- Humans are strong – they do move on.
- Rwandese have absolutely nothing, but absolutely everything.
 - Community
 - Harmony
 - Family value
 - Collecting brother & Sisterhood
 - Desire for connection
- What next beautiful miracle are you going to show me?
 - Dream
 - Hope
 - Desire

Role of Morita Therapy

Living with the pain

- MT offers insight and approach to live **with** the traumatic memory.
- Living **well** with the traumatic memory.
- MT never attempt to change affective experience.
- MT attempts to remove attentional fixations to help people engage in action taking.
- MT view affective experience as product of action not cause.
- MT believes that if we can succeed in engaging people in action, resulting change in situation will bring desirable affective experience.
- Target of change in MT is action engagement, NOT affect.

Fostering nonjudgmental attitude towards diverse affective selves

- It does not deny or attempt to change their affective experience.
- It does not psychopathologise
- It validates people's experience.
- It encourages people to take and honour diverse affective experience.
- It refuses to judge people via clinical discrimination.

Silence & Rest

- “Shattered belief”
- Psychological/Physiological scar tissues
- **Experience** of safety
- Silence does absolutely nothing, but absolutely everything.
 - Time to “rest”
 - Time to “reflect”
 - Time to “be”
 - Time to “was”
 - Time to “will be”
 - Time to “can be”
 - Time to “need to be”

Obedience to nature

This presentation was my personal travelogue. I welcome your insight, comments, feedbacks, challenges, & collaboration.

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