

**TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY**  
**Central Department of English**  
**M. Phil Program in English**  
**Kirtipur, Kathmandu**

**Discourse of Rwandan Genocide in *Murambi* and *Hotel Rwanda***

**A Thesis**

**Submitted to the Central Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of M.Phil in Arts**

**By**

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**July 2014**

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**Letter of Recommendation**

This dissertation entitled, “Discourse of Rwandan Genocide in *Murambi* and *Hotel Rwanda*” by Kamal Pachhain has been completed under my supervision. I recommend it for acceptance and examination.

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Supervisor

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**Letter of Approval**

This dissertation conducted by Kamal Pachhain entitled as, “Discourse of Rwandan Genocide in *Murambi* and *Hotel Rwanda*” has been accepted and approved as partial fulfillment for the Requirement of M. Phil Degree

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## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. Dr. Beerendra Pandey, for providing scholarly suggestions and invaluable guidance, without whose companionship and supervision this present research work would never come to this form. I have no words to express my gratitude for him.

I express my sincere gratitude to Prof. Dr. Ammaraj Joshi, Head of the Central Department of English and Dr. Anirudra Thapa, co-ordinator of M. Phil programme who cordially helped and provided me the opportunity to make this research.

Similarly, I remained owed to Prof. Dr. Abhi Subedi, Prof. Dr. Krishna Chandra Sharma, former Head of the Central Department of English, Prof. Dr. Sanjeev Uprety, former co-ordinator of M. Phil programme, Dr. Ananda Sharma, Prof. Dr. Arun Gupta and Dr Shiva Rijal for sharing their profound ideas and books related to the present dissertation.

Similarly, I would like to thank my friends, Mr. Indra Thapa, Mr. Narayan Basnet, Mr. Madhav Bhusal, Mr. Bimal Basnet, Mr. Jeet Bahadur K.C., Mr. Krishna Bhusal and the entire Birendra Higher Secondary School and Birendra Siksha Campus Team for their support.

I am highly indebted to my parents, Shanta Devi Pachhain and Pirtam Bahadur Pachhain for their persistent support. Likewise, I am indebted to my wife, Manju Basnet, who inspired and encouraged me to complete this research work by providing conducive environment for my study. I am equally thankful to my son, Agrim Pachhain and my sisters Shova, Sita and Sarita Pachhain who helped me being kind to my study.

Kamal Pachhain

## Abstract

This dissertation is a comparative study on genocide discourse of Rwanda genocide in two texts Boubacar Boris Diop's *Murambi, The Book of Bones* (novel) and Terry George's *Hotel Rwanda* (film). These two texts remember the cataclysmic event of genocide through heart-rendering images of the brutal mass murder. The representation is laced with an affect of the condemnations of the genocidal violence. Theoretical modality of genocide narrative has been applied to study the both novel and film. The novelist Diop has exploited the polyvocal narratives to depict the pangs and pain of the then situation in Rwanda. The analysis reveals the fact that the causes of genocide are the byproduct of race nationalism, ethnicity, tribe, religions and their manipulation. This research, in fact, makes significant contribution in analyzing the roots of genocide of the past as well as possible reasons might cause genocide in future. The main protagonist of *Murambi* loose the mother and siblings because of ethnic differences in the family that he knew when he came back from Djibouti. Unlike Cornelius, the protagonist of *Hotel Rwanda*, Paul Rusesabagina faces and struggles to protect his family and other people. The only cause behind this massive devastation predominantly of Tutsi people is the cause of different ethnicity in Rwanda. The strain of reproduction is however, a far cry in *Hotel Rwanda* even thought it too ends on happy note.

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## Chapter I: Introduction to Genocide in Rwanda

The first appearance of the term “Genocide” can be attributed to a book, published in 1944, under the auspices of the Washington-based Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and entitled *Axis Rule in occupied Europe*. The term genocide was coined by Raphael Lemkins in his *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*. The word ‘genocide’ is the combination of two Greek and Latin words “genos” (race/tribe) and “cide” (killing). According to Lemkins, “genocide is a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of the essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves” (Qtd. In Levene 43). For him, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. Genocide is related to death, destruction terror, and extermination. In other words, genocide is a mass killing; it is generally one-sided in which one group or state destroys other group. Mass murder or massacre happen when genocide occurs. The perpetrator’s ultimate aim is the destruction of the biological structure of such national groups. Lemkin quotes Hitler’s own recorded ‘table-talk’ thoughts on this score:

[. . .] by remove I do not necessarily mean destroy: I shall simply take systematic measures to dam their great natural fertility [. . .]. There are many ways systematical and comparatively painless or at any rate bloodless of causing undesirable races to die out. (Qtd. In Levene, 44)

These lines of Hitler creates a situation of deportation for the people of aloof race. The genocide is always systematic and the major purpose of genocide is to kill the people of different races. It is intentionally done who are in different group and brings about the terror. The act of persecution, atrocity and destruction are at the core of

genocide. The most compelling feature of genocide is the identification of named annihilatory policies perpetrated against particular group. It only makes people hopeless and is filled with havoc. Genocide creates that situation in which there happens the disintegration of the political and social institutions of the group. He further mentions that “composite of different acts of persecution or destruction could all constitute genocide” (Qtd. In Levene 44). Any way genocide creates immediate formation of different functions. The success of the perpetrators can be measured only when they kill myriad number of people. Similarly Israel Charny considers “genocide as the mass killing of substantial numbers of human beings [. . .] under conditions of the essential defenseless and helpless of the victims” (Qtd. In Levene 17). As such act of genocide leaves many number of people dead. The specific and particular groups of are murdered in a well planned way.

Genocide is a very complex term that is different from war though there is a mass murder. Actually it is a human destruction which is between two categories of people who are different in terms of race, tribe, ethnic, religion or nationality. Genocide, in general, happens in bipolar societies where there are racial tribal ethnic or religious divisions. Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan, Germany, Iraq, Cambodia, Armenian, Soviet, Ethiopia etc. were caught in these kind of racial, ethnic, religious atrocities which lead to bloody massacre. Lemkin again says, “whoever while participating in a conspiracy to destroy a national, racial, or religious group, undertakes an attack against life, liberty, or property of members of such groups is guilty of the crime of genocide” (Qtd. In Levene, 8). Genocide, however, is a crime against humanity. It is an inhuman activity that destroys others life and it is a deliberate act. A genocidal act means attempting to annihilate or kill a group’s (religious, ethnic tribal, racial) existence.



“*Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*” defines “genocide as a murder of a whole race or group of people”. It so often bespeaks human horror and misery. It is not ultimately containable within geographical, political and cultural boundaries. It thus, is taken to be both radically criminal and aberrant act, outside of and distinct from, the dominant and accepted norms of liberal state and society. Genocide is directly antihuman act and simply generates terror in the mind of the people that develops the situation of crisis. No people can leave freely and happily. Where ever there is genocide there happens violent death, brutality, humiliation, etc. The matter of ethics and rationality doesn’t work during the period of genocide.

However, genocide doesn’t lead people towards unity and uniformity. It’s sole aim is to inflame the conflict and creates the situation in which all the norms and values are undermined and neglected. Since it is lopsided, it creates the devastation of human body which is systematic and well organized. It is also an authentic by product of dominant political and economic forces. Carole Nagengast argues:

Few states especially liberal democracies, typically or openly exercise their power over their constituency through unmediated violence, though it is held in reserve. Rather they try to ensure conformity to a set of images that create the illusion of unity, the illusion of consensus about what is and what is not legitimate, what should and should not be suppressed. (Qtd. In Levene, 18)

At times economic and political issues create massive loss of physical body. In the name of accumulating power there happens conflict. So, social cohesion gets disturbed and only lawlessness will spread that causes the troubles. United Nations conventions define genocide as “an acts committed with intent to destroy in whole or

in part, a national ethnical, racial or religious group” (Qtd. In Levene 35). In genocide targeted groups are killed that is mass murder.

Thus, genocide is a mass killing of a particular group which is deliberate and systematic. Genocide, in fact, is replete with destructions, chaos, violence, bloodsheds, killing etc. One group attempts to annihilate and eliminate the other group which results in massive destruction of many human life. It is a deliberate mass slaughter which is sometimes also known as holocaust. Genocide involves direct physical killing of the targeted population. It has spatial and temporal characteristics that can't be simply equated to a single episode of mass murder. All genocide perpetrators are motivated by clear cut self-defense. Yehuda Bauer mentions that genocide is “the planned destruction, since the mid-nineteenth century, of a racial, national or ethnic group” (Qtd. In Levene 39). Genocide hardly exists in between states rather it occurs within bipolar society. It is well managed and directed towards the certain population. Genocide in fact exists as an isolated phenomenon specific to the mass killing of identifiable groups. However, Lemkin says, "genocide is an overall plan to cause the disintegration of the political and social institutions of the group, including the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups" (Qtd. In Levene, 36).

The idea of Lemkin proves that genocide carries disharmony and makes people compel to live in terror. The matter of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness go away from human beings. There is no human right and no social justice during the time of genocide. The question comes do war and genocide same or different. Lemkin argues that war differs from genocide because war takes place in between states and it is a total break with the normal function of society. Unlike war, genocide is a crime against humanity that happens in bipolar society. In this context Helen Fein's idea

is relevant and says that what makes the victim of genocide different from those in war is a case not of “where they are but who they are” (Qtd. In Levine 61). Actually, genocide is very dangerous and victimized people are identified through their race or skin. Genocide also challenges the authority and normal functioning of the state that affect the overall system.

Genocide is simply another word we use for mass murder. Necessarily, *Genocide in the age of the National State* deals with the groups who have become mass murder. Gerard Libaridan notes Armenian genocide, a situation where:

Analysis revolving around conflicts over irreducible categories such as race and religion turn history into a field where, instead of human beings interacting, abstract concepts do battle. It is as if border of individuals think and act as prescribed by ideologies of nationalism, religion or race [ . . . ] one is comforted by the thought that Armenians can be reduced to a corollary of a concept. (Qtd. In Leven 13)

Libaridan’s key assumption is that race in nineteenth century become a master concept for the every reason of conflict which slowly and gradually turned into mass killing. Genocide is actually anti-human and thereby brings tremendous devastation, havoc, anarchy in the world. It is supposed to be diabolically evil and ludicrous. During the time of genocide, linguistic political and cultural autonomy were denied. Mark Mazower has perceptively voiced the anxiety thus:

I think there may also have been a widely-held assumption that the mass-killing of African or American peoples was distant and in some sense an “inevitable” part of progress while what was genuinely shocking was the attempt to exterminate an entire people in Europe.

The assumption may rest up on an implicit racism [. . .] finally betrayed itself. (Qtd. In Levene, 26)

Mazower's idea clarifies us that mass killing happening in between African or American people is a kind of genocide. As such genocide was based on the race of two countries as America and Africa. From the history, we came to know that genocide invites crisis and generates the confusing situation and push the people in traumatic situation. Similarly, we can see such nature of mass killing in Germany, Rwanda, Iraque, Combodia. East Timor, Ethiopia etc.

Lemkin says that genocide is a type of warefare. In other words genocide is a single facet of more general exterminatory trust of late modern man enroute to nuclear nemesis. In Lemikin's framework, genocide can't be isolated from a specific sequence of mass killing. In Harff and Gurr's view: "genocide is an episode" of sustained and coherent group destruction perpetrated by a state regime" (Qtd. In Levene 61). It basically shows that sometimes genocide may occur by the state. Mostly genocide can be the product of ethnic tribal hatred that creates grim condition. Likewise, Jean-Paul Sartre, as president of the Russell war crimes Tribunal adduces that 'genocidal intent is implicit in the facts' but adding "it is not necessarily premeditated" (Qtd. In Lemkin 55). However, Lemkin's ideas stresses on genocide as a policy of conscious, systematic, outright elimination and indiscriminate way of killing. It is notably associated with often prolonged moments of massive state or societal rupture and crisis. All genocide experts are in agreement that such difficult life condition are a major element in the formation of the genocidal perpetrator's mind, even if as in the Rwandan case thirty years on from the moment of revolution. Genocide is actually a symptom of particular types of social economic, or political environment. Genocide can equally be committed against people who live in the next

valley, the nearest village or literally next door. Genocidal process culminates in a specific moment of systematically organized and extended mass killing. It is also a product of state crisis. In accordance with Steven T. Katz, genocide is used as a murder “any national, ethnic, racial, religious, political, social gender or economic group, as these groups are defined by the perpetrators, by whatever means” (Qtd. In Levene, 40). Genocide is the outcome of specific relationship between perpetrator and targeted group. Thus, genocide is taken to be a both radically criminal and aberrant act outside of, and distinct from the dominant and accepted norms of liberal state and society. So, it is supposed to be a diabolical, mad, even quintessentially and unadulteratedly evil and dehumanizing act. The Rwanda Genocide describes in the following pages, is one such genocidal act of violence.

Rwanda, one of the world's poorest and most densely populated countries faced the economic crisis. In 1994, Germany established indirect suzerainty over Rwanda, cooping and taking over the pyramidal structure of political rule. The Germans gave way after their defeat in the first world war, to Belgian colonial administration. The Belgians were the first to rigidly codify Hutu and Tutsi designation. In the divide-and-rule tradition. Tutsi become colonial favourite and proteges. Early explorers of central Africa, notably the Englishman John Hanning speke propounded the "Hamitic hypothesis" (Qtd. In Adam Jones 235). This depicted the Hutu as offspring of Ham, the black son of Noah. By noble contrast, the Tutsi caste was descended from the Nilotic civilization of classified Egypt. As such was typical of imperial racial theorizing, the mark of civilization was grafted on to physiognomic difference, with generating taller, supposedly more refined Tutsi designed to rule, allegedly less refined Hutus to serve.

Under Belgian rule and afterwards, Tutsis and Hutus were indoctrinated with this Hamitic hypothesis. The caste character of the designations was gradually transformed into a racial that shaped ethnic identity and fueled Hutu resentment which erupted first in post-independence massacres in 1959-60 and then, in 1994, in genocide. Hutu' and 'Tutsis' did not constitute separate nations till twentieth century. It is even hard to describe them as different ethnicities, since they share the same language, territory, and religion. Rather the two groups in pre-colonial period may be viewed as social castes based on material wealth. Moreover, the Hutu and Tutsi populations in Rwanda have had a tangled history. Although they often lived as neighbours, intermarrying and sharing a common culture, tension between Hutu and Tutsis have flared as decolonization, ethnic tensions and civil wars have taken their toll. Broadly speaking, Tutsis were those who owned cattle; Hutus tilled the land and provided labour to the Tutsis. The designations were hardly arbitrary and they indeed, had a basis in physiognomic differences. But they were fluid and permeable as professor of government Mahmood Mamdani writes:

The rare Hutu who was able to accumulate cattle and rise through the socio-economic hierarchy could *Kwihutura* – shed Hutuness and achieve the political status of a Tutsi. Conversely, the loss of property could also lead to the loss of status summed up in the Kinyarwanda word *gucupira*." These processes were "of little significance statistically", "but "their social and political significance can't be overstated. (Qtd in Adam Jones 234)

Thus, although Rwanda was definitely not a land of peace or bucolic harmony before the arrival of the Europeans, there is no trace in its pre-colonial history of systematic violence between Tutsi and Hutu as such. From its beginning around the seventeenth

century, the political organization of Rwandan society featured centralized forms of political authority and a high degree of social control reflecting the fact that the land is small, the population density is high and social interactions are constant, intense and value-laden. This authoritarianism reached its apogee under the rule of Mwami Kigeri Rwabugiri (1860-18950) at which point traditional obligations of corvee labour came to be imposed on Hutus alone and thereby polarizing the social difference between Hutu and Tutsi.

It was under the Belgians, too, that a new racially segregated state, Church and education system was constructed. Tutsis were assigned a dominant role in each. Not only this, Tutsi got benefited from their positions of dominance in education and the state bureaucracy. After the Second World War, pro-independence movements developed throughout the colonized world including Rwanda where Tutsi moved to the forefront of the various anti-colonial initiatives. By seeing such position of Tutsi, Belgian authorities, took favour of the less educated, less threatening Hutu majority and thereby planted the seed of conflict between Tutsis and Hutus. Even under the rule of Hutu Juvenal Habyarimana, Tutsis condition improved which strengthened the conflict now and again. Hutu power radio station is propagating hate messages against the Tutsi minority. Thus, the seed of conflict began to sow between the two ethnic groups like Hutu and Tutsi. Another thing that Belgian authority created artificial distinct in between natives. Though Hutus were in majority, they were not treated equally like Tutsis which encouraged the climate of fear and panic to forestall demands for democracy. In 1986 Rwandas exiles in Uganda formed the Rwandan patriotic Front and 1990 the RPF launched a military invasion of Rwanda. Thus, the tension between two ethnic groups 'Hut' and 'Tutsi' led towards conflict.

The genocide that consumed the tiny Central African country of Rwanda from April to July 1994 was in some way without precedent. In just twelve weeks, at least one million people overwhelmingly Tutsis, but also tens of thousands of Hutus opposed to the genocidal government-were murdered, primarily by machetes, clubs and small arms. About 80 percent of victims died in a "hurricane of death . . . between the second week of April and the third week of May" (Qtd. In Adams Jones, 232) noted Gerand Prunier. In Rwanda, the civilian Hutus population-men, women and even children was actively conscripted and comprised the book of Genocidaiers. Numerous warnings of impending genocide were transmitted and an armed united Nations "assistance mission" (UNAMIR), under the command of Canadian major General Romeo Dillaire, has been in place in the capital, Kagali, since October 1993.

In one notorious instance captured on video, at the cares psychiatric Hospital in Ndera, Kigali , Kigali prefecture, a few sobbing whites were evacuated while rapacious militia members cruised just outside the gates, and some hundreds of terrified Tutsi refugees begged the foreign troops for protection. The Tutsis were massacred within hours of the troops' departure. Actually, many foreign observers tend to view the Rwandan conflict as an expression of "ancient tribal hatreds"(Qtd. In Levene 41).

In 1994, Tutsis died at roadblocks because they were assumed to be Tutsis whatever their identity cards said. And the corpses of thousands of Tutsi victims were dumped into the Nyabrongo river. At the thousands of roadblocks established across the country, carrying a Tutsi identity card meant a death sentence. Tens of thousands of Tutsis fled to neighbouring, Zaire, Tanzania and especially Uganda. Even the president, Habyarimand was shot down by Hutu militias. They were assisted, trained and advised by the French. As early as April 9, in the Church at Gikondo in Kigali, a



slaughter occurred that presaged the strategies to be followed in coming weeks-one that was witnessed by polish nuns, priests and UN military observers:

A presidential Guard officer arrived and told the soldiers not to waste their bullets because the interahamwe [Hutu power militia] would soon come with machetes. Then the militia come in, one hundred of them, and threatening the [polish]. Priests they began to kill people, slashing with their machetes and clubs, hacking arms, legs, genitals and the faces of the terrified people who tried to protect the children under the pews. Some people were dragged outside the Church and attacked in the country-yard. The killing continued for two hours as the whole compound was searched. Only two people are believed to have survived the killing at the Church. Not even babies were spared. That day in Gikondo there was a street littered with corpses the length of a kilometer ... The killing in Gikondo was done in broad day light with no attempt to disguise the identity of the killers, who were convinced that there would be no punishment for their action. (Qtd. In Adams Jones, 238)

The mindboggling thing was the involvement of ordinary Hutus in the slaughter. Mahmood Mamdani writes "Had the killing been the work of state functionaires and those bribed by them. Without massacres by machete wielding civilians mobs, in the hundreds and thousands, there would have been no genocide" (46). In the history of genocide, Hutu women flocked by the tens of thousands to participate in the killing of Tutsis and the stripping of corpses. To the extent that their violence was directed against Tutsi women Mohamood Mamdani an analyst of Rwandan genocide again writes :

there appears to have been a kind of gendered jubilation at the "comeup pance" of Tutsi females, who had for so long been depicted in Hutu propaganda as Rwanda's sexual elite. Otherwise, the motivations for women's involvements as genocidal killers frequently paralleled those of Hutu men: bonds of ethnic solidarity . . . persuasion and coercion by those authority: the lure of material gain: and the intoxicating pleasure of untrammelled sadism. (Qtd. In Adam Jones 243)

Exterminationist propaganda against Tutsis become common place in Rwanda. As early as December 1990, the infamous Hutus ten commandments were issued by the Hutu extremist paper *Kangaru*. The Hutu must be firm and vigilant against their common Tutsi enemy" read one of the commandments.

Genocide against the Tutsi minority would simultaneously eliminates the perceived constituency for the Rwandan Patriotic Front: resolve the economic crisis through distribution of Tutsi land, wealth and jobs; and the Hutu majority in genocidal complicity. The extremists imported hundreds of thousands of machetes in 1993-94; this weapon would the symbol of the Rwanda genocide. Thus, Tutsis were dragged out of homes and hiding places and murdered, often after torture and rape. At the infamous roadblocks, those carrying Tutsi identity cards- along with some Hutus who were deemed to look Tutsi were shot or hacked to death. Romeso Dallari writes:

On a journey north from the capital, was pass[ing] over bridges in swamps that had been lifted by the force of the bodies piling up on the struts. We had inched our way through villages of dead humans . . . we had created paths amongst the dead and half-dead without hands. And

we had thrown up even when there was nothing in our stomachs. (Qtd.

In Adam Jones 239)

In order to kill Tutsi, Army and militia forces went street to street, block by block, and house to house, in Kigali and every other major city save Butare in the south. Tutsis were dragged out of homes and hiding places and murdered, often after torture and rape. Numerous accounts exist of Tutsis paying to be killed by rifle bullets, rather than slowly and agonizingly with machetes and hoes. Hutu militia used machetes and killed myriad number of Tutsis.

Almost 50,000 people died at Bisesero in April and May. Militia roamed freely through Kabgayi, selecting Tutsimen and boys for execution and women and girls for rape. The horror ended only when the Rwandan patriotic front captured Kabgayi on June 2. On July 4, the RPF gained full control of the capital, Kigali. According to Rwanda expert Christian Scherer. "The export of genocide on Rwanda is the main cause in the spread of conflict to the whole of the central African region, and the chief reason for the unprecedented violence, intensity and destructiveness of the conflict- possibly the most murderous since the second world war" (Qtd in Adam Jones 244). Early estimates of the death-toll in the Rwandan genocide were between 500000 and 800000 overwhelmingly Tutsi. Many women also lost their life with great pangs. Actually Rwanda genocide shows the shocking reality of human destruction without any meaning. However, the mass killing of Rwandan genocide is world's greatest human misery. Gernrd Plumier captures this element vividly, noting that Social envy come together with political hatred to fire the bloodlust:

In Kigali the [militias'] . . . bad tended to recruit mostly among the poor. As soon as they went into action, they drew around them a cloud of even poorer people, a lumpenprole trait of street boys, rag-

pickers, car washers and homeless unemployed. For these people the genocide was the best thing that could ever happen to them [. . .]. The political aims pursued by the master of this dark carnival were quite beyond their scope. They just went along, knowing it would not last. (Qtd. In Adam Jones 243)

When the conflict went out of control, some 20,000 Tutsi had congregated at Gatwaro stadium. The stadium was surrounded by soldiers and militia, who began firing into the stadium and at any one who sought to flee. Twelve thousand people died in a single day. Elsewhere in the prefectures perhaps the most exterminatory killing of the genocide took place. Gloriose Mukakanimaba, a Tutsi woman and mother of three says: "Entire Tutsi communities were wiped out with no witnesses left to tell what happened. From a population of 252,000 Tutsi in a 1991 census, by the end of June there were an estimated 8,000 left alive" (Qtd. In Adam Jones 242). This statement reveals the fact that Rwandan genocide is an ethnic hatred which is one sided killing. The Tutsi people are killed by counting.

Anyway, Hutu extremists inflicted genocidal atrocities against Tutsis living in eastern Zaire and staged cross-border raids into Rwanda, prompting the newly installed RPF regime in Rwanda to launch operations in the region that themselves led to the deaths of thousands of civilians, together with hardcore genocidaries. One of these convictions, however, that of Jean-paul Akayesu broke important legal ground with its historic determination that systematic rape was a crime against humanity. And that sexual violence constituted genocide in the same way as any other act." While reconstruction and attempted reconciliation proceeded, thousands of Tutsis continued to die from genocidal assaults-not only increases border attacks launched by die hard genocidaraires in Congo but also from the effects of rape-induced AIDS. It is clear,

however, that hundreds of thousands of Hutus participated eagerly were motivated by greed- the chance to loot Tutsi belongings and seize Tutsi land.

Within 100 days, in Rwanda, over one million innocent people were slaughtered. However, in 1994, Rwanda experienced a massive genocide in which nearly a million Tutsi and moderate Hutu were slaughtered by Hutu extremist. My overall view regarding the conflict between Hutu and Tutsis was tribal conflict which turned into genocide because myriad number of people lost their life. Many writers have written books regarding Rwanda Genocide. Some of these books are *Murambi: The Book of Bones*" by Boris Dip. Similarly, *Hotel Rwanda* by Terry George is one of the films based on the Rwandan genocide. In sum, unequal distribution of power, position, identity, domination, atrocity, biasness etc. really created the conflict. As such things were created when the Rwanda was under the rule of Belgian. This dissertation focuses on *Murambi The Book of Bones* and a film called *Hotel Rwanda*. These two texts reflect upon the Rwanda genocide. Chapter two which follows the present one critically analyzes the discourse of genocide in Diop's *Murambi*. The discourse, the chapter a types, foregrounds the trauma of the protagonist who discovers the role of his own father in the genocidal massacre at Murambi. Chapter three which looks at the film *Hotel Rwanda* concludes that the depiction of the genocide is graphic happy with a happy ending. Chapter four which concludes the dissertation makes the point that both the novel and the film represent the Rwandan genocide not only objectively but also in away that makes the reader and the audience condemns it in their minds.

## **Chapter II: Representation of Genocide in *Murambi, The Book of Bones***

Boubacar Boris Diop, in *Murambi, The Book of Bones* attempts to represent the awful violence of genocide in Rwanda which created the gruesome murder of hundreds of thousands of people. The key characters used in this novel are Cornelius Uvimana, Jessica, Michel Serumundo, seraphine, Alphones, Marie Helenes, lucienne, Staneley Ntaramira, Roger, Arusha, Zakya, Valerie Rumiya, Rosa Karemera, Colenel Perin, Clonel Muslim, Nataramira Faustin, Gerard Nayinzira, Doctor Joseph Karekez, Simeon Habizeza, Theresa etc. Jessica and Stanley Ntaramira are the childhood friends of Cornelius etc. All the four sections as *Fear and Anger The Return of Cornelius, Genocide and Murambi* show the Cornelius journey through Rwanda and his visit to several memorial sites in order to confront and understand the history of genocide.

However, through this novel *Murambi, The Book of Bones* the writer Boris Diop unfolds and depicts two significant events that occurred during the time of genocide. In the first moment the writer shows the terrific situation, menace and the aftermath of genocide in Rwanda and in the second moment the writer reveals the Cornelius return towards the home to know the hyper reality of genocide happening in *Murambi*, Poly technical School. Cornelius, a Rwandan history teacher, lived abroad for 25 years during the time of the genocide in Rwanda. In the first subtitle 'Fear and Anger' the writer presents the terrific situation primarily because of Hutu and Tutsi conflict. The environment of menace is developing in the opening session. Likewise, the novel also discloses the reality with arrival of Cornelius, his discovery of childhood friends, reliving of shared memories, his visited to his uncle Simeon Hobineza and the school at *Murambi* were largely gruesome massacre took place. The novel obviously projects the voices of unspeakable pain and loss. With the use of

poly-vocal narratives, the novel recounts the actual events taking place in Rwanda. The novel, however, in short is all about the Cornelius journey, his understanding about the genocide, its tremendous devastation and loss. Moreover, this novel in fact, depicts the atrocities of 1994 and the ongoing repercussions of the genocide that continue to spill over Rwandas borders.

However, the overall focus is on the ninety days in Rwanda. The tale of novel centers on the experience of Cornelius Uvimane. As a son of growing up in the shadow of two fathers, two countries and two legacies, cormelius, a protagonist of this novel shares both the responsibility and the plight of the genocide. His real father Dr. Karekezi, a Hutu fanatic, responsible for the *Murambi* mass murder has left him with the legacy of Rwanda's genocidal politics while he endeavors to understand and communicate this legacy under the tutelage of his symbolic father, his uncle Simeon, a Tutsi victim and a traditional figure of the African sage. Actually, all the characters reveal an intimate knowledge of the intertwined histories of their neighbours, whether Hutu, Tutsi or Twa. Actually the novel revolves the issue of killing and torture in between Hutu and Tutsi when we hear Michel Serumundo, a Tutsi and video store proprietor speak of the impending massacre, we are directly indicated as aloof, disconnected subjects in a besieged world that is clamoring for our attention. Michel knows all too well that, despite the signs pointing to Cataclysmic destruction, the world has its gaze turned elsewhere:

The world cup was about to begin in the United States. The planet was interested in nothing else. And in any case, whatever happened in Rawands, it would always be the same old story of blacks being up one each other. Even Africans would say, during half time of every match,

“They are embarrassing us, they should stop killing each other like that.” (9-10)

These lines provoke the indifferenceness of western people mainly of France towards the rising conflict of genocide in Rwanda. The westerns seem so selfish and they are not showing any sense of humanity to protect the people from neighboring country. Rather they are busy at watching the world cup. They make a joke that such conflict is always same old story of backs. The brutal mass murder happening in Rwanda does not matter for western people, rather they enjoy on the world cup and neglects the very sensitive issue of conflict. Even though people in neighboring country are in life and death situation, the so-called, powerful country neglects and feel happy to see the piles of corpses. One of the most haunting voices of Murambi belongs to Michel Serumundo, Tutsi who will be slaughtered. He says in the opening pages of the novel:

I have seen lots of scenes on television myself that were hard to take. Guys in slips and masks pulling bodies out of a mass grave. Newborns they toss, laughing, into bread ovens young women who coat their threads with oil before going to bed. That way, they say, “When the throat-slitters come, the blades of their Knives won’t hurt as much”. I suffered from these things without really feeling involved. I didn’t realize that if the victims shouted loud enough, it was so I would hear them, myself and thousands of other people on earth, and so we would try to do everything we could so that their suffering might end. It always happened so far away, in countries, on the other side of the world. But in these early days of April in 1994, the country on the other side of the world in mine. (10)



This statement indicates that this is a carefully planned series of killings, which the perpetrators then attempted to conceal by burying the bodies. It shows the tribal hatreds in between people of two different races. Actually it is heart breaking scene for the people who live in Rwanda during that time. As such act really consolidates the divisible identities of Hutu, Tutsi and Twa and fuel violent ethnic hatred.

The novel actually begins with a Tutsi, Michel who expresses not only his own current perspective but also the competing versions of history which circulate within his own consciousness. Michel's narrative tells of his concern for his family, imperiled by Hutu neighbours, and reveals the perspective of the Interahamwe as memory of the past Hutu violence inside their consciousness: 'I didn't dare to hope that they would be satisfied with just a little blood' (11). Michel's statement evinces just how interconnected the two warring groups are and thus how fictions of identity operate to divide. Similarly we know so many things from Faustin's story, causing us to shuttle between warring perspectives and to feel their interlocking connections. Faustin's story reveals how Hutus experience the present as inseparable from stories of past Tutsi domination: "They joined the Interahamwe militia to make men and women more powerful than them tremble" (19). Neither Michel nor Faustin is personally aware of the other in these structurally parallel stories, but yet each knows and articulates his enemy's history.

In the novel one of the survivors Gerard Nayinzira tells Cornelius Uvimanna his story of witnessing an Interahamwe militiaman raping a dead women:

I saw that with my own eyes. Do you believe me, Cornelius? It is important that you believe me. I'm not making it up for once that's necessary. If you prefer to think that I imagined these horrors your mind will be at peace and that's not good. The pain will get lost in

opaque words and everything will be forgotten until next massacre.

They really did incredible things. It happened in Rwanda only four years ago, when the entire world was playing soccer in America. (175-76)

As the main protagonist, Cornelius represents the visitor upon whose individual memory the commemoration of the Murambi massacre depends. Having spent twenty five years in exile, Cornelius goes back to his birth place, Murambi, also in July 1998, in order to find out what happened to his family in 1994. Before he arrives in Rwanda, Cornelius believes that almost his entire family has been slaughtered leaving only his uncle, Simeon Habineza, still alive. However, Cornelius eventually learns that his father, Dr. Joseph Karekezi, is not, in fact, dead but rather was the engineer of the massacre at Murambi. As the story of his father's involvement begins to unfold, Cornelius becomes a participant rather than as observer in the history he discovers. As he travels from Kigali to Murambi, Cornelius remembers such events from his childhood as the 1973 massacres that led him to the Rwandan genocide. However, when he finally hears the truth about his father's role in the killings he is forced to re-evaluate his position "From the day on his life would not be the same. He was the son of a monster [ . . . ]. He had suddenly discovered that he become the perfect Rwandan: both guilty and a victim" (78).

Cornelius is with his friend Jessica and they talk about the actual number of killing. At that time, Jessica says that the number of victim is controversial. Seeing such situation, Cornelius gets surprised and paused while speaking. Dr Joseph and Colonel Muslim are gifted fellow. They are both Hutus and are involving together in killing the Tutsi people. They were talking about their friends who were confident. Colonel Muslim at that time neglects his wife and two children Julianne and Francois. During the genocide it's no one fault. Colonel thought that his wife curses him

thinking that he never loved her. “It’s just history that wants blood. And why would I only spill other people’s? Their is just rotten” (107). The actions of Cornelius’s father exemplify the essential incomprehensibility of genocide. The reasons behind this ethnic conflict was that Tutsis were supported by Belgian government whereas Hutus were supported by France’s arms and military training to the interahamwe. More clearly, Tutsis were imaged and stereotyped as collaborators, rebels, cockroaches, traitors, invaders and there is also suggestion that Tutsis are pest. These negative description are essentialised stereotypes with grave consequences for Tutsi in the context of genocide.

Those ninety days in Rwanda are the focal of the novel which brought massive devastation. Addressing a crowd of survivors, feverish to seek, revenge old Simeon insists. “You have suffered, but that doesn’t make you any better than those who made you suffer. They are people like you and me. Evil is within each one of us [ . . . ] you are not better than them” (84). These remarks are directed towards Hutu and Tutsi survivors who don’t understand the inextricable relationship and ran after the colonizer’s song that ultimately turned into genocide. Similarly in the novel, when Simeon Habineza tells Cornelius about the dogs drinking from the pools of blood that seeped from the graves where the victims are buried, Cornelius interprets the story as a metaphor for Rwanda. His uncle, however, is quick to correct him: It’s not a symbol [ . . . ] our eyes saw it” (153). After getting more information about the genocide of Rwanda, Cornelius says “would tirelessly recount the horror with machete words, club words, words studded with nails, naked words and [ . . . ] words covered with blood and shit” (179). Paradoxically, Cornelius tries to accord the realist descriptions of the genocide which is precisely expressed through metaphor: he uses machete words to hack into silence around what happened in Rwanda. In Kigali, Cornelius is

shocked that the genocide appears to have left no visible trace on the city. The events in the text cause us to circulate among the characters and between positions of aloofness and direct witnessing of the massacre.

Anyway, Dr. Joseph appears as key figure of Hutu extremist and encourages his men to fight bravely. He is more oriented towards the killing and making the situation horrific. The Hutu extremists kill the Tutsis by chasing out of the house. He is presented as a blood sucker and says,

And all those Tutsis to kill. I didn't think there were so many of them. I have the feeling that the planet is inhabited by Tutsis. That we are the only people in the world who aren't Tutsis. Before, it was easy to yell out like thunder, "Tubatsematsembe!". We have to kill them all. (19)

These lines really show the hostility and enmity in between two tribes who were living in time in the bygone days sharing each and everything that they had. But now, they are completely negative and trying to kill as far as possible. Even Cornelius was left by his friends Jessica and Satan by saying "Cornelius is Dr. Joseph Karekezi's son. His father is Hutu [ . . . ] "One of the men cut his off. Hm! That troublemaker Joseph Karakezi ! A very bad Hutu ! Hmm!. He [ . . . ] he's already corrupted his son (40). From this remarks also, even Cornelius is taken entirely negative simply because of his father's anti-social act which completely damaged the social harmony and unity between Hutu and Tutsi. His real father Dr. Karekezi is a Hutu fanatic and he is responsible for the *Murambi* mass murder.

Diop reveals how fiction issued necessarily as psychological insulation, as we witness in the case of those Hutus coerced into fighting who descended in to madness to cope. "I'm not killing the other in order to seize his possessions, no I'm completely

mad and proof, it's that the torture I inflict upon him is unique in the history of human suffering" (112). What we see in such a brutal paradox is an attempt at saving the merest shred of human fellow-felling and deliberative rationality within this scene of wide spread trauma. Even more moving is that this Hutu father, conscripted into service by the Interahamwe militia, reveals a sorrowful compassion for those he has killed. Thus despite the radio propaganda, the writer Diop reveals the inescapable affiliations within the larger collective consciousness of Rwanda. While he is living in Djibouti, Cornelius is struck by the idea that Rwanda is an imaginary country. "If it's so difficult to talk about it in a rational way, maybe it's because it doesn't exist. Everyone has his own Rwanda in head and it has nothing to do with the Rwanda of others" (67). Rwanda under neo-colonialism is indeed an imagined nation-state, except when western powers invoke-its putatively sovereign status suits their political purpose. Wole Soyinka has illuminated this vexing and tragic irony, pointing out that it was in no small part that the very western imposed designation of Rwanda as a sovereign nation-state prevented it from being aided internationally: "All nations of sovereignty with respect to Rwanda should be completely forgotten and we should just go in and stop the killing [. . .]. The horror of Rwanda is too high a price to pay for a very vaporous and whimsical notion of what constitutes inviolable territorial boundaries" (Qtd. In Arnould Bloom field 659). Not only did western governments fail to confine the causes of Rwanda's genocide to within the country's own borders, the west's own insistence of Rwandan sovereignty seems patently self-implicating.

Diop, factually, reveals both the connections and in some cases double identities of the characters. Even if some of the characters have little to no direct knowledge of one another, Diop shows how their subjectivities are informed by the presence of those around them as their lives inevitably intersect. For example, Jessica,

a Tutsi with a Hutu identity card, joins the Rwandan, patriotic Front (RPF), the elite government army comprised of Tutsis. In order to guard her identity and continue working as an operative in Kigali, she must make heart breaking decisions, such as refraining from letting her friend Theresa know that those seeking protection in the local Church will probably be massacred there. Her consciousness reveals the struggle between dual perspectives both Hutu and Tutsi histories – given as these twin knowledge divide her from her friend as she continues to work for the opposition effort.

The novel builds in fateful intensity as we learn that Cornelius's own Hutu father, Doctor Joseph Karehezi, is responsible for the deaths of thousands of Hutu at Murambi polytechnic school, including that of his own Tutsi wife (Cornelius's mother) and their two young children (Cornelius's siblings). As Karehezi's identity unfolds further, we find that, although he himself had been imprisoned years before for denouncing the previous massacres of Tutsis, he is caught up in a bizarre combination of self-hatred, greed, and recrimination, leading to his directing the genocide in his own community and against his own family. It is in bringing such characters to life that Diop shows the inexplicable contingencies of identity as well as the sometimes contorted affiliations that define relationships. The result is that we feel a deep sense of the ethnic and political makers in favour of shared, human affiliations. Towards the end, the novel shuttles between the grotesque hyper-realities of the massacre and the uncanny sense that a person's very physical existence is displaced, if not somehow even unreal. When Gerard tells his story to Cornelius, he admits that, each time he visits Murambi, he wishes he had died there, for he carries within him the shame of the survivor: "I move my hands and my feet because it seems like a hallucination to me" (176). Murambi is also the site where memories of utter

dehumanization are recalled. Gerard exposes the full degradation of European attitudes clearly when he recalls how:

The foreign troops with operation Turquoise . . . had set up camp, in full knowledge, on top of the mass graves. That was extremely bad manners. Had they believed, them, by behaving in such a way, that Murambi's dead were somehow missing that little something that made them human beings? Had they believed that they were missing a soul, or something of the sort? Cornelius thought of the old man [French President Mitterrand]. In those countries a genocide doesn't mean much. (177)

Cornelius seems quite pessimistic by the presence of foreign soldier's operation on the mass grave of Rwandan people after he knows the reality. He is quite worried about direct inspection by troops of other countries because their role became entirely negative towards Rwandan people during the genocide. He also feels a kind of lamentation for missing the dead at Murambi. The novel's narrative becomes consolidated, and we follow Cornelius's discovery of the full scope of the massacre at Murambi. For him, and thus for us, the moments of peace come with direct contact to the land: "sitting right on the ground, his eyes half closed and his mind empty, brought him a strong feeling of inner peace" (173). Our witnessing of Cornelius perceiving the very force of life in his uncle Simeon tells us that Rwanda will go on:

Black hat on his head and a scarf pulled tightly around his neck to protect him from the dew, Simeon walked leaning on his cane, his cane, his step slow and regular . . . It was unthinkable that so much splendor – it reminded him of the child playing the flute near lake Mohazi – had nothing to do with the impending death of the old man . .

. Thus, in the very country where death and worked away at destroying all energy, the force of life remained in act. (166)

These striking lines really indicate the grim situation of Rwands through the mouth of Simeon Habizeza. He is victimized by the Tutsi during the time of warfare. He expresses his sorrowful ideas that nothing good is there and no youths are there to create newness. Now he has become old and with the help of cane he is sharing the pangs seen through his eyes. He goes on recounting the devastating experience and talks that everything is destroyed and nothing good is left there. Only dead bodies are there. He mentions that spiritual regeneration is necessary to avoid such crime.

While finding information, he meets friends, uncle and other people. But meanwhile what happens is that Gerard becomes so angry and tries to do violence with Cornelius because Gerard knew that Cornelius was the son of murderer but Cornelius shows the easy talks with him.

You started to talk about the pretty girl who gave you the eye in the bar in Abidjan', said Gerard coldly, 'you were making big gestures, your entire body was getting away from you, while we, because of the circumstances, we've learned to draw in our bodies, we've received so many blows, right . . . "In that instant, "solely from the intensity of his voice, Cornelius had just realized that Gerard could kill him at any moment." (151)

As such violence is mostly that of the victim. It is Gerard's inner rage which is incessantly about to explode. During his visit from Murambi to Kigali, he gets troubles from different people. In the novel he is recognized as a son of monster and therefore he faces many difficulties in getting the information. Gerard's hidden fury needs to be uncovered and resisted in a dialogue with Cornelius:



There are several of these in this school. These holes served as mass graves. I was told that in Murambi the victims were buried, then exhumed." That's correct. The bodies are intact because there's clay in the soil here. Besides, you've noticed that the skeletons are all a bit red.

(149)

After the mass murder, Cornelius knows so many causes of conflict that turned in to genocide. Dipo's tale is mainly based on the experience of Cornelius Uvinmane, a Rwanda history teacher living in Djibouti at the time of genocide. Cornelius goes on getting information and takes the reader upto the shocking reality due to the mass killing in Murambi polytechnic school. Cornelius also know that for creating as such massive devastation of human body the role of media like radio in Rwanda is really negative. Through this media, messages of hatred are propagating that adds fuel to fight. Even the radio does not perform this act of uncovering.

However, Alphonse Nagurambe a Tutsi, owner is living the most terrifying hours of his life. Abel Mujawamarya, a businessmen from Kigali arrived in Gisovu with two yellow trucks full of matches. He then organized a meeting and gave out matches and grenades to the Hutus. They uttered the terrible words, "Begin with one side." Neighborhood by neighborhood. House of house., Don't spread your forces out in disorderly killings. All of them must die" (28). This statement reveals the fact that Tutsis should be eliminated using the machetes. They should not be left alive because they are the main enemy of Hutu. As long as they remain, they create troubles and so, they must be annihilated thoroughly. The administration, army and the interahomue militia are going to combine a force to kill Tutsis who are spreading here and there. Moreover, whenever sermendo was in bus, soldiers or militia appeared from every direct with crazed eyes, "They said it was going to be a field day for the militia. My

blood froze. The interahamwe militia, whose only purpose in life, was to kill Tutsis.  
(6).

While the conversation is going on between Cornelius and Jessica, at that time, they severely talk about the genocide happening in Murambi. In the course of giving information about Rwandan genocide, Simeon Habineza makes Cornelius listen, “After a genocide, the real problem is to the victim but the executioners, To kill almost a million people in three months took a lot of people. There were tens or hundreds of thousands of killers. Many of them were fathers. And you, you are just the son of one of them” (79). Rwandan genocide also affected many women and children from different ways. Jessica Kamanzi, a girl wants to die in the days of horror seeing such pitiable situation. She expresses her anxiety and sadness, “Yes that young woman had an almost supernatural beauty. It took away any chance she had of escaping the killers. They were going to rape her a thousand times before they killed her. She knew it, and she was going out of her mind” (92). Women are also seduced by the priest when they were going to take a safe shelter from Hutu. As such belong and sentiments can be found in both Joseph Karekezi and Colonel Musoni. They both belong to Hutu and want to eradicate physical elimination of Tutsi. Being a leader and direct involver with interahamwe, Joseph Karakezi says: It was easy to read on the faces of those I saw. Fatigue and weariness. Our interahamwe had certainly received good training, but maybe we underestimated the physical effort it takes to kill so many people with knives. The ones they want to eliminate don't make things easy for them, understandably. They run, they scream, they hold on to the interahamwe's arms, try different ways to bribe them, in short they'll do anything to prolong their existence by two or three miserable minutes” (103).

As an observer of the horrific situation in Rwanda, Cornelius becomes so sad and nervous. He finds nothing good and everywhere finds emptiness and hollowness whenever he moves house to houses. He, Stanley and Jessica formed a little gang and they view things: "Eleanor Mwenza, Simone's wife, was raped by some kids." Aunt Eleanor who always went to church in a blue dress? Yes, they remembered the name, but they could not remember exactly who she was. Simeon was out in the fields. "They watched her put out the fire by herself, and then they did their dirty work on her before they killed her." Another day they learned that there was no one from someone's family left in Bugesera.

It is because of anti-human acts many women including Eleanor Mwenza gets raped where tortures are indeed visible. Cornelius found father role as a villain and involved in committing crimes. His father Joseph Karekezi says:

When your father decided to become a powerful man, he knew that he would have blood on his hands. Since president Kayibanda's time, people were always killing Tutsis and then going home to play with their children. Tens dead. Hundreds dead thousands dead. They couldn't be bothered to count any more. Little by little it became routine. (155)

Even the wounds clearly visible on the bones of the dead simply because of the personal fanatical thinking. The awful violence of genocide really changed the earth of Cornelius and found unthinkable loss and devastation of human body.

However, Murambi's most immediate importance lies obviously in its subject matter, namely the overwhelming tragedy of the Rwanda genocide. The Rwandan genocide of 1994 was clearly world tragedy, not only an African tragedy. Cornelius came back to Murambi simply because of genocide. Actually Cornelius and his childhood friend

Jessica Kamanzi also made a plan to see the places. At that time, Cornelius says "Near Kyovu see hundred of corpses a few yards from the barricade. While his colleagues are slitting the throats of their victims or hacking them to bits with matches close to the barricade, an interhamwe militaman is chekcing ID Cards" (32).

In the name of Hutu and tutsi, myriad number of people lost their life in vain. There was unseen politics which was functioning and creating havoc, confusion, human right violation and turmoil situation because of which Rwanda became a nation of poverty, disease and invaders. Colonel Muslim expresses the positive side of French with his friend Doctor. They shave the things happily seeing their killing success. "I know said colonel Muslim, June 1992. February 1993. And you want to count on them again in 1994? The French have better things to do ..." (105). What we speculate about them is that Hutus are killing not form their own sense but form the guidance and sense of other people's country. It shows that French to some extent, seems more responsible for the terrific bloodshed in Rwanda. Thus French seems to an agent of torturer, rape and kill.

Murambi recounts the complex experience of the 1994 genocide and its aftermath. Simeon also expresses the anxiety regarding the worsening situation and thinks so seriously. He hopes nothing good will come and such condition really create barrenness of humanity. Simeon says:

No, there was no sign, Cornelius. Don't listen to those who claim to have seen spots of blood on the moon before the massacres. Nothing of the sort happened. The wind didn't howl with sorrow during the night, nor did the trees start to talk to each other about the fully of men. It was all very simple. Here in our region one of the perfects had said: 'No, none of these barbarous crimes here. 'They immediately killed

him. We knew that our turn would come. Then, one night, I went to look at the houses up there. It was a night like tonight, peaceful and clear, but there were fewer lights than usual on the Murambi hill. And then, yes, I reflected that every home without light was a future tomb.

(153)

Murambi, *The Book of Bones* actually depicts the heart rendering picture of the Rwandan genocide. Whenever, Cornelius moves with Simeon, he only observes the things happening in school and its doom. The horrible truth is that *Murambi* will turn into the grave and it will not be the place of living. There will be no light and no human beings. Mostly ethnic Tutsi's were killed in one of the bloodiest atrocities of the twentieth century. Simeon exposes his sadness about Murambi for being barrenness and soulless place. Cornelius describes the pathetic situation in such a way that:

Rwanda was the only place in the world that these victims could call their home. They still wanted its sun. It was too soon to throw them into the darkness of the earth. Besides, every Rwandan should have the courage to look reality in the eye. The strong odor of the remains proved that the genocide had taken place only four years earlier and not in ancient times. As they were perishing under the blows, the victims had shouted out. No one had wanted to hear them. The echo of those cries should be allowed to reverberate for as long as possible.

(147)

As a history teacher, Cornelius, desires to see the factuality of Rwanda Genocide who was living and working in Djibouti at the time of massacre. He returns from there and tries to understand the death of his family and others. His old childhood friend

explains to him that between fifty and sixty thousand people were slaughtered over the course of a few days while sheltering in the Murambi polytechnic school.

Cornelius visits place to place where he only sees chilling horror and overwhelming sadness of the tragedy. Besides, he simply gets the rotten smell of human body. Thus, he captures the trauma of genocide because it is only through narrativizing that the burden of trauma can be lightened.

### **Chapter III: Depiction of Genocide in Terry George's *Hotel Rwanda***

The film *Hotel Rwanda* is a representation of genocidal warfare in Rwanda. The film is all about real event of 1994, when a well-planned mass murder began and more than 800000 Rwandans primarily Tutsis were killed within ninety days. The film which depicts that many Hutu and Tutsi were against each other and which emphasizes the struggle many suffered as a result of opposing political, racial and ethnic views, has a history.

The Belgian colonists had created an artificial distinction between Hutu and Tutsi. They chose the taller, lighter-skinned, Rwandas to be Tutsi which left the others Hutus. The Belgians put the Tutsis in poor until they left and then the Hutus became in control of Rwanda. The General Juvenal Habyarimana, a Hutu dictator and president of Rwanda since 1973, has just been killed, as his plane was downed near Kigali-Rwanda airport. Such act strengthened the polarization between Hutu and Tutsi and then turned into genocide. In order to properly understand the vocabulary used in the film, it is necessary to refer to the historic background on which Terry George's work draws. The history of the central African nation of Rwanda goes back to several nine to nine centuries B.C. F. The population of Rwanda was constituted by three social groups, who arrived at successive moments: the "Twas" the "Hutus," and lastly the "Tutsis". The three categories or ethnic co-existed through all the last centuries without what the current terminology has come to term ethnic or tribal conflicts that vie to culminate one of the groups by the way of a genocide. Before the arrival of the German in 1884, the social groups who came to be identified as Hutu, Tutsi and Twa shared the same language Kinyarwanda, believed in the same God, Imana and lived side by side throughout the country. The Belgians used the already existing Hutu-Tutsi difference and made these differences as a part of their colonial

system. Hutus were used as forced labor for the colonial administration, and Tutsis supervised them. In 1933, Rwandans were given an ethnic identity card showing if they were Hutu or Tutsi. At that time 85% of the population was Hutu and 15% was Tutsi. This ID card policy favored Tutsi which is responsible to kindle the massacre. "The differences between Hutu and Tutsi was not determined by physical feature or religion as they are physically indistinguishable and practised same religion (almost) but was determined by several myths and later ID cards issues" (Adhikari, 287).

Actually, the film *Hotel Rwanda* is set amidst rising tensions in Rwanda leading up to and following the 1993 Arusha peace agreement that was supposed to end the conflict. In *Hotel Rwanda*, the conflict in the film is not completely relegated to the background through the film is about one man's personal story of his experience during the genocide while the film manages to adequately address events that occurred, the film's main concern is not only to tell the story of how Rusesabagina helped and saved the lives of many, but also to show his growth as a person as he realizes his place in the eyes of many viewers. The film stars of *Hotel Rwanda* are Don Cheadle (Paul Rusesabagina), Sophie Okonedo (Tatiana), Soaquin Phoenix (Jack D'Aglish) and Nick Nolte (Colonel Oliver).

The film informs us about the battles between the Hutus and Tutsis. It is based on the true story of a Rwandan genocide victim, Paul Rusesabagina. The film recounts the story of a Rusesabagina who fights bravely to save his family and the people around him in the time of great crisis and disaster of genocide. The film does not provide any background to the origins of the conflict until about 20 minutes into the film; and even scene that touches on the historical event. The film begins with sound from the Hutu extremist radio which states that the land belongs to Hutus only that the minority Tutsi's must be wiped out.



The Radio sound byte has no real historical context or explanation. Rather than providing a complete background of the conflict, this quote instead seems to portray Hutu as the good guys and all Tutsis people as evil and ill intentioned. In the film *Hotel Rwanda* Paul Rusesabagina is a hotel manager in Kigali, Rwanda who is smart, polished and understands the things happening around it. But in 1994, he becomes an unlikely hero as his country headed towards the bloody civil war within a hundred days massacre in Rwanda, over one million innocent people were butchered. Paul who is Hutu, curtly must depend on the very same trick he used to run his hotel to save his wife, Tatiana who is Tutsi, their family and more than one thousand Tutsi refugees escaping the Hutu Militia.

The seminal protagonist of this film is Paul Rusesabagina who is depicted as a character with impeccable style, courage and tremendous ability that allows him to save more than 1268 refugees staying at the hotel. Paul, in fact, resorts to bribery and blackmail and makes of the connection he has made in a clever and diplomatic circulus as the Rwandan elite to protect his family and other people who were staying at the hotel. Parroting extremist Hutu propaganda, the captain used the word cockroaches several times to refer to Paul's friends and family. The implication is that the Tutsis are pests that must be eliminated. The captain then aims his rifle at different people's heads and the camera now focuses in on Paul's face as it twists upwards pleading with him and assuring him that if he lets them all go he will personally handover much of the savings that are in the safe of the hotel. Then there are a series of crosscuts between the two men's faces after which the captain finally agrees. His men hustle the Prisoners in to several polices vans and follow Paul to the hotel, while the captain waits outside. Several tense moments follow as Paul ignores his gawking hotel employees and rushes over to the safe and hands over large amounts of money.

There are brief cuts always to the outside of the hotel where the others remain in the police vans until the captain slowly counts the money. He snarles again that the amount is less than that agrees upon till Paul convinces him that that is all there is with a brief twist of his head, the captain tells his men to let the prisoners go. The scene ends with the men, women and the children rushing joyfully in to the safety of the hotel.

The film *Hotel Rwanda* depicts the violence of the 1994 genocide through three motifs that utilize dark, visuals, white spaces and repeated images. In the film, the first motif is that of witnessing, as seen in the mass grave sequence when Paul and Gregoire accidentally find thousands of corpses in the street. The second motif in *Hotel Rwanda* is betrayal, as depicted in the foreigners, evacuation sequence, when Paul finds out that only white foreigners will be rescued from the carnage. The third motif in *Hotel Rwanda* is compassion, as revealed in the bribing sequence, when Paul bribes the militia to save the lives of his family and friends. The film manages to expose uncomfortable truths about genocide. A defining element that turned this conflict into genocide was the coordinated and deliberate plan of killing, made possible by propaganda spread via the Hutu power sponsored radio. When the president's plane is shot down, the announcer is back, initiating the call to cut down the tall trees which indicates the killing of Tutsi people. Stephen Holden writing for *The New York Times* says:

*Hotel Rwanda* radically down plays the actual gore, which is observed either through a fog or from a distance. Bodies are strewn everywhere, but the streets don't run with blood, and no hideous mutilation is shown, even the beatings seem tentative. Still, the movie does its job. You are left with the uncomfortable suspicions that if the conditions

for such a perfect storms of hatred were right; a similar catastrophe could boil up almost everywhere. (3-4)

The movie represents a brutal and heart-rending picture of genocide. In the film interhamwe (Hutu extremists) snatch a machete or a gun and beam in their sudden power; permission is implicit. It's one on one, but in aggregate, it is compounded savagery that becomes genocide. By the time the Tutsis drove the Hutu across the border into the Congo; a million innocent lay dead on the ground. If you close your eyes to avoid watching the butchery, the sounds of sallaughter pour into your ears. Of all the images that linger after the movie releases us, the most terrifying one is the joy on the faces of the killers as they beat and kill. They dance, laugh on the bodies of their victims.

A few scees later, in the bar of the hotel, a European asks a Rwandan about the Hutu and the Tutsi people and the origins of the fighting. The journalist named Jack asks a Rwanda journalist, a man who is friends with Rusesabagina, as to what the actual difference between the Hutus and the Tutsis is. The man's response provides a brief and very basic history of the origin of the conflict, which is the colonialist Belgians tilt towards the Tutsis whom they preferred over the Hutus.

This is the only time where the film attempts to explain the history behind the conflict and it does so in less than one minute. While this history is true, it falls short as a full explanation of Rwanda before a colonial rule, and explains the reasons why Belgium supported a revolt led by the Hutu people, after years of ruling through the Tutsi ethnic group. Thus, the conflict is clearly focused to give a detailed explanation about the origins of the conflict. Rosesabagina responds by referring to the signing of the Arusha peace agreement, which was facilitated by the UN, but did not succeed in alleviating the conflict in Rwanda. Moreover, the film fails to show the Rwandan

genocide in its true scene as it presents the fictional genocide and is excessively inclined to narrate the story of Russesabagina. It overemphasizes on the heroism of Paul and overshadows the genocide which was devastating and heart-rending. Paul's real life heroism and Terry George's noble effort are motion question. The assassination of Juvenal Habyarimana on 6 April 1994, the systematic slaughter of Tutsi civilians, the underground black market and the lack of intervention from the west to stop the genocide indicate the emerging anti-human act in Rwanda. The story is slightly cynical towards the west. It is emotional and captivating in trying to draw the attention of the audiences. The film genuinely appeals to the audiences. After watching the film they are sympathetic towards the Rwanda victims and critical towards the west for their indifference. The striking thing is that Rwandans still talk about ethnicity and more worryingly about ethnic grievance.

Through the Paul's Journey, we experience the genocide in a number of ways. Initially, we are shocked along with him to find that such monstrous hatred and violence could be possible. Then, as he encounters an impossible set of challenges that he must overcome to keep the people he is protecting alive, we wonder how he will negotiate these obstacles. Finally, we are divested with him by the moral cowardice of the western nations who so cynically deserted Rwanda when they were in a position to stop the killings. Paul's reaction to this desertion gives the film its strong moral message. *Hotel Rwanda* is a film based largely on family issue. In the very beginning Paul seems indifferent towards the matter outside his family. As Paul drives home in a blackout, witnessing scenes of unrest in the street. On turning he finds that his Tutsi neighbours have descended upon his house. They fear their lives and Paul is the only Hutu they trust. His son witnesses the murder of the family next door and goes in to a speechless, traumatized state. As such reality has finally hit

Paul. The edgy clam that characterized his previous behaviour is replaced by hysteria when he believes that his son has been hurt. It turns out not to be his son's blood that is on his clothes, nevertheless, things first hint of violence is enough for Paul to realize the seriousness of the situation. The next morning, they see bodies in the streets demonstrating that the genocide is well underway in Kigali. Seeing such horrific situation his naïve optimism is dashed by the shocking by reality of genocide. As Paul drives home he finds Hutus extremists are beating Paul's neighbor. Seeing such situation Paul and his wife are peeping through their gate. Paul's wife is terrified but closing the gate, Paul whispers to her that there is nothing they can do. He only becomes indifferent to the world outside his family. In the bed the same evening, Tatiana, Paul's wife asks why the neighbor was killed. She appeals Paul to help the neighbours with his contacts while their conversation is going on Paul tells Tatiana that he can't ask one of his contacts in the army to help his neighbour Victor, who was beaten and then taken by soldiers. He says that he can't help because Victor is not family. He remains quite indifferent and selfish.

For Paul family matters great and focus on the protection of his family only. He does not feel any sense of bothering for not helping his other neighbours albeit he knows his neighbour in initial stage seems to be selfish man in the film but at the end of the film, Terry George transforms him surprisingly into a savior, and guardian who saves the thousand of lives. We can see the signs when the box of Machetes spills open; we are placed off guard when Paul invites his wife Tatiana to a candle-lit moment of repose on the rooftop, only to tell her that when the attack comes she is to throw herself, and the children off the roof. When the Tutsi neighbours seek shelter and hide in Paul's home, Paul is unwilling to have them in his house. He only refuses to acknowledge the fact that the Rwandan Tutsis are in danger and the situation is

worsening minute by minute. He shows his anger towards his wife for providing them shelter. Tatiana begs him to let them stay in their house just for a night. He agrees reluctantly in the words of his wife. Tatiana's sister and brother in law visit Paul at the hotel. Due to the terrific situation, they want to leave Rwanda and take Tatiana and her children along with them. They feel Paul is in no danger because he is a Hutu while they, Tatiana and her children are Tutsi. Paul seems to be highly sanguine because of the presence of United Nations. While Paul is later driving towards home and hears gunfire, shouting and glass breaking. Buildings are burning and smashing. He finds terrific situation outside the Rwanda. When they arrive, his family and neighbours are hiding in the dark. They say to Paul that president Habyarimana has been murdered and Tutsi rebels have killed him. Paul says that this is nonsense that has no meaning.

So, Paul is highly optimistic and hopeful because no bad thing will happen due to the presence of United Nations and is supporting UN for keeping the situation under control. Paul still trusts on the western world for managing such conflict. Though he has attained success and a high social status, these achievements were possible because of the western influence that remained in Rwanda postcolonialism. That night, he finds several of his neighbourhood hiding in his house due to the threat of Hutus. The neighbours are terrified because it has just been announced that Tutsi rebels had murdered president Habyarimana, and Hutu extremist were planning to take violent action to retaliate. Rusesabagiana's wife, a Tutsi, then pulls him aside to tell him the neighbours all run to him because he is the only person to whom they can trust. This scene contains two key elements. First the scene establishes Rusesabagiana as the person with the ability to help all, thus constructing Rusesabagiana as the hero of the film. This is developed in several other scenes throughout the film, establish

Rusesabagina as the go to person, and the one individual with the potential to help others who don't have strong ties to the western world.

Though Rusesabagina calls on many of his western connections through the film, he is often left with the burden of having to make tough decisions by himself. He realizes he does not have the support of the west when UN officials and buses arrive to transport only Americans and Europeans from danger leaving innocent Rwandans to find for themselves. He realizes he was disillusioned by the idea that the western world cared about Rwanda and had truly moved past the ideas present during and postcolonialization when a UN colonel he thought was an advocate for the Rwandans but addresses them as dirt.

It is also the point in the film at which Rusesabagina realizes he does not have support from those who are truly in a position to stop genocide, and he must use his wits to help save lives in the best way he can. It is important to note there are a couple of characters from the western world who seem to try best to help Rusesabagina and other Rwandans. However, their roles may serve to mitigate the racism shown by the colonel from the UN. The irony is that the role of UN seemed meaningless even after seeing the genocidal murders.

However, the film *Hotel Rwanda* avoids overt voyeurism and relies more on the audiences' power of imagination to work through the trauma. It is the story of one man, hotel manager Paul Rusesabagina, in 1990s Kigali, and his heroic efforts to save the lives of his family, friends and acquaintances from the Rwandan genocide unfolding all around him. Terry George uses one man's moral dilemmas to stand in for the violence and trauma. This establishes a network of looks that call on us to work through the violence. Beasts that wreak havoc on victims are somewhat absent in *Hotel Rwanda*. Terry George's screen writer spent a year writing the first draft of the

script. Terry George himself did extensive research on the genocide and went to Rwanda several times, sometimes accompanied by the real Paul and Tatiana Rusesabagina. In "Smearing a Hero" George claimed that he believed he had "found a story that showed that even in the midst of such horror [as the genocide] the human capacity for good can triumph" (Qtd. In Uraizee 16). That carnage had its origins in what Johan Pottier calls the "modern struggle" in Rwanda for power and wealth . . . it was not a "tribal conflict", rather it was "a class conflict minutely prepared and callously executed" (9).

From 1860 onwards, the Rwandan King Rwabugiri, a Tutsi began a process of ethnic polarization that hitherto had been absent. Hutu peasants were forced into agrarian labour and exploited, as were, to a lesser extent, Tutsi commoners. Even the wealth, not race, was the basis of division. In 1926 the New Belgian colonial administration radicalized the Hutu-Tutsi division, in particular by supporting the Tutsi royal court and aristocracy until independence. In the early twentieth century,, Rwanda had a series of famines and its population migrated a lot. Rwanda became independent in 1962 with a Hutu presidency, Gregoire Kayibanda. In 1969, exiled Tutsi launched a military invasion and were beaten back. Around, 10,000 Tutsis were killed in the process. All these led to economic collapse in the late 1980s. Thus, as Pottier indicates "acute poverty, externally induced economic malaise and the ruthlessness of embattled politicians gave rise to a restless, deadly social layer of desperately poor, easy to manipulate young thugs" (21). In 1991, politician faithful to Habyarimana organized a structure called Hutu power which defined enemies of the state as the Tutsi. In 1992-93 a series of massacres took place in Bugesera. In 1993, Habyarimana negotiated peace with exiled Tutsi in Uganda who had formed an army



(the RPF) but he failed to implement it. In 1994, his plane was shutdown as he was returning from Tanzania and that event immediately triggered the genocide.

The genocide itself is represented in *Hotel Rwanda* in the mass grave sequence in which Paul first discovers the extent of the violence. In this sense, which lasts 15 minutes Paul is returning from a meeting with major Georges Rutaganda played by Hakeem Kae-Kazim at his military camp in what is now a devastated part of Kigali after most of the killings have already taken place. It is significant that this is the first time Paul has ventured outside the hotel since the genocide began. Indeed it is in receding daylight at the camp that he witnesses with anguish the horror that men like major Rutaganda have brought. Here George represents a quick series of pangs to depict the brutal fact that during the genocide thousands of Tutsi women were gang-raped, raped with objects such as sharp sticks and gunbarrels, held in sexual slavery, or sexually mutilated. Many of the raped were then brutally killed.

*Hotel Rwanda* has much to recommend in its depiction of various aspects genocide, such as the speed of the descent in to chaos and disaster. One day, in Rwanda there is relative peace and calm, the next day (in Kigali especially) there is mass slaughter on a truly horrific scale. *Hotel Rwanda's* director Terry George presents genocide as a romance and comedy. George clarifies in *Bringing the True Story of an African Hero to film*:

I wanted to be a love story and a political thriller about an ordinary man who finds the courage he never thought he had, and with each step manager to hold off an army. . . . The whole gore factor didn't interest me in the slightest. I wanted people to feel a love story and an individual story rather than a docudrama about a massacre. (255)

George's statement obviously shows his motives behind making the film and his intent focus to portray genocide. He is more inclined to the commercial facet of the movie rather than the serious subject matter. More importantly, *Hotel Rwanda* needed to be romantic comedy in order to obtain commercial funding and sustain in the Hollywood. "Go for with the terror" (48) reminds of Ame Thompson, Deputy Film Editor of *The Hollywood Reporter* in her. *The Struggle of Memory Against Forgetting* writes "and you risk making audiences fun for the exists" (48). She mentions the film as belonging to, "that honorable Hollywood tradition ... [taking] horrifying event in the world, [showing] audiences how and why they happened, and [reminding] them not to repeat history" (47). Thompsom implies that there is a commercial requirement for a Hollywood storyline, one that needs not only a Hollywood ending, but a Hollywood hero. Without these components, the film would have been too risky for producers and the high draw actor Don Cheadle to participate; *Hotel Rwanda* has deliberate tendency to understand the horrors of the Rwanda genocide.

The film makers chose to show the actual violence sparingly but the results of slaughter are not avoided: in two different scenes the character a mass of dead bodies. Other strengths of the film are its dramatization of the menacing atmosphere of hatred created by Hutu power extremists: the chilling hate speech of the extremist controlled radio RTLM and the frightening intensity of the interhamwe militants are powerfully recreated. The film was shot in South Africa, but genuine Rwandan refugees were used as extras in these scenes instead of locals – a choice that doubtless adds to the film's authenticity.

The overall impression is that we are witnessing Paul having a horrible nightmare. The story reveals a choice not to highlight the political and historical factor that contribute to the genocide but rather to focus on one man's experience of it.

The film discloses Paul and his loyal Tutsi driver Dube taking hotel van to pick up some necessary goods. Dube is nervous about the tension in Rwanda but Paul dismisses his concern. The time is passed, he tells him. The next scene has Paul sitting in the office of supplier George (Hakeem Kackazim) who it turns out, is an exponent of the radical politics that are about to drive the country into madness. He gives Paul a shirt, one which we will soon learn bright and colourful uniform of the interahamwe. When they are leaving a container falls and its contents spill out on to the horror of warehouse. It is filled with machetes. The focus of the film is Paul Rusesabagina: the challenges he faces and how he overcomes them; the illusions he has and how he responds when they are shattered.

The depiction of Paul Rusesabagina in the film is one that not only incorporates the heroic aspects of his story but also transcends his story offering portrait of humanity in extreme situation. He is the film's center and is emotional core. Through the Paul's journey we experience the genocide in a number of ways. Initially, we are shocked along with him to find that such monstrous hatred and violence could be possible. Then, as he encounters an impossible set of challenges that he must overcome to keep the people he is protecting alive, we wonder how he will be divested with him by the moral cowardice of the western nations who so cynically deserted Rwanda when they were in a position to stop the killings. Paul's firm reaction to this dissertation truly accords the film positive ones. Paul's role as witness allows the viewers to react to the horror of what is happening in Rwanda. We see the violence through his eyes.

Like many Rwandans Paul is unwilling to believe that the extremist threats to exterminate the Tutsis would ever really be carried to fruition. Testimonies reveal that not all the Rwandans were sanguine: some were extremely nervous in the lead up to

this time and did sense that something dreadful was coming. But, like many other Rwandas, Paul refuses to believe the worst about his people. His subsequent loss of innocence when the cataclysm unfolds is therefore able to mirror our own. The force of the film *Hotel Rwanda* is altogether its capability to give a metaphoric structure to what occurred in 1994. In concentrating on Paul Rusesabagina, the manager of the famous Belgian hotel "Hotel des Mille Collines" the film achieves the showing of at least four things: 1) heroism of the individual who won over brutality; 2) the indistinctive effect of the 1994 slaughters upon all the population of Rwanda; (3) the fact that survival was largely also a matter of chance; (4) the indifference of the world, especially the white westerners world. It is fair to underline the point by referring to the way the United Nations troops (UNAMIR) are portrayed. They are not peace makers, are not allowed to shoot in order to stop the killings, and are altogether impotent. With the intensification of the killings; UN troops and all white westerners desert Rwanda and leave the Africans of Rwanda to their doomed fate. Colonel Oliver puts it so well to Paul Rusesabagina: "You are dirty, you are worse than a nigger, you are African" (Qtd. in Nzabatisind 235). Around a million of people were murdered within the four months of the atrocity.

Of course, to see these images in the movie theatres and comfort takes again its rights afterwards, as one journalist cynically points out in *Hotel Rwanda*: "People in the west might see the horrible events on their television sets say that it is terrible and go back to eating their dinner" (Qtd. in Nzabatisind 235). In the film, Africa is represented as a metaphorical place of nonhumans, although Paul Rusesabagina strives to remind us of country. In the genocide narrative of the *Hotel Rwanda* a variety, it is the Hutu power extremists whose aggressiveness is projected on to the Tutsis, as we see in the propaganda broadcasts; as their evil nature is made transparent

for us, we translate the evil natives of colonialism in to the evil, swarming interhamwe, to combat whom the self-sacrificing bearer of the light of civilization is represented in the person of Paul Rusesabagina. Though Paul is exemplary, it is by no means representative of the real life actors; moderate Hutus, the United Nations, the United States, the French and the Belgians failed as groups to act decisively, forcefully, and in a coordinated manner. Terry George's exceptional efforts are not the matter of debate but now the essentials of the Rwanda genocide are eluded is the matter of concern. The primary focus of the film is on the depiction of killing, turchering atrocity of Hutu extremist over Tutsi people. In order to safeguard the victimized people, the role of Paul is really praiseworthy. Depicting the exact a mass murder, Philip Gourevitch, in *We Wish to inform you that Tomorrow we will Be killed with our Families*, writes:

In April of 1994, the government of Rwanda called on everyone in the Hutu majority to kill everyone in the Tutsi minority. Over the next three months 800,000 Tutsis were murdered in the most unambiguous case of genocide since Hitler's war against the Jews (16).

These lines highlight the mass killing predominantly the Tutsis not because of serious subject matter but because of ethnic hatred that they did. Actually the Rwanda genocide is a story of inaction and despair. Even the terrific events experienced by Paul and his wife Tatiana were downplayed to serve a squeamish audience. When asked his opinion of a scene where many people, include his wife and children, try to leave the hotel in a convoy of UN trucks and fall into an ambush from Hutu death squads wielding machetes. The truck is full of massacre people. Even in a speech, Paul evokes this same moment. In the film, Tatiana runs off throwing her wedding ring at Paul while fervently accusing him to have left her and their children

completely alone. Actually, Paul extricates her from the truck himself and carry her into the hotel. The ambush traumatizes his wife to such an extent that she remains in bed for weeks unable to move, lets alone speak. The movie attempts to present the most awful prospect of genocide but it is unable to fulfill it as so little time is given to those parts. As so less time is given to those aspects, there is a risk of those scenes being unnoticed by the viewers. The most heartrending scene passes away just in a minute that viewers have to the hotel and tells Paul that she made it to his brother's in-law's home. While she could not find him or his wife, she was able to locate their two young daughters. The two children are with an older lady across the street from where their parents were killed. She then describes the horror that she was witnessed. The Hutus makes her watch the killing of a little girl. The girl screamed for her life promising that she would not be a Tutsi anymore. The awful truth is that Tutsis are butchered by Hutu militia. The film has many scenes which depicts the genocide violence. These scenes recount the panic and terrible situation which touches each and everybody. Genocide is always painful and most evil of all. It neglects the parts of human suffering, pain and troubles.

The pivotal scene occurs when the hoped for Belgian peacekeepers arrive at the hotel. The entire population of the hotel is elated, and perhaps to leave. However, while this is happening, we see colonel Oliver having a heated discussion with the Belgian officer in charge. Oliver throws his hat on the ground and storms back into the hotel. Paul follows him to the bar and serves a drink to the distraught colonel. A total of 3900 people of twenty-two nationalities were evacuated from Rwanda on April 9 and 10, just a few days after the plane crash. It is probably the single most devastating blow to the hopes of anti-genocidal forces in Rwanda. As Linda Melvern in *Conspiracy to Murder: The Rwandan Genocide* says: "The evacuation was

devastating for Rwanda. It sent a signal to the extremists that their well said plans could be implemented without fear of too many paying western eyes (Qtd. in Fletcher 21). One awful truth is that the Rwandan genocide was entirely preventable but a combination of public apathy and a lack of political will ensured that it wouldn't be stopped.

In *Hotel Rwanda*, Paul's role is not that of betrayer but of the betrayed. George went to Rwanda after the genocide in or near Rwanda, suffering from trauma and shock, especially the women, many of whom had been raped and were now pregnant: many survivors were forced to continue living side by side with the killers of their loved ones. George stresses the lack of concern by the rest of the world for the victims and survivors. The outside world, as many historians have shown, turned a blind eye to the killings, and this powerfully illustrates in the foreigners' evacuation sequence of *Hotel Rwanda*. This scene takes place well before the RPF (with French help) intervened to stop the genocide. The film stresses almost all attention on the lack of action of the international community. There is a United Nations presence in Rwanda, represented by Colonel Livi (Nick Nolte). He sees what is happening, informs his superiors, asks for help and intervention and is ignored.

Colonel Oliver, the Canadian commander of the UN forces in the area feels increasingly angry by the world's indifference of the ongoing genocide. At one point, he feels Paul that he and those at the hotel are considered to be dirt worthless in the eyes of the western countries. Who don't want to get involved in any African conflict, the UN is supervising the evacuation of foreigners. The Africans at the hotel watch as these privileged, lucky, and white people are ushered into buses. When some priests and nuns appear with more African children, they are informed that only the whites among them will be allowed to leave. In this one startling image, Terry George

captured the abyss that exist between the rich and the poor, whites and blacks, those who have all the breaks and those who must suffer the most dreadful and terrifying circumstances of deprivation.

Paul soon finds himself in his first life and death situation in a scene outside one of the hotels where he has worked. A group of soldiers has just found out that the family and friends who has asked them to protect and not Hutus but Tutsi crackroches. The soldiers are outraged and want to kill them all immediately. Paul is told that he must shoot the first person. He refuses, offering the excuse that he does not like guns. The soldiers demand a sum per person, more than Paul has. Paul pulls out a wad of money and officer says it will be enough for his family. But twenty or so others don't have the money to save themselves. Rather than see his friends and neighborus die, Paul makes a deal so that the soldiers will escort them to the Hotel Milles Collines, where Paul will give him money in returns for their safety.

Survivor stories from the genocide are littered with these sorts of incidents where people were able to pay someone off in order to avoid being killed. Whether this phenomena suggests that many Rwandans in authority were keen to avoid having to kill (and were able to justify not doing so to witness under the pretense of taking money), or whether such people were interested in killing but more interested in making a buck is not clear. However, from Paul's submissive voice and posture to the officer's rage-turned-to greed, the film recreates these incidents with a realism that is chilling accurate. Once he is back at the hotel, Paul uses every trick in the book to wheel and deal, lie, bluff, beg, corce and burry in order to keep the hotel safe from the murders. He knows exactly what strings to pull at what times in order to keep people alive. Early on, he lies to his Sabena superior in Belgium (Jean Reno) and severely downplays the chaos in Rwanda, knowing that if his boss knew the severity of the



situation they would close the hotel down. Later, when an army unit comes to the hotel with the intention of eliminating the Tutsis, he effectively shames his boss into using his contacts in the French government to call the forces off one of the reasons he was able to keep the hotel safe from attack for so many weeks was that he had high profile clients who came to him during the chaos as a reliable supplier of alcohol and other hard-to-obtain items. The film demonstrates this through Paul's friendship with General Bizimungu (Fanaokoena), another character based on a real life person. At the end of the film, with any vestige of order gone, there is no longer anything to stop the interhamwe overrunning the hotel. Paul convinces the reluctant General Bizimungu to come to their rescue. Paul finally realizes that his faith firstly in his own countrymen not to start the genocide and then into international community to stop it, has been misplaced. And in the same moment, he realizes that it is time for him to take responsibility himself. He soothes his fellow Rwandans and counsels them on the pointlessness trying to resist this injustice. In the film's enduring image of the west's desertation of Rwanda, the bus Paul's away as Paul and his people stand in front of the hotel. From now on they are alone.

Nevertheless, the film does not really attempt to engage with the deeper issues of Rwanda. Early in the film, the much disputed issue of Hutu/Tutsi difference is given a cursory mention. This occurs during a scene in the bar of the hotel, where an American news cameraman (Joaquin Phoenix) is talking to a Rwandan journalist about the difference between Hutu and Tutsi. The Rwandan's reply suggests that the Belgians created the distinction in order to rule the colony more effectively. Such an explanation is overly simplistic:

The intertwined relations of Hutus and Tutsis does mean that they can't be considered separate ethnic groups, but this does not mean that they

don't have different histories. This is a pitfall that the film makers should have avoided, in a country where history is so contested, oversimplifying in this way is plainly unacceptable. (qtd. In Fletcher, 22)

Phoenix then turns to the two Rwandan ladies sitting next to him at the hotel bar. He asks, if they are Hutus or Tutsis. One of them turns out to be Hutu and the other, Tutsi – the journalist concluded that the two Rwandans from two different ethnic groups could be the "twins." While the Belgian colonists didn't invent the difference between Hutu and Tutsi, they did cement and exploit it in a way that was to have immensely destructive consequences. The real understanding of Rwanda in particular and Africa in general must acknowledge that ethnic division used as tool to rule Africa in the colonial era. In one of the most visually disturbing scenes of the film, the presentation of the (affects of the) violence is masked. Paul is returning from a supplier in town and while driving back to the hotel, believes that the driver has veered off and road as their path is excessively rough. Because their way is shrouded in an early morning mist, neither Paul nor can the driver see exactly where they are going, so they stop the car and Paul exists to investigate the problem. Upon stepping out of the car, he trips and falls on the top of a mutilated body.

However, the viewer is then shown exactly what Paul is faced with as he lies on the ground: an up-close shot of the bloodied face of a child, the expression frozen in fear. In horror, Paul looks around him and finds himself surrounded by another bodies. His vision of the bodies is limited, though, as the mist enshrouding them makes it almost impossible to put together any details of the sight before him. As he moves along the road to see what lies ahead, the mist dissipates slightly revealing the aftermath of gruesome massacre: the road is strewn with corpse. Rusesabagina breaks

down in sobs and tears as he has realized the extremity of the dire circumstances he and so many others, are in. During this time his main assistant in the hotel attempts to come in after hearing the cries and fearing he may be in trouble. Rusesabagina yells desperately for him to stay out of the room. Soon after he emerges in his suit, completely in control. This scene depicts trauma he is experiencing, and his take charge attitude following such heartache shows he is a strong character, capable of making difficult decisions in the face of adversity. The only real help he receives from non-westeners in the film is from Rwandans with high involvement in the plans of the genocide, he obtains their help through multiple bribes throughout the movie.

The film *Hotel Rwanda* appears with the short coming of logical explanation to the genocide. The director and script writer failed to contextualize the violence of tremendous Rwandan genocide. In one of the scenes, when Desmond Dube asks Paul why people are so cruel, Paul replies that they have hatred and they are insane. Rather than focusing such massive genocide happened in Rwanda, the film sometimes seems to be highlighted simply on the individual act. The film implicitly encourages the audiences to identify with the hero of the story rather than the victims of genocide; the film's inability to place members of the audience in a position of identification with the immediately victimized group makes it even more unreliable and over the top. On the film, Paul does not look like a Rwandan in any manner; neither his family nor is the life style he lives African/Rwandan. Terry Genocide strategically makes his character more like western because he targeted western audiences. He wants audiences to relate with Paul and understand the story of genocide. Even in time of terror and fright, Paul arranges a romantic supper for his wife on the hotel roof. This is so unreal scene which gives the glimpse of director's fantasy. There are murders, exterminations, gunfire around them but Paul and his wife are having a dinner. Taking Tatiana by the hand, he walks her to the roof where a candle light dinner awaits them.

There are gun-shots in the background. They sit and begin to talk about their lives. They laugh Paul tells Tatiana that if the Hutus were to come and kill him, she should come to the roof and jump off with her kids in hand. The machets is not a good way to die and their children should not witness the murder of their parents.

*Hotel Rwanda's* story, however, focuses on the story of Paul Rusesabagina and his struggle to protect hundreds of refugees from gruesome deaths. While the film does not ignore the events of the genocide, it focuses on the personal struggle endured by Rusesabagina as he strives to help others in the absence of western aid. In the end Paul is able to keep the refugees safely within the confines of the hotel until the massacre finally subsides. When the film ends Rusesabagina has been reunited with his family giving the illusion of a happy ending to an event that has no happy ending. Actually, the movie offers some tints of images of genocide and Rwandan the then situation. Rwandan genocide was the most disturbing and well-organized blood path of 20<sup>th</sup> century which left almost million of corpses dead. The incomprehensibility of the actions of the perpetrators, as well as the vast number of lives in such a short time period, are aspects that contribute towards making the genocide an enigma.

Thus, the research intends to underline the Terry George's depiction of genocide in *Hotel Rwanda*. The film depicted ethnicity as the main factor that motivated the Rwandan genocide. Through this film Rusesabagina is presented as a hero not in the sense of hotel manager but in the sense of rescuer who selflessly fought and save the life of myriad number of the people. The focus of *Hotel Rwanda* is on individuals who resist the systematic violence, and that leads to hope at the end of motive. For example, in one sequence, Paul has romantic dinner with Tatiana on the roof of the hotel. Their ability to express their love for each other and enjoy the sunset on the roof, despite its incongruity with the perpetration of massacres, does express hope for the future. The scattered corpses of the dead body, raped situation,

matchetes, gunshots, aggressive nature of the people, atrocity and murders shown in the film really made more serious and sensitive for the viewers. Terry George attempts to depict genocide by means of the story Rusesabagina. If Paul does not think and does not protect the people coming before him, of course, the large scale of genocide will occur, which is shown in the film. It is because of the Paul's courage, and action, no such tragedy happened like the Nazi Holocaust of the Jews, the Rwandan genocide was systematically planned, highly organized and centrally directed one that brought massive devastation of human body. Hunger, thirst, and sheer terror and murder were the core things around which Rwandan genocide took place. In one scene, Paul is driving through a small broken-down village and stops the car to see what is causing the bumpy terrain. He gets out of the car and sees hundreds of dead bodies lying on the gravel road. It actually proves the mass murder happened in the name of ethnic tension in Rwanda.

Thus, *Hotel Rwanda* is a film that offers a comprehensive understanding of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. The most pathetic scene in the film is when Paul returns from a supplier in town where the road is strewn with corpses. The film shocks the viewers and that shock is its prime purpose.

#### **Chapter IV: Conclusion: The Affect of Shock in *Murambi* or *Hotel Rwanda***

The aim of the research is to analyse the depiction and representation of genocide in the two distinguished texts as *Murambi*, *The Book of Bones* by Boubacar Diop and *Hotel Rwanda* by Terry George. Rwandan genocide was the most disturbing and well organized blood path of twentieth century that left almost myriad number of corpse behind. The film *Hotel Rwanda* projects the horrific situation caused by the ethnic and tribal hatredness in which Paul Rusesabagina plays the role of protagonist and struggle to protect the people. He belongs to Hutu community but his wife belongs to Tutsi community. The film basically focuses on the story of Paul and his struggles to project the hundreds of refugees from gruesome deaths.

In the very beginning, Paul doesn't take the conflict seriously because he does not believe in it. He seems quite selfish and he only works and exposes himself as a dutiful manager. But later on, he gets believed whenever his son witnesses the murder of the family next door and goes in to a speechless traumatized state. Moreover, when Paul was during in a blackout. He saw the scene of unrest in the street and found many Tutsis neighboring descended upon his house.

Paul's wife's role is very significant that guided him to save the traumatized people by the racial conflict. He was the only person to whom Hutus trust. But the very fact is that almost a million people lost their life predominately Tutsis in Rwanda. Anyway, the film depicts ethnicity as the main factor that motivated the Rwandan genocide. Paul is presented as the man of courage and ability whose role is like guardian for the refugee's people and negotiates with both Hutu extremist and UN peace keepers to maintain the situation as before. Though he supports the presence of UN in Rwanda, he eventually knew the fact that their role is to deteriorate the nation

rather than maintaining the peace. In order to protect the people, he even does immoral acts like bribing.

Terry George emanates pangs and brutal acts during the genocide through the eyes of Paul. The scene of gang-raped for Tutsi woman with objects (sharp sticks, gun barrels) exactly touches the heart of each and every people. No human can be happy seeing such situation. Faced with such scene Paul becomes angry and attempts to manage the situation. Actually, the movie offers some tints of images of genocide with hundreds of dead bodies lying on the road. Thus, the film stresses on the depiction of killing, torturing atrocity of Hutu extremist over Tutsi. The dispersed corpses of dead body, raped situation, machetes gunshots, atrocity, and aggressive nature of people, shown in the movie genuinely catches the traumatic situation faced by the Rwandan people. Thus, Terry George, to some extent, seems quite fit to depict the reality of mass murder through the Paul Rusesabanging and his selfless attempt to save the life of the people. *Hotel Rwanda* celebrates the victory of Paul Rusesabagina, his bravery, his integrity and his altruism. The film also shows that during genocide there were those brave men and women who took sides to protect the Tutsis who could have easily fallen victim to the machetes and knobkerries of the Interhawe. Paul is situated in the center of conflict and all the gruesome events are presented for the viewers through him.

Similarly, this present novel *Murambi, The Book of Bones* is also based on the issue of genocide that unfolds the aftermath of mass murder happening in Murambi polytechnic school. The story of the genocide moves around key characters as Cornelius Uvimana, Michael Serumundo, Jessica and Dr. Joseph Karekez. The novel shows the Cornelius's return, his discovery of childhood friends with their shared memories and his visit to Murambi. In other words, this novel is all about the journey

of Cornelius from Djibouti to Murambi where cataclysmic destruction took place in the name of Hutu and Tutsi. However, the overall focus is on the ninety days in Rwanda. The protagonist of this novel is Cornelius who shares both the responsibility and the plight of genocide. During the time period of genocide he was in Djibouti and therefore, he has come at Murambi to confront and understand the history of genocide. The novel begins with a Tutsi Michael whose families are imperiled by Hutu neighbours. Similarly, Fastin also blames the past domination of Tutsis. However, through these two different characters. The reality of animosity is clearly made visible.

Having spent twenty five years in exile, Cornelius comes back to his birth place to know what happened to his family in 1994. Through Michael narratives Cornelius knows about his family. Cornelius thought that his all the family members have been slaughtered but he ultimately knows the fact that his father and his uncle are alive. He got most of the information from his uncle that his father Dr. Joseph Karekezi is an engineer and well planner of massacre at Murambi. Cornelius found that he is the son of monster. His father was Hutu fanatic and involved in killing though he lost his wife and children. The reason behind this conflict was that Tutsis were supported by Belgians where as Hutus were supported by France.

Cornelius gets information mostly through his uncle and his friends. Cornelius is shocked that the genocide appears to have left no visible traces on the city. His father, Joesph is responsible for the mass murder who damaged social harmony we experience and know the massacre happening in polytechnical school through the description of Cornelius. We know through this novel that the combination of self hatred, greed and recrimination led to genocide in Rwanda. Actually Jessica and cornelius are intimate childhood friends. Once Jessica also shows the meaningless



living and existence because of genocide and tells him that many women and girls are raped and seduced before they are killed. Such statement indicates that human beings are treated less than animals. They are butchering in large numbers. He travels from Kigali to Murambi and finally hears the truth about his father's role in killing. The novel makes us clear that Hutu and Tutsi are taking them as their arch enemy and want to eliminate as much as possible. Thus, it creates incendiary message of hatred, goading people to murder. In order to bring such vexing and tragic situation of Rwanda, the role of west is explicitly responsible. Finally, the novel emanates the grotesque hyper-reality of massacre and the uncanny sense that a person's very physical existence is dispersed.

*Murambi, the Book of Bones* is the obvious reflection of tribal hatred between Hutu and Tutsi. The core of the novel focuses on the conflict generated in the name of races which is similar with what Raphael Lemkins says "genos' (race/tribe) and cide (killing). Lemins argues that, "Composite of different acts of persecution or destruction all constitute genocide" (Qtd. In Levene 44). In other words, he further clarifies that genocide is related to death, destruction, terror, and extermination. So as the case with novel too. The main character of this novel Cornelius gets lost his mother and his siblings due to the ethnic tension because his mother belonged to Tutsi race. Since she belongs to the different race like Tutsi, she was killed but her husband was not because he was Hutu. Mark Mazoer clarified us that mass Killing in African people is a kind of genocide that particularly deal with racial issues. Cornelius, later knew the fact that his father protected the Hutus and made plan to kill the Tutsi with different types of machetes, knives blades etc. In the novel, Jessica presents the plight condition of woman, and girls. They are raped and misbehaved before they kill. It is somehow similar with notion of chalk and Jonassan that genocide is "a form of one

sided mass killing" (Qtd. In Levene 10). In other words, genocide solely created humiliation, personal loss, brutality and violent death.

The film *Hotel Rwanda* depicts the physical loss of human body through the eyes of Paul Rusesabangina, This film also shows the communal hatred based on two different races as Hutu and Tutsi. Which Steven considers genocide as a murder "any national, ethnic, racial, religious, political, social gender as these groups by whatever means" (Qtd. In Levene 40). The film depicts the same thing that is faced by Paul while protecting his wife, relatives and other people. Paul and his wife belong to Hutu and Tutsi race. He faced so many troubles to protect his wife because she belongs to Tutsi. He (Paul) saw many hacking dead bodies of people, spreading here and there while he was in vehicle. Sometimes, he finds the obstacles in driving because of dead bodies in the street. He also feels uneasy and finds difficulty to identify the bodies when Helen Feins says that what distinguishes the victims of genocide from those in war is a case not of "where they are but who they are" (Qtd. In Levene 61). The idea of Feins makes us clear that, the film *Hotel Rwanda* depicts the loss of physical body predominantly of Tutsi that refers to a certain kind of community. Many Tutsis races were killed by the Hutu extremists.

However, despite the fact that *Hotel Rwanda* and *Murambi: The Book of Bones* are two different texts, their main issue is the same i.e. genocide. The context of both texts are based on the 1994 genocide of Rwanda in which a number of people were killed not because of different national identity but because of racial aloofness. The novelist Diop has exploited the multiple narratives through which the audiences get lots of information regarding the massive devastation of Murambi polytechnic school where as in *Hotel Rwanda* few narratives are used. The main protagonist of *Murambi* loses the mother and siblings because of ethnic difference in the family.

Unlike Cornelius, the protagonist in *Hotel Rwanda* faces and struggles in order to safeguard his wife though she belongs to Tutsi family and finally, he becomes able not only to protect his family but also he becomes successful to save the life of many Tutsi refugees. In both the texts, women and girls are tortured, seduced, raped and killed with pangs. The film *Hotel Rwanda* ends with reunion of the family and they become happy. But in *Murambi The Book of Bones*, the novel at last presents the grotesque and gruesome hyper-reality of the massacre. The very genuine thing is presented through the mouth of Simeon Habizeza, that violence didn't do better neither for Hutu nor Tutsi. It means that we all should realize the thing and spiritual regeneration must come within us. The strain of representation is, however, a far cry in *Hotel Rwanda*, even though it too ends on happy note.

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