

Post-Genocide Rwandan Refugees

Masako Yonekawa

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Why They Refuse to Return 'Home':
Myths and Realities

 Springer

Masako Yonekawa
Economics and Informatics Department
Tsukuba Gakuin University
Tsukuba, Japan

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Foreword by Mark Gibney

This book provides a fascinating and timely analysis of the role that different refugee groups have played in Rwandan politics over the course of the past half century. Masako Yonekawa challenges many popular perceptions that, unfortunately, have taken root, particularly the simple dichotomy that has equated the country's Tutsi population as passive victims and all Hutus as "*genocidaires*". As the attention of the world has drifted elsewhere, it is important to be reminded of the oppression and corruption that afflicts Rwandan society, which has had a profound effect on the country's inability to repatriate large segments of its Hutu population, thereby forestalling any meaningful form of national reconciliation.

Mark Gibney
Carol G. Belk Distinguished Professor of Humanities
and Professor of Political Science
University of North Carolina
Asheville, USA

Foreword by Victoire Ingabire Umuhuza

I highly congratulate Yonekawa for her courage to write such controversial and sensitive subject without fear or favour. Her personal experience and knowledge as a staff member of the UNHCR during the forced repatriation of Rwanda refugees in 1996 is an invaluable asset in shedding light on what happened and the motivations of international actors at the time. Knowing the truth about the history and experiences of Rwandan refugees, understanding their needs, pain, fears, hopes and expectations will help to respond better to their needs and hopefully pre-empt a repeat of a forced entry back home as it happened in 1990 when Tutsi refugees decided to force their way back to Rwanda because they considered that their right to return had been denied. The great merit is not about getting all the information or interpretation accurate but about her courage to seek the truth in spite of the risk of going against the politically correct narrative about Rwandan refugees. Only truth can make us free.

Victoire Ingabire Umuhuza
Chair of the Party FDU-Inkingi
Kigali, Rwanda

Foreword by Charles Onana

Few researchers have bothered to examine the issue of Rwandan refugees since the 1994 massacres and the reasons for their reluctance to return home. Yonekawa brings together her academic experience and her field knowledge to offer an intimate, courageous and informed reading of the political situation that plunged Rwandan refugees into fear, terror and death in the DRC.

An eyewitness to the distress and forced repatriation of these refugees and their “reintegration” to Rwanda, she dares that no expert has taken the risk of doing for 25 years at the international level: simply telling the truth. And it gives a shiver because the regime of Paul Kagame has never stopped producing refugees for at least two decades. It is from this haemorrhage of Rwandan refugees that Yonekawa treats here as a clinician. It shows how a policy contrary to respect for human rights and the promulgation of repressive laws led many Rwandans (Hutu and Tutsi) to leave in exile. The interviews with these refugees give Yonekawa's work additional strength and make it a fundamental book, the first that goes so far in the exposition of facts, political analysis and the troubled game of the international community.

Charles Onana
Investigative Journalist
Paris, France

Preface

A sea of people washed over the landscape. Like prisoners they walked silently, many balancing belongings on their heads. Mothers with babies strapped to their backs struggled to move forward, and small children whimpered from the pain of their long, inexplicable trek. Rwandan soldiers scrutinised the hordes of refugees, occasionally screaming at them and striking them with sticks to force them to move faster.

In the faces of refugees, I saw fear, hopelessness, and emotional exhaustion. Many had not washed in weeks and smelled foul and sick.



Forced repatriation of Rwandan refugees in end 1996 (taken by Yasuki Shimomura)

It was late 1996, and thousands of refugees were being expelled en masse from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)¹ and Tanzania where they had sought asylum since the Rwandan genocide in 1994. Their dramatic exodus was ordered and forced by these host governments and Rwandan Government and approved by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United States (US).

The Rwandans were returning home against their will. I witnessed the massive forced repatriation of refugees from the DRC and Tanzania to Rwanda. The scenes were unforgettable, both in their entirety and in their excruciating detail, from the disarray to the individual misery. As a staff member of UNHCR, I felt helpless; the only thing that the UNHCR and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) were able to provide were biscuits and water along with transportation for the most vulnerable people. We were there to monitor the “refugees’ march”, but in reality we did very little for these people.

Nearly two-and-a-half decades have since passed, and some of these returnees, as well as other Rwandans, have fled their country again. While Rwanda is recognised for its rapid development under President Paul Kagame, the country continues to produce refugees today. A large majority of them have categorically refused to return to Rwanda.

I became intensely interested in the plight of refugees and the forced migration in the 1990s while working for 10 years with the United Nations (UN) in Africa’s Great Lakes region.² I worked in a refugee camp in western Tanzania from 1994 to 1995. I later spent three years in Rwanda with the UNHCR, monitoring the return and reintegration of the 1959 “old-caseload” and the 1994 “new-caseload” returnees from Uganda, Tanzania, and the DRC. I was then deployed to eastern DRC in 1998 until the war erupted, and again in 2007 with the UNHCR, where part of my work was to assist with the repatriation of Rwandan refugees. After my retirement from the UNHCR, I began working as a researcher, using my field experience to explore questions that had long troubled me.

While in the region I witnessed the constant movement and suffering of Rwandan people, it has become the norm for many Rwandans to be refugees. The forced repatriation of Rwandan refugees in 1996 was one of the most controversial moves in the history of the UNHCR. At the time, both my senior colleagues and I regarded repatriation as a long-term solution. In 1997, I remember applying for a job as a field officer in Goma in eastern DRC. The position required searching for missing Rwandan refugees and helping them repatriate after Rwandan forces invaded Congo. The job was eventually withdrawn, presumably because so many refugees had disappeared or were massacred. The UNHCR regarded these deaths as

¹The name of the country has changed four times since the country’s independence in 1960. The post-independence name was Republic of the Congo until 1 Aug. 1964, when its name was changed to the DRC. On 27 Oct. 1971, the then President Mobutu renamed the country Zaire. Following the First Congo War, the country was renamed the DRC on 17 May 1997. In this book, DRC or Congo will be used regardless of the period.

²The Great Lakes region includes Rwanda, DRC, Burundi, Uganda, and Tanzania.

“unfortunate incidents” that were “out of their control” due to the spiralling war in the Congo.

In early 2014, I visited several camps in an African country that hosts Rwandan refugees. The purpose was to help organise an international seminar at Rikkyo University in Tokyo to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide and the exodus of Rwandan refugees. The event took place on World Refugee Day on 20 June 2014.

The interviews I conducted with refugees in an African country made me realise that I had never really understood the depth of their fear or the true meaning of refugee protection. I believe that leaving the UNHCR to become an independent researcher gave me a deeper understanding of the problems refugees faced, and it likely heightened my sensitivity to their suffering. Refugees openly expressed fear and mistrust, not only of host governments and the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), the present ruling party which was a rebel group prior to 1994, but also of the UNHCR, which they viewed their boss. In their mind, the UNHCR had developed an intimate relationship with Rwanda, whose government had persecuted them, and UNHCR officials abandoned refugees in 1996, when the Rwandan troops under Kagame violently attacked their camps in the Congo. The UNHCR went on to recommend³ the cessation clause of the Rwandan refugees’ status, which refugees rightly argued eroded their basic human rights. This is why most Rwandan refugees have difficulty trusting the UNHCR or even sharing their concerns with its staff. One refugee was candid with me in an interview, “In fact, I did not feel like meeting with you, a former UNHCR employee, as I have very bad memories of this organisation”.

I learned that some refugees felt compelled to disguise their nationality to avoid discrimination and bias on the part of the UNHCR. Hearing this helped me to understand why refugee statistics had always seemed skewed to me; for many years, I had wondered why the number of Congolese refugees was so high, while the number of Rwandans was so low.

It was during this preliminary research in Africa that I met Dr. Barbara Harrell-Bond, Founding Director of Refugee Studies Centre of Oxford University. She co-directed the Rights in Exile Programme, previously known as Fahamu Refugee Programme; this was the only organisation that has actively opposed the invocation of the cessation clause for Rwandan refugees.⁴ My association with Harrell-Bond allowed me to expand my network with refugees, researchers, and activists worldwide and to conduct interviews with refugees thanks to the strong trust she gained from them.

³Although Article 35 of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees gives only the UNHCR a supervisory role, it was reported that UNHCR has been actively calling for invocation of cessation clause. Fahamu, Refugee Legal Aid Newsletter Issue 21 Dec. 2011, 7–8.

⁴Fahamu Refugee Programme, *Rwanda: Cessation of Refugee Status is Unwarranted*. Memorandum of Fact and Law, 2011.

It is my deepest regret that Harrell-Bond who enormously supported, advised, and encouraged my research and this publication passed away on 11 July 2018 at the age of 85. Until her death, we had an intense exchange for four years on how to advocate for Rwandan refugees' protection via email and during my visit to her home in Oxford.

I am grateful for the Rwandan refugees for sharing their painful and dreadful experiences as well as invaluable documents with me. I was deeply impressed by their wise and non-violent attitude, their long-time fight for justice, and their passion in pursuing education for themselves and for their children. They have maintained this spirit in spite of repeated threats and harassment. Obviously, I cannot speak on behalf of the Rwandan refugees, but I have tried as much as possible to highlight their concerns from their perspective. Any errors of fact and analysis are my responsibility.

This book is dedicated to Barbara and to Rwandan refugees worldwide.

I hope this book will help to promote an understanding of the current situation faced by Rwandan refugees and aid in policy implementations for all refugees.

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Tokyo, Japan

Masako Yonekawa

Introduction: The Urgency of the Rwandan Refugee Situation

Based on the preliminary research and literature review, I found it important, even urgent for the international community,⁵ and in particular the UNHCR, to review the core issues of protection and repatriation of refugees using Rwandan refugees as a case study, which has been contested for decades.

The UNHCR claims that Rwanda “has changed significantly since the 1994 genocide, and today enjoys an essential level of peace and security”.⁶ This situation, if it were true, would allow refugees to return home if they wish to. However, the vast majority of refugees refuse to return. There are four main reasons for this refusal, according to the UNHCR and the Rwandan Government: first, “[refugees’] strong links to their countries of asylum after many years in exile”⁷; second, “[some] fear of facing justice having participated in the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi [minority group]”⁸; third, “the majority of refugees are being held hostage by ‘refugee leaders,’ who are organizing opposition to return in the hope of evading judicial proceedings”⁹; and fourth, “[their] apprehension about conditions in their home country”.¹⁰

While the first three reasons may apply to some refugees, this book will demonstrate empirically based on literature review and field research that the fourth reason may be the most pronounced. To be more explicit, refugees have extremely

⁵In this book, this term refers to the major donor states, which have been playing a prominent role in influencing refugee policies, as well as the UN bodies, especially the UNSC and the UNHCR.

⁶UNHCR, Refworld, “Implementation of the Comprehensive Strategy for the Rwandan Refugee Situation, including UNHCR’s recommendations on the Applicability of the ‘ceased circumstances’ Cessation Clauses”, 30 Dec. 2011. <http://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?docid=4f33a1642> para. 28.

⁷Ibid, para. 2.

⁸*The New Times*, “Rwandans lose refugee status as cessation clause comes into force”, 1 Jan. 2018.

⁹K. Long, “Back to where you once belonged: A historical review of UNHCR policy and practice on refugee repatriation”, UNHCR, Sept. 2013, para. 192.

¹⁰UNHCR, “Implementation of the Comprehensive Strategy for the Rwandan Refugee Situation”, para. 2.

strong fear and well-founded grievances against the Rwandan Government (RPF). They are aware that the RPF has committed grave crimes and human rights violations in the region since 1990. They point to crimes committed during the RPF invasion war from 1990 to 1994, during the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, in addition to attacks on refugee camps and the crimes of “genocide” in eastern DRC from 1996 to 1997, and the sporadic killings and other crimes in central Africa and beyond.

Today, Rwanda continues to produce countless refugees, including a number of high-profile political ones who have been subjected to imprisonment, kidnapping, threats, and assassination in and outside of Rwanda. Apart from Rwandans, foreigners who had reportedly witnessed or documented Hutu civilian massacres by the RPF have also become victims; they have been killed because they were considered dangerous witnesses to RPF crimes.¹¹ In spite of these incidents and the ongoing outflow of refugees, the governments of Rwanda and asylum countries in addition to the UNHCR are adamant that refugees should return to Rwanda—where returnees (former refugees who returned to their homeland) can end up facing death.

To make matters worse, the enforcement of the cessation clause of refugee status on 31 December 2017 by Rwanda and asylum countries, recommended by the UNHCR, suggests that Rwandan refugees can be refouled anytime by the host governments; this applies notably to the Republic of Congo that applied cessation clause of Rwandan refugees’ status. This could lead to another massive forced return and forced displacement, and risks triggering a similar dynamic scene in 1996–1997. Moreover, if Rwandan refugees do not return to Rwanda, they “risk situations of *de jure* [lack of legal nationality in any country] or *de facto* [the inability to enjoy the benefits associated with legal nationality] statelessness unless they can attain alternative nationality to replace their Rwandan citizenship”.¹² The complex issues around statelessness are not examined in this book, however.

There is general agreement among historians that the three-decade, unresolved problem of Rwandan Tutsi refugees led to the 1990 invasion of Rwanda by the RPF, whose founding members were mainly raised in exile in Uganda.¹³ The invasion was followed by civil war and genocide. The UNHCR acknowledges this:

¹¹Such foreigners include three Spanish employees of the Medicos del Mundo; Canadian and Cambodian personnel of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Office (OHCHR); Fathers from Canada, Croatia, and Spain; and a Tanzanian lawyer for the International Criminal Court for Tribunal (ICTR). Other foreigners who have challenged the RPF’s genocide narratives have been imprisoned and threatened.

¹²L. N. Kingston, “Bringing Rwandan Refugees ‘Home’: The Cessation Clause, Statelessness, and Forced Repatriation”, *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 29 (3), 2017.

¹³H. Adelman and A. Suhrke, “Preface”, Adelman and Suhrke (eds.), *The Path of a Genocide: The Rwanda Crisis from Uganda to Zaire*, New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2000, x; Africa Watch, *Rwanda: Talking Peace and Waging War, Human Rights since the October 1990 Invasion*, IV (3), 27 Feb. 1992, 8.

Inevitably, one is forced to ask how the course of subsequent events might have been different if a durable solution had been found for the Rwandan refugees in the 1960s. That the vast majority of refugees wanted to go home was in little doubt. An inquiry into the situation in Kivu [in eastern Congo] in 1963 found an overwhelming desire amongst the refugees to return to their homeland if UNHCR were able to give a ‘watertight’ guarantee for their well-being in Rwanda. Had repatriation taken place at that time, a new accommodation might have been found between the Tutsi and Hutu, thus avoiding the genocide that occurred 30 years later. Or, it may be argued, if the international community had been more generous in providing the necessary funds, then local settlement in a politically stable environment like Tanzania might have worked. More, too, could no doubt have been done to find regional solutions.¹⁴

In contrast to the UNHCR’s inaction in the past, the same UN refugee agency today has been seeking to *aggressively* resolve the problem of Rwandan refugees by organising repatriation and recommending the invocation of cessation clause, forcefully against refugees’ will.

The main argument here is twofold; first, the promotion of voluntary repatriation and invocation of the cessation clause of Rwandan refugees’ status remain premature, and second, Rwandan refugees refuse to repatriate to Rwanda because they fear and associate trauma with the RPF, whose agenda has been partially or fully backed by the US Government. Since early 1990s, the US has become one of the main political and military supporters of the RPF even before its army seized power in 1994.¹⁵ The unbridled support of the RPF has dramatically affected international policy and the lives of Rwandan refugees.

Literature Review and Research Gap

Since the Social Revolution in 1959 which resulted in the mass movement of old-caseload refugees, mainly Tutsi, Rwandan refugees are one of the most protracted and violent in Africa.¹⁶ Some of that violence has flowed from the militarisation of refugee camps. A great deal of literature exists on Rwandan refugees who fled from 1959 onwards and in 1994. Studies have described how the second generation of old-caseload refugees led an eventual invasion of Rwanda, or an “armed repatriation” as it is called by some analysts; the invasion was in part caused by the crisis of citizenship in Uganda.¹⁷ Studies describe in detail how the killing campaign was executed in 1994, including the role of external actors, such as

¹⁴UNHCR, *The State of the World’s Refugees: Fifty Years of Humanitarian Action*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000, 52.

¹⁵Amnesty International (hereafter, Amnesty), *Rwanda: Ending the Silence* (hereafter, *Ending the Silence*), Sept. 1997, 42.

¹⁶For Rwandan refugees’ movement prior to 1959, see D. Newbury, “Returning Refugees: Four Historical Patterns of ‘Coming Home’ to Rwanda”, *Society for Comparative Study of Society and History*, 47 (2), 2005.

¹⁷M. Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism and the Genocide in Rwanda*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2002, 36.

France, which is said to have led to the massive flight of new-caseload refugees, mainly Hutu, and “*génocidaires*” (genocide killers).¹⁸

Some research has critically examined the forced repatriation policy of these new-caseload refugees in 1996–1997.¹⁹ The reintegration problem in Rwanda, especially with regard to land policies, has been identified in both the old-caseload and new-caseload returnees.²⁰ The restricted political space in post-genocide Rwanda which led to the additional flight of refugees has been analysed by former Rwandan politicians and international academics.²¹

There is substantial documentation examining serious human rights violations committed against the Rwandan refugees by the RPF army in the DRC.²² Testimonies from post-genocide and current Rwandan refugees have attempted to show the reasons they fled and why they were reluctant to repatriate, but these are scarce.²³ Human rights organisations have criticised the UNHCR’s policy on voluntary repatriation and the cessation clause of Rwandan refugees.²⁴ Largely speaking, there is a paucity of research on the role of external parties, in particular the US Government, in influencing events that have caused refugees to flee in the first place.²⁵

¹⁸A. Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell Stores: Genocide in Rwanda*, Human Rights Watch (hereafter, HRW), March 1999; G. Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide*, Kampala, Foundation Publishers, 1999.

¹⁹Amnesty, *Rwanda: Human Rights overlooked in mass repatriation*, Jan. 1997; M. B. Umutesi, *Surviving the Slaughter: The Ordeal of a Rwandan Refugee in Zaire*, Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin Press, 2004.

²⁰S. Takeuchi and J. Marara, “Land tenure security in post-conflict Rwanda”, S. Takeuchi ed. *Confronting Land and Property Problems for Peace*, Oxon, Routledge, 2014.

²¹F. Reyntjens, *Political Governance in Post-Genocide Rwanda*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2013; J. Sebareenzi, *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation*, New York, Atria, 2009; T. Rudasingwa, *Healing A Nation, A Testimony: Waging and Winning a Peaceful Revolution to Unite and Heal a Broken Rwanda*, South Carolina, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013.

²²UNSC, *Report of the Secretary-General’s Investigative Team charged with investigating serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*. S/1998/581, 29 Jun. 1998; OHCHR, *Report of the Mapping Exercise documenting the most serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed within the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo between Mar. 1993 and Jun. 2003* (hereafter, Mapping Report), Aug. 2010.

²³International Refugee Rights Initiative and Refugee Law Project, *A Dangerous Impasse: Rwandan Refugees in Uganda*, Jun. 2010; C. Karooma, “Reluctant to return? The primacy of social networks in the repatriation of Rwandan refugees in Uganda”, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, Working Paper Series No. 103, Aug. 2014.

²⁴Amnesty, *Ending the Silence; Amnesty, Rwanda. Protecting their rights: Rwandese refugees in the Great Lakes region*, 2004. Although Amnesty and HRW have continued to criticise the human rights violations committed by the Rwandan Government, these organisations since 2010 have kept silent or weakened their argument on the cessation clause of Rwandan refugees, although this is related to the human rights situation in the country.

²⁵A. R. Zolberg, A. Suhrke and S. Aguayo, *Escape from Violence: Conflict and the Refugee Crisis in the Developing World*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1989; M. Gibney, “U.S. Foreign Policy and the Creation of Refugee Flows”, H. Adelman ed. *Refugee Policy: Canada and the United States*, Toronto, York Lanes Press, 1991.

There are three main research gaps in the literature. First, there has been no systematic and comprehensive research on the protection of and repatriation challenges of post-genocide Rwandan refugees who are classified as those who fled after 1995 and including former 1959 and 1994 returnees. The lack of rigorous research on 1994 refugees is likely due to perception bias and their being labelled “*génocidaires*”. Second, there have been only fragmented studies on the cessation clause of Rwandan refugee status. The few studies available are mostly from Uganda.²⁶ Thirdly, the role and interests of external actors in Rwanda and the Great Lakes region, as it relates to Rwandan refugee policy, have not been examined. It is worth noting that the author did not have access to primary sources of information, especially from the US Government; therefore, there are limitations regarding my assessment of US policy.

Methodologies

To demonstrate my argument, the following questions were explored: how has the durable solution of refugees evolved from the 1950s—when the UNHCR was born—to the 1990s when the RPF’s armed repatriation and new-caseload refugees’ forceful return took place; what motives have various actors had vis-à-vis the solution of Rwandan refugees, such as the previous Rwandan Government under President Juvénal Habyarimana (1973–1994), or the current RPF (1994~), in addition to the UNHCR; what are the refugee concerns with regard to repatriation from the early 1960s until today; and what have the Global North’s policies been, especially that of the US, in the Great Lakes region.

In addition to a literature review, interviewing refugees was absolutely essential to understand the plight of these post-genocide refugees and address the gap in research. There are two methods of research: quantitative and qualitative. In quantitative research, data are in the form of numbers, stressing neutrality and objectivity and minimising or eliminating the subjective human factor.²⁷ In qualitative research, real events are documented, what people say is recorded, written documents are examined, and social context is emphasised; this includes “time context (when something occurs), spatial context (where something occurs), emotional context (the feeling regarding how something occurs), and socio-cultural context (the social situation and cultural milieu in which something occurs)”.²⁸ For

²⁶K. E. McMillan, “Uganda’s Invocation of Cessation Regarding its Rwandan Refugee Caseload: Lessons for International Protection”, *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 24 (2), May 2012; F. Ahimbisibwe, “The Host State of Refugee Security in Uganda: The Case of Rwandan Refugees in Nakivale Settlement”, Ph.D. dissertation, Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Dec. 2015; A. S. Sniderman, “Explaining Delayed Cessation: A Case Study of Rwandan Refugees in Zimbabwe”, *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 27 (4), 2015.

²⁷W. L. Neuman, *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, Boston, Allyn & Bacon, 2011, 169-9, 174.

²⁸*Ibid*, 175.

my research, I used the latter method for two reasons. I considered it important to focus on the perspective of the post-genocide refugees whose fear and psychological insecurity in particular are not well documented in academic literature, except for refugees in Uganda. Second, it has become clear, given some of the testimonies of refugees, including ex-RPF officers, that dominant narratives of the RPF on the genocide and other crimes do not reflect the reality. Kevin Dunn and Iver Neuman argue the following:

Since some representations become accepted as ‘true’ and others do not, it is important to ask how certain structures of knowledge become dominant. Particular meaning and identities are widely accepted, or ‘fixed,’ not because of any inherent ‘truth’ but because of the strength of that specific representation.²⁹

To demonstrate why refugees have not returned to Rwanda, the following questions were raised, where applicable: (1) the reason and timing of their flight; (2) the type of persecution refugees have experienced in Rwanda and in asylum countries, as well as their degree of fear; (3) the reason for their refusal to repatriate, and the minimum conditions for voluntary repatriation; (4) how refugees have dealt with land and property ownership; (5) how the UNHCR and countries of asylum explain the cessation clause process and the qualification for the exemption clause; and (6) conditions for local integration.

I needed to interview as many refugees as possible to understand their personal stories and the problems they might have in common. The objective of the research, therefore, was not to compare policies towards refugees in host countries—whether they were in Africa, Europe, or North America—but to examine the issues they currently face and gain a deeper knowledge of their experiences when they fled.

It is worth noting that finding and persuading Rwandan refugees to open up and give interviews proved to be very challenging. As a rule, most refugees are highly reluctant to share their stories and have trouble trusting outsiders. My research was made possible only when refugees were willing to refer me to others on the basis of trust. I got help from foreigners, among them Barbara Harrell-Bond, who worked directly with Rwandan refugees, and advocated on their behalf for many years.

I held individual interviews with 86 Rwandan refugees, both former and current, in five countries in Africa—four of which invoked cessation clause and one which had not—and also in five countries in Europe and North America. While some have refugee status, others have lost refugee status when the cessation clause was invoked in 2017; others are asylum-seekers or had obtained nationality or residence status in the countries of asylum. Five interviewees belonged to opposition groups in exile, such as the Rwanda National Congress (RNC) and the United Democratic Force (FDU)-Inkingi. Out of 86, I only used testimony from 57 interviewees for this book, the majority of whom live in African countries. Not all interviews were cited in the book due to various reasons. Those who obtained nationality in the host countries are not anxious about repatriation and thus talked less about it. Additionally,

²⁹K. C. Dunn and I. B. Neuman, *Undertaking Discourse Analysis for Social Research*, Michigan, University of Michigan Press, 2016, 55.

time spent with interviews was in some cases limited, and therefore, it was difficult to grasp the full context of their experiences. Supporting documents based on interviewees' statements could not always be found. However, my conversations with all refugees were very useful, especially in understanding President Habyarimana's refugee policy (Chap. 2) and RPF's tactics in promoting repatriation (Chap. 4).

As much as possible, I tried to select interviewees from varied backgrounds, ethnic group-wise, gender-wise, age-wise, profession-wise, and experience-wise, including those who have been displaced a number of times in and outside of Rwanda, those who served as witnesses before the International Criminal Court for Tribunal (ICTR), those who claimed their land and houses, and those who worked with the *Gacaca* court. Most of the interviewees were Hutu, and some were Tutsi, including former RPF officials and former old-caseload refugees. More than half of the interviewees turned out to be men. The majority of refugees, especially those in Africa, collaborated in research interviews for the first time since fleeing Rwanda simply because hardly any researchers have conducted research.

Most interviews took about two hours on average, but some lasted as long as six hours and some less than an hour. Occasionally interviews were interrupted due to the trauma refugees felt in relating their experiences. For six people who had difficulty speaking in English or French, Rwandan interpreters were used. To clarify certain issues, refugees were in some cases interviewed a second, third, or fourth time. While a number of refugees interviewed were living in urban environments, some resided in camps or settlements. A majority of refugees interviewed were over 40 years old, which meant that at the time of 1994 genocide, they were at least 17 years old. A few were minor or born after 1994. After explaining the purpose of the research and the importance of maintaining anonymity, interviews were conducted privately. In order to protect the refugees, the names of the interviewees, as well as the location and dates of interviews, are not disclosed in this book, except where permission was granted (Table).

Overall, the interview had mainly four limitations. First, because of security reasons, I did not have access to Rwandan refugees in eastern DRC, where the vast majority of Rwandan refugees now live. Second, it is extremely difficult or almost impossible to conduct field research in Rwanda to countercheck the returnee situation (see Chap. 4). Third, ex-Rwandan Government army (FAR) and *Interahamwe* were not met with, despite my attempt to do so. Fourth, in order to verify the UNHCR's view, several attempts were made to meet with the Representative and Deputy Representative (Protection) in two UNHCR country offices in Africa to no avail; government officials in some African countries were not met with either. The fact that I was unable to meet UNHCR made me decide to write a letter to the High Commissioner Filippo Grandi (see pp. 139–140).

Congolese refugees, many of whom have lived beside the Rwandan refugees in eastern DRC since 1994, were also interviewed as part of efforts to provide context for testimony from Rwandan refugee. In addition, a total of 31 persons, including journalists, researchers, and former ICTR lawyers were interviewed.

Table Breakdown of interviewed refugees used in the book

Refugee	Sex/Age	Refugee	Sex/Age
A	F old	CC	M old
B	F mid	DD	M mid
C	F mid	EE	M mid
D	F old	FF	M youth
E	F old	GG	M old
F	F youth	HH	M youth
G	F mid	II	M old
H	F old	JJ	M old
I	F old	KK	M old
J	F old	LL	M youth
K	M mid	MM	M old
L	M mid	NN	M old
M	M mid	OO	M mid
N	M mid	PP	M mid
O	M mid	QQ	M mid
P	M mid	RR	M mid
Q	M old	SS	M mid
R	M old	TT	M mid
S	M old	UU	M old
T	M youth	VV	M mid
U	M old	WW	M old
V	M mid	XX	M old
W	M mid	YY	M mid
X	Mid old	ZZ	M mid
Y	M mid	AAA	M old
Z	M youth	BBB	M youth
AA	M youth	CCC	M old
BB	M old	DDD	M mid

Age: youth (20–35), mid-aged (36–50), old (51–)

While ethnic categories are officially prohibited in today’s Rwanda and no statistics regarding ethnicity are publicly available,³⁰ the current regime “thinks in strongly ethnic terms”.³¹ Scholar Filip Reyntjens used the terms “RPF-isation” and “Tutsisation” to describe consolidating the hold of the RPF Tutsi, and often undermining RPF

³⁰Reyntjens, *Political Governance in Post-Genocide Rwanda*, 201, fn. 84. Prior to 1994, the population of Rwanda was said to be composed of three ethnic groups: the Hutu (85%), the Tutsi (14%), and the Twa (1%). UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), “Question of the Violation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in any part of the World, with Particular Reference to Colonial and other Dependent Countries and Territories”, E/CN.4/1994/7/Add.1, 11 Aug. 1993 para. 13.

³¹Reyntjens, *Political Governance in Post-Genocide Rwanda*, 201.

Hutu.³² Likewise, refugees, regardless of Hutu or Tutsi, think the same. Therefore, this book attempts to explore the ethnic dimension of issues facing refugees.

Composition of Book

To critically examine the circumstances of Rwandan refugees, especially those who fled after the genocide, Chap. 1 reviews basic information about refugees, such as the definition of this group and the evolution of a durable solution. The issue of voluntary repatriation and the cessation clause of refugee status require particular attention, as these topics are not sufficiently explored.

Although this book deals mainly with post-genocide refugees, the history of 1959 old-caseload refugees is first reviewed in Chap. 2. Understanding the history of these refugees, mostly Tutsi, is important because their plight set off a chain reaction. Their armed repatriation triggered the exodus of mostly Hutu who fled during and in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide.

Chapters 3 and 4 examine the new-caseload and post-genocide refugees, respectively, exploring the reasons for refugee movement and the refugee policies of the RPF government and the UNHCR. In Chaps. 2 and 3, five main atrocities committed by the RPF are examined, all of which are related to the refugees' unwillingness to repatriate: RPF's invasion and civil war (1990–1994); the shooting down of Habyarimana's presidential jet (1994); the genocide in Rwanda (1994); the massacre of the Kibeho Internally Displaced Persons' (IDPs)³³ camp (1995); and the attack of refugee camps and "genocide" in the DRC (1996–1997). This book does not cover human rights violations committed by the RPF in eastern DRC after 1998, such as the illegal exploitation of natural resources, massacres, and forced displacement, although these have affected the movement of many Rwandan refugees who remain in eastern DRC.

Chapter 5 highlights the Global North's role within the refugee policy in general and its influence and interest in Rwanda and the Great Lakes region; in particular, that of the US vis-à-vis Rwandan refugees is examined. Chapter 6 provides my conclusions.

In countries of asylum where the cessation clause was applied, or where refugees have obtained citizenship, refugees should be precisely referred to as *former* refugees. However, throughout the book, the term "refugee" is used regardless of their status.

In the future, I hope to have an opportunity to publish more on these issues, after thorough analysis.

³²Ibid, 19–21.

³³According to the UN's Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (2004), IDPs are "persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized border".

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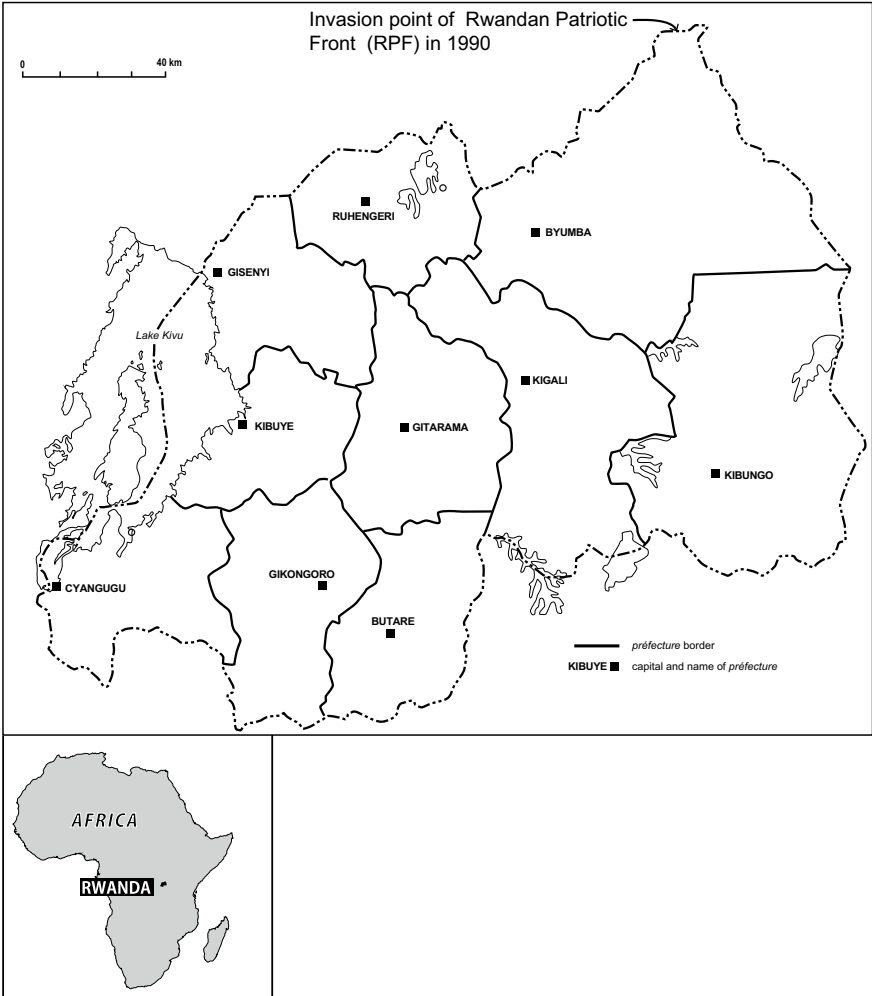
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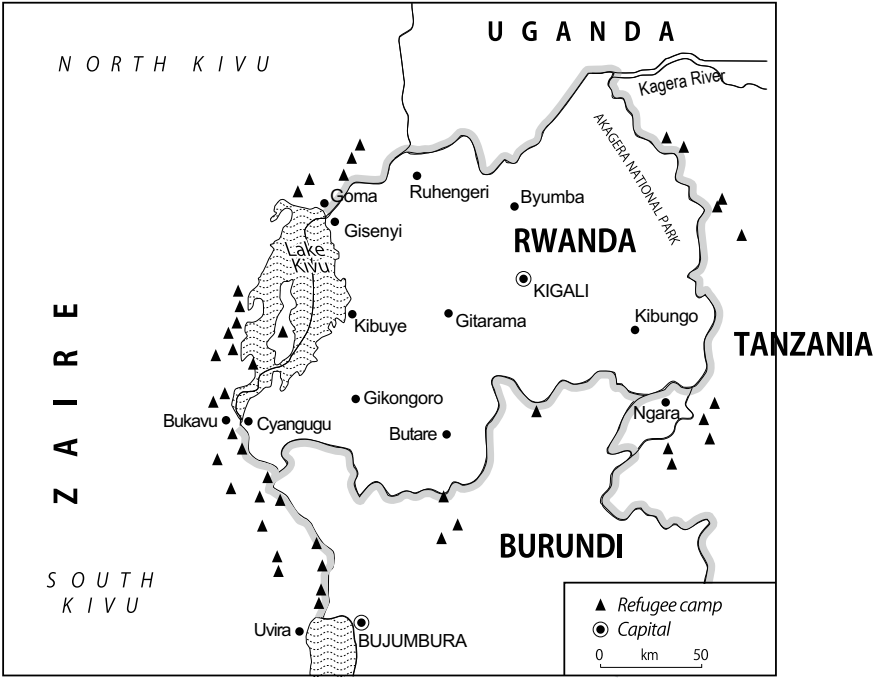
Abbreviations

AFDL	Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire
ADEPR	Association des Églises de Pentecôte au Rwanda
AMF	American Mineral Field
CDR	Coalition for the Defense of the Republic (Rwanda)
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
DMI	Directorate of Military Intelligence (Rwanda)
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council (United Nations)
FAR	Armed Forces of Rwanda (before 1994)
FDLR	Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda
GNU	Government of National Unity (Rwanda)
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICTR	International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IRC	International Rescue Committee
MNF	Multinational Force
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OHCHR	UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PDD	Policy Decision Directive
RNC	Rwandan National Congress
RPA	Rwandan Patriotic Army
RPF	Rwandan Patriotic Front
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations

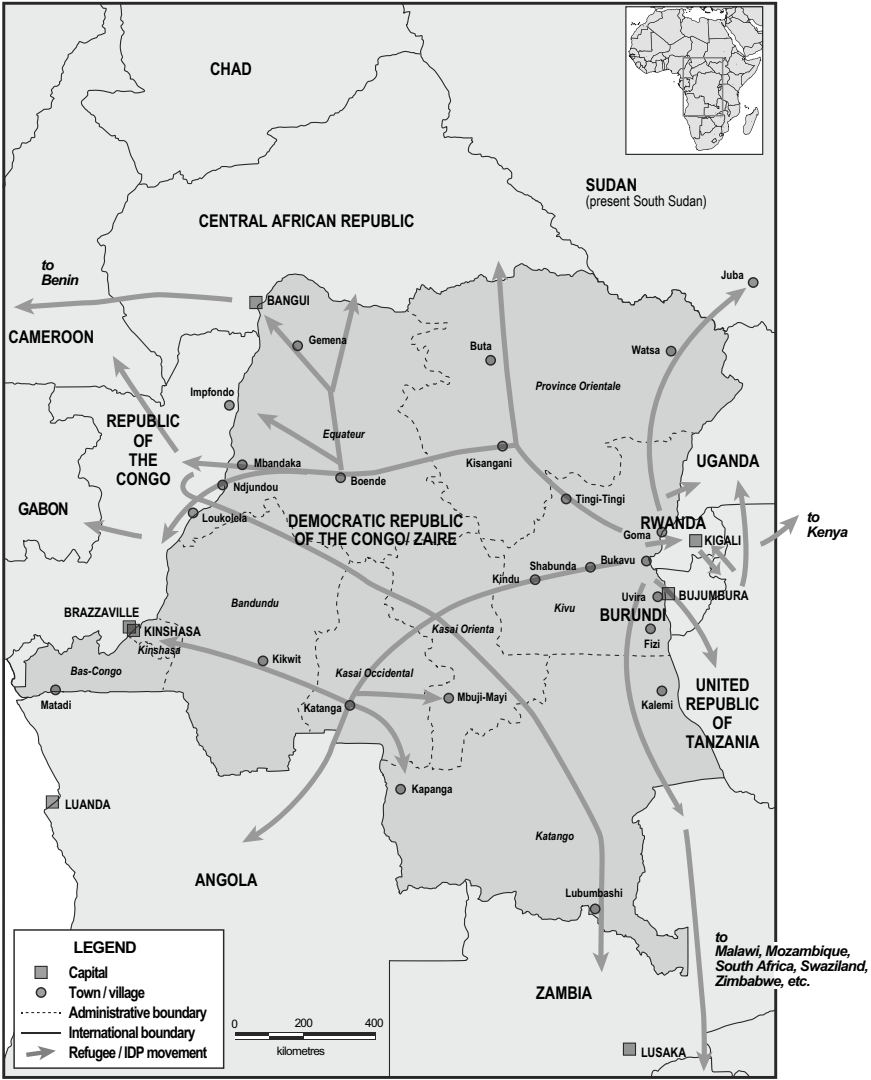
UNAMIR	UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States
USCOR	United States Committee for Refugees



Map 1 Rwanda's administrative map until 2011



Map 2 Map indicating the location of Rwandan refugee camps in neighbouring countries (1994–1996)



Map 3 Map indicating Rwandan refugees' main movement (1996–1999).
Sources UNHCR, *The State of the World Refugees: Fifty Years of Humanitarian Action*, 2000, 270; Amnesty International, *Great Lakes Region: Still in Need of Protection: Repatriation, Refoulement and the Safety of Refugees and the Internally Displaced*, 1997, 12; and author's interview with Rwandan refugees