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## **Rwanda National Days Celebrations and Racist Propaganda (1962-1982)**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This article addresses the link between Rwanda national days celebrations and a racist propaganda between 1962 and 1982. It states a problem to know whether the political messages on the national days celebrations conveyed a democratic message or a racist propaganda. First, it explores a theoretical theory related to race and propaganda. Then, it focus on the racial interpretations of Rwandan society during the colonial period with the objective to search for a relationship between the colonial discourse and the post-colonial political speeches.

An analysis of the spoken as well as the written and musical data of the post-colonial period studied leads to certify that national days celebrations sent to the nation a racist propaganda against Tutsi

Key words : race, propaganda, democracy, Hutu, Tutsi

### **1. Introduction**

The national day celebrations offer a good opportunity for the authorities to send messages to the whole nation. The aim of such messages, spoken or written, is to remind or to reveal certain policies. As some countries, the Republic of Rwanda has national days celebrated each year. The republican system established in

Rwanda since 1961 was viewed until the end of the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi in 1994 as being the legitimate heir of the 1959 revolution. That is why it was supposed to defend and promote the gains of the revolution as could be seen in the preambles of the Rwandan constitutions of 1962 and 1978 or in the manifesto programmes of the ruling political parties.

Some scholars have suggested that 1959 revolution is to be considered as a democratic process because it allowed Hutu as majority to access power through elections (Murego: 1975, Reyntjens, 1985). Others, however, believed that the 1959 revolution has been conducted in a racist environment (Lemarchand, 1970; Newbury, 1988; Chretien, 2006; Linden, 1998).

In celebrating those days, the Presidents of the Republic and other leaders were having the opportunity to address to people. What kind of message they have sent to the nation? What has been the message content? Could be the message content considered as a form of propaganda? If yes, what kind of propaganda was it? If no, how to characterise the message content?

The objective of the study is to collect the spoken, written, pictorial, or musical data, then to analyse them according to the research problem as well as the hypothesis and the theoretical framework and to see whether the propaganda was racist or democratic with the consequences related to each hypothesis. The first hypothesis of the research is that the message content related to the national day celebrations should be considered as a

democratic project. The second one is that the content of those documents should be taken as a kind of racist propaganda.

## **2. Theoretical context of the study**

### **2.1. Propaganda**

The study is conducted in a theoretical context related to the concept of “propaganda”. This context should guide us to specify our research perspective. Some Scholars have defined and explained what is the propaganda. Bryder (2008) defines it as the manipulation of symbols for the sake of controlling public opinion in contexts characterized by power, influence and authority relationships between people and groups of people.

He adds that those are typically relationships where values such as safety, wealth, prestige and deference are allocated for whole political systems: Global, national, regional. Lasswel (1927) states that the symbols means the objects which have a standard meaning in a group and such significant symbols have both an expressive and a propagandist function in public life. To be effective, propaganda must be seen, remembered, understood and acted upon and adapted to particular needs of situations (Qualter. 1962).

### **2.2 Race**

Delacampagne (1983: 35) recalled that the word “race” appeared in French vocabulary in the sixteenth century, borrowed from the Italian *razza* which means “sort, species”, which derives from the Latin *ratio* “reason” meaning “order of things, category, species “and that it was in the Middle Ages that a shift of meaning would

have occurred from “category, species” to “lineage”. It is worth noting that the term appeared in English vocabulary from Italia via French at the same period (Oxford English dictionary).

That term, previously applied to animal varieties domesticated by man, was applied to human beings from the sixteenth century onwards. It was between the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth that the concept of “race” entered into the lexical formation of an ideology intended to explain social inequalities and the merits of colonization. The race then became an intellectual category, but pseudo-scientific.

Thus there was crystallization of what is known as racial ideology or racial doctrines. Simar (2003) presented the latter meanings to support the idea that ethnic groups were irreducible to each other, that they should continue their historical evolution as part of their own genius, that they were, by their very nature, either predestined for progress or for eternal inferiority, and that this greatness or unworthiness was imposed on them by physico-physiological characteristics.

Clearly, there is a necessary link between biological characteristics and social behaviors.

This theory is based on an essentialist view of the idea of race. According to this approach, men or cultures are eternally immutable. This way of thinking is opposed to a historicizing approach that takes into account the fact that people change over time and depending on their social living conditions (Memmi, 1994).

It was then in the 1930s that the concept of “racism” appeared, the peculiarity of which was the absolute differentiation of the “races”

and the hostility towards a “racial group”. Memmi (1994: 193) gave a definition that includes that peculiarity: “Racism is the widespread and definitive valorization of real or imaginary differences for the benefit of the accuser and to the detriment of his victim, in order to justify aggression or privilege”.

The term “racism” is thus posterior to racial theories and contains an intention of aggression or exploitation which racial theories did not necessarily involve. Its appearance in the 1930s is not unrelated to the rise of Nazism. Arendt (1944) stated that in 1939, when German tanks begun their destruction, racism was-in political warfare- calculated to be a more powerful ally than any paid agent or any secret organization of fifth columnists.

That calls for other expressions related to the following expressions: raciology, racialisation, racist propaganda, racial interpretation. The term “raciology” refers to the study of those doctrines, and “racialisation” to the transformation of social groups into racial units or the polarization of events on the racial. Concerning racist propaganda, if I consider the propaganda definition from Padover, I can recognise the identities Hutu, Tutsi, Twa as the symbols being manipulated for “the sake of controlling public opinion in contexts characterized by power, influence and authority relationships between people and groups of people”. Then the racial interpretations consist of presenting a society according to a racial terminology by transforming social identities into racial identities.

Those interpretations may be considered, willy nilly, as the sources of inspiration of post- colonial political management. As far as the settlement of Rwanda is concerned, it was widely agreed, without

any supporting evidence, that Rwanda was first populated by the Twa race, followed by the Hutu race, and, lastly, by the “conquerors” of the Tutsi race who came from Abyssinia behind their cows seeking pastures for their animals (Pagès,1933 ; De Lacger,1939 ; Kagame, 1943; Maquet,1954, Hiernaux,1954).

Hutu were considered as a race of the majority of the population, whereas Tutsi, as a race of the minority (Pagès, 1933; De Lacger, 1939; Delmas, 1950; Kagame, 1954, Maquet 1954, Hiernaux,1954). Concerning the economic aspect, the Twa were presented as being a “race” of clay workers, the Hutu, a “race of aboriginal cultivators” and the Tutsi, a “race of cow breeders” ( Pagès, 1933, pp.30-35 ; De Lacger, 1939, p.39 ; Kagame, 1943, p.20).

For the socio-political status, it was agreed that Tutsi were superior to Hutu or that Tutsi dominated the other “races” or that Tutsi exploited Hutu (Ryckmans, 1931 ; Hurel; 1934; Sandrart,1953, Maquet 1954; Hiernaux,1954).

The emphasis was sometimes put on the diptych of « Tutsi minority exploiting Hutu majority », the cow being the instrument for that domination (De Lacger, 1939, p.44 ; Arnoux, 1953 ;18). Morphologically, Tutsi were presented, in comparison to the rest, as being an ideal classical type: tall, fine features nice to look at, proportionate limbs, resembling the classic European or Egyptian beauty (Classe, 1935; Ryckmans, 1936; Sandrart, 1953).

It is worth underlining that those interpretations have been inspired by the racial ideology built in Western Europe in nineteenth

century (Simar, 2003; Sanders, 1969; Chrétien, 1977). The hypothesis of racist propaganda is mainly based on those previous interpretations which might have influenced the post-colonial political discourse. Those interpretations are, of course, false, but according to Banton (1967), true or false opinions on the character of the “race” have always had great social significance and particularly when a given category is designated according to a racial terminology, some ensuing consequences could be foreseen.

### **3. Materials and method**

By celebrating the national anniversaries, the Heads of States usually address to the nation a message related to the day significance. The Presidents Kayibanda (1961-1973) and Habyarimana (1973-1994) didn't escape the rule. Moreover the official publications accompanied the message before the national day celebration. The print media, the political parties manifestos, the official reports are supposed to contain such messages. As method, I will apply the historical method explaining and analyzing the collected data in a perspective of the research problem, the theoretical context and hypothesis.

### **4. Results and discussion**

#### **4.1. Independence Day: 1/7/1962**

The perspective of independence provided MDR-Parmehutu leaders with an opportunity to reveal the advantages the Hutu would enjoy from independence. Politically, independence was supposed to give the Hutu an opportunity to develop. Economically, individual wealth was to serve not the interests of the whole nation, but those of Hutu in priority. Consider the Parmehutu's chiefs words : « Oh Hutu, cultivate, do business,

work with wood, work with clay, work and earn your living : in other words, work and increase your income » (Kayibanda and al. 1962a,p.2).

To achieve that objective, the State had to provide credits only to Hutu, who was the only person capable to understand the republican form of the power. In the field of education, the political party MDR- Parmehutu thanked the Rwandan government for having sent 35 Hutu for studies in Europe and urged the government to quickly put into place a university which would facilitate Hutu to have access to higher education.

At the judicial level, President of the Republic, Kayibanda and his colleagues exhorted the Supreme Court to defend MDR-Parmehutu interests against « feudal » mindsets. In conclusion, MDR-Parmehutu leaders declared that party was Hutu's party of. We simply have here a political option favoring racial discrimination in an economic-social and political project of a society.

In his speech celebrating accession of Rwanda to independence in Kigali, President Kayibanda urged the crowd present at the ceremonies to thank Belgium for having educated Rwanda and thank to which the country had acceded to independence. His gratitude went more particularly to the Belgian Colonel Logiest who, according to him, had well represented Belgium on the difficult path for Rwanda to gain independence. In contrast with the words of appreciation expressed to Belgium, he chastised the responsibility of the « feudal lords » for the unrest in November 1959 (Kayibanda, 1962b, p.1).



We face a government praising its former coloniser on the day of independence by casting slurs on a segment of the population who were also colonised, the Tutsi. Note that « feudal lords » refer to Tutsi in the then racial discourse. This had been in line with the Parmehutu policy since its foundation in October 1959.

The strategy adopted by Kayibanda, the founder of the party, is part of a theory which identifies ethnicity as a mobilisable resource in the conquest of power. Glazer and Moynihan (1975) as cited by Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart (1995) state that what is common to identification forms based on religion, language or national origin is that they have become effective hotspots of groups for concrete political objectives.

The particular contribution of ethnicity to that mobilisation is to provide an idiom which privileges group solidarity by concealing the interests for which the struggle is undertaken (Cohen, 1969 as cited by Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart, 1995).

After the victory of the MDR-Parmehutu party in the 1960 communal elections and in the 1961 legislative elections resulting from racist mobilisation in favour of Hutu, leaders of that party intended to reward those they believed to constitute their electorate by reserving exclusively the national resources to the latter. That was political corruption in good and due form for the future political competitions.

#### **4.2. Commemorations of tenth anniversaries**

After having discussed the theoretical framework, I will be dealing with the analysis of some official documents so as to scrutinize the racist nature of propaganda.

#### **4.2.1 The republic system celebration: 1/7 /1971**

Year 1969 coincided with the tenth anniversary of the 1959 revolution. It also marked the beginning of Kayibanda's third presidential term and that of a new legislature, as election of Kayibanda and that of parliamentarians were held on 28 September 1969. Yet, at the beginning of every legislature, State authorities had to revise MDR-Parmehutu manifesto programme so as to give guidelines for the new term. That was the reason why the national congress of the party held in Gitarama on 7 July 1969, adopted the famous manifesto programme no.4 which set out guidelines to be followed for the new term.

The preamble asserted that in order to reinforce the achievements of the objectives pursued by Parmehutu since its creation, it was of paramount importance to intensify the struggle against maneuvers of any kind used by opportunists, unrepentant supporters of the « feudal and colonial systems » and other elements not yet totally purified of the after-effects of the « feudality » and « foreign imperialism », which constantly changed their tactics according to ad hoc needs so as to deceive the “ common people” , to « subjugate » them again or take away from them the benefits of “ their democratic revolution “ (MDR-Parmehutu, 1969, p.4).

That manifesto programme announced that MDR-Parmehutu had declared war to any esoteric government system which would mark the “feudal system and colonialism”, or their foundations, regardless of their form and their origin. To strengthen the party ideology, the congress participants affirmed that the party should

ensure “full and complete achievement” of the 1959 revolution (MDR-Parmehutu, 1969, p.4).

The party principles could be summarised in the struggle against the “feudal and colonial system “. Combating that system meant full and complete achievement of the revolution. The equation “feudal =Tutsi “as defined by the “pathetic appeal of Gitarama” on 8 May 1960 by MDR-Parmehutu officials (Nkundabagenzi, 1961, pp.247-252) had still all its value through the racial historicization of the society.

The concern to cleanse the after-effects of “feudality” demanded recognizing the heroic deed of “authentic Parmehutu supporters”, who had been on the frontline of the revolution. Those heroic deeds were magnified in a well known song entitled *Ibigwi by’aba Parmehutu*, heroic deeds of Parmehutu partisans, solemnly sung by the Parmehutu’s choir *Abanyuramatwi* on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic, on 28 January 1971.

The song recalls that those Parmehutu supporters were the pioneers of the revolution whereas they had no food and no means of transport; it depicts those leaders as *impirimbanyi* meaning “proven revolutionaries”, they who endured cold and heat of *Karubanda* as well as thirst and hunger when they were going to liberate the “common people“; it mentions the awakening of the forces of Hutu in 1959 when the latter showed their capacity of organisation and won; it urges all Parmehutu supporters to remember the past so as to evaluate the progress made in only ten years, since the advent of democracy that “we are celebrating today” ; it finally calls all Parmehutu partisans for

always remembering the yoke of feudality and the chores accompanied with the whip which disappeared with their beneficiaries; it ends up praising those heroic deeds with wishes to Kayibanda and his political entourage for a long and happy life.

The “heat of Karubanda” refers to the royal court as the term Karubanda means the “place of the people” where the king spoke directly to the people. At that time, the royal court symbolised the Tutsi in the racial discourse. “The thirst and the hunger” on their way to Usumbura reminded of the ills of colonisation, as Rwanda was part of the colonial territory called “Ruanda-Urundi” whose political and administrative capital was in Usumbura, the current Bujumbura.

The party songs are an important source of history as long as the central theme reflects the current political events. By stating that Unar and Rader -considered as Tutsi parties- boycotted the 1960 communal elections, the song attacked Tutsi, as Rader participated in elections and the formation of the interim Government and Council. Incidentally, Rader has not always collaborated with Unar and on the contrary, that party formed, in April 1960, a Common Front with Parmehutu and Aprosona –considered as Hutu parties- to express its break up with Kigeri V who was associated with Unar in the eyes of the dominant public opinion (Nkundabagenzi, 1961; Lemarchand, 1970).

The song can be interpreted as intending to revive a declining political party by recalling the “feudal and colonial” ills to underscore the merits of that party that was supposed to have removed them ten years earlier. The celebration of the heroic deeds of the party masked the difficulties that Kayibanda and his party

were facing, almost in the same way as Father Kagame did to defend the precolonial political institutions when King Mutara III Rudahigwa was facing opposition from “Astridiens” in the forties (Kagame, 1945).

#### **4.2.2. The Independence Day: 1/71972**

The services of the office of the President of the Republic also participated in the historic racial-oriented reconstruction movement, on the occasion of the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of independence of Rwanda. They then disseminated a brochure in Kinyarwanda language containing the “turning points in history of Rwanda”. (Prezidansi,1972).

In addition to the introduction, it is composed of five parts. The introduction announces that “this little book “would explain to the reader how Hutu freed himself from the “feudal and colonial system “and established democracy.

The first part praises the “pre-nyiginya” Hutu political entities whose monarchs were like fathers of the led who took them for their own children, because of the biological and social ties existing between those kings and their loyal companions; the second part presents the arrival of the Tutsi around 1700 AD, who, after spending their lifetime wandering along behind their cows and settling in Rwanda, learned kinyarwanda and rwandan culture.

The pre-nyiginya period refers to political systems exististing in Rwanda before the building of the kingdom of Rwanda under the supervision of the Nyiginya dynasty considered as Tutsi.( Rennie, 1972).

Concerning the “feudal system”, *ubuhake*, Tutsi revealed to Hutu that there was no other way for him to secure a cow than providing his services to Tutsi.

Once power was won over, thanks to Hutu’s services, Tutsi built, from Gasabo, a kingdom that would quickly become the source of all Hutu’s misfortunes and a hotbed of criminality. The third part is devoted to the “reign of Tutsi and the White ».

During that period, two foreigners, Tutsi and White, plotted to exploit Hutu. However, the Hutu managed to wake up and demanded that this exploitation be replaced by the establishment of fraternity and security for all. The fourth part contains what has been designated as “the light of democracy”, lit between 1 November 1959 and 1 July 1962.

It describes the provocation and defeat of Unar as well as Hutu’s political victory. This period was inaugurated in tears resulting from the suffering of Hutu’s sons, victims of their engagement to free themselves from the “feudal and colonial regime”. The fifth part celebrates the triumph of democracy and independence between 1 July 1962 and 1 July 1972 and glorifies the ever memorable action of the Hutu party’s founders.

This brochure attributes to Tutsi a sense of superiority over the Hutu. To the Services of Presidency, like Hitler in Europe, the Tutsi believed that they constituted a superior race born to govern and exploit the Hutu pretending that they had descended from heaven by self-proclaiming *Ibimanuka*, allusion to a tale of origin the “Fallen from Heaven” (Vansina, 2000).

According to them, the Hutu was worthless. The Tutsi despised him, did not deign to share a meal together, made him work like a wheelbarrow, dispossed him of his property for pleasure, beat him like a serpent by spitting on his face, consistently calling him a marginal, by attributing all the blunders to his morphology such as his general bad morphology, ugliness of his eyes, his club-shaped calves, his very wide nostrils. To them, the Tutsi had spread the idea that the Hutu were incapable of leading and the Europeans hastened to accept it. They said that the Hutu was neither intelligent, nor polite, nor sociable, that he did not know how to entertain people during evening gatherings, to dance with delicacy, to be liars, etc.(Prezidansi ya Repuburika, 1971).

That presentation of the “turning points” in the history of Rwanda focused on the absolute differentiation between Tutsi and Hutu according to the themes of settlement, the socio-political status, and the psychological as well as the morphological features. It had been inspired by racial interpretations of the Rwandan society adopted by the colonial and religious officials since the end of the nineteenth century and revisited by the ideology of the 1959 revolution.

Archaeological sources do not, however, show the settlement of Rwanda as has been presented in this brochure. The discovery of two cow teeth in Remera in eastern Rwanda indicates that cow-raising was practiced in what to become Rwanda from the third century AD, so before 1700 as imagined by the press services of President Kayibanda (Van Noten, 1983).

Other sources attest that agriculture and livestock were practiced at the same time at the beginning of the Christian era in the region of the Great Lakes and « non-Bantu » (non Hutu in racial discourse) peoples played a pivotal role in the adoption of livestock farming and in the cultivation of cereals by several Bantu communities in the Great Lakes (Chretien, 2003).

In addition to the imaginary settlement presented by the Presidency, the document does not cite any source and the bibliography indicates only the names of the authors. We are faced with an imaginary “programmed history” in which the Hutu had fallen asleep since time immemorial and suddenly awoke in 1959.

This is a useful contradiction, since existence of the “pre-nyiginya” Hutu political entities is, at the same time, recognized in this document. Other sources indicate that some of these entities even cohabited with the Nyiginya dynasty (Ntezimana, 1980)

Associating Hitler with the Tutsi is an example of applying the ideology of races to Rwandans. One of the highlighted elements of this ideology is confusing Hitler as an individual and the society component constituted by the Tutsi, in other words, the confusion of an individual with a group of individuals is a facet of the ideology of races. Mentioning Hitler is even more significant in this respect, since it is a symbol of racism.

Evocation of the « Fallen from Heaven » was inspired by racial interpretations of the origins of the kingdom of Rwanda developed especially by Father Loupias (1908), Canon de Lacger (1939) and Father Heremans (1971), and not from the primary rwandan sources. In this regard, the « Fallen from Heaven » do not refer to



Tutsi, but to alleged ancestors of lineages close to the court of the King of Rwanda in the nineteenth century (Chrétien and Triaud, 1999, pp. 281-320). In addition, the “Fallen from Heaven’ narrative is an etiological legend and must be considered as an invented tale, (Vansina, 2000).

As the information services from the Presidency of the Republic disseminated the above mentioned brochure from Kigali, the MDR-Parmehutu Secretariat published in Gitarama, on the occasion of the commemoration of the Independence, a special issue of the newspaper *Urumuri rwa demokarasi* “The Light of Democracy” (1972).

In summary, in that issue it was asserted that Rwanda before November 1959 had been in the hands of Tutsi who had spent 400 years ruling it as he liked, exploiting the popular mass of Hutu.

The settlement of Rwanda was described according to the pattern in vogue of successive waves, highlighting the fact that Tutsi waited until Hutu made Rwanda viable to finally immigrate from Abyssinia. The main focus was on the exploitation of Hutu by Tutsi during 400 years of Tutsi government: “the Hutu cultivated the soil and the Tutsi seized the crops “as if the former was absolutely unable to protect his crops or that the latter was totally incapable of cultivating the soil.

The reality of existence of Hutu chiefs, on the other hand, was acknowledged as stated in the newspaper that in 1931 Belgians abolished the administration of the lands controlled mainly by Hutu lineages. This contradiction weakens credibility of the Presidency’s brochure.

How to explain this historical falsification on the occasion of very important anniversaries? One of the clarifications would be that MDR-Parmehutu had a split in 1968 between the “ real Parmehutu” and those who had deviated from the right track.

Those excluded from the party included influential figures such as Cyimana, a native of Byumba, Habamenshi of Gisenyi, Bicamumpaka of Ruhengeri, Mbonyumutwa and Sentama of Gitarama, Rugira of Butare and Sezirahiga of Gikongoro. (Raporo ya Komisiyo y’Inteko, 1968).

The tenth anniversary of the 1959 revolution that of the advent of the republic and that of independence were celebrated in a context of a loss of impetus in MDR-Parmehutu. It was a golden opportunity for the party to activate solidarity among Hutu by recalling the “heroic deeds” of the revolutionaries supposed to have saved the Hutu from the yoke of the Tutsi. This made it possible to divert opinion from the split of the party.

By focusing attention on the heroic deeds of the past, party leaders were forgetting the bankruptcy of the present. Glorifying the merits of the Hutu recalled at the same time the misdeeds of the “Tutsi system”. This operation constituted an important phase of racialisation of the rwandan society, since this process was promoting racism against the Tutsi.

I already shared with you a comment made by Banton for whom, when a given category is designated according to racial terminology, some ensuing consequences could be anticipated,

such as the expulsion of the Tutsi from education and employment in 1973. By chasing the Tutsi from the National University of Rwanda, the only one, on the night of 15 to 16 February 1973, the chasers claimed to be implementing the manifesto programme discussed above. This is what emerged from a report of events made by the then rector Nsanzimana to Harerimana, the then Minister of Education. (Nsanzimana, 2007).

### **4.3. Commemorations of anniversaries of independence**

#### **4.3.1 The 16<sup>th</sup> anniversary of independence: 5/7/1978**

After dedicating the year 1974 to agriculture, President Habyarimana proclaimed the year 1978, on the occasion of the New Year, the year of livestock. He took the opportunity to recall the harmful role of the cow in the past: “Until eighteen years ago, the cow was an instrument of political domination by a minority and of psychological alienation from taboos by which it was surrounded by the system into force. The shock of 1959, resulting from the liberation movement of the Rwandan people, did not spare the conceptions and myths that had made the cow the most precious and valuable asset because it was supposed to be owned by the ruling minority and its satellites “(Habyarimana, 1978, pp.13-14).

He associated an element of his development ideology with racial interpretation of society. He developed for the future a relevant development project that he compromised by reviving raciology-related memories.

We already know that the domination of a “governing minority” means, through racial-oriented discourse, the exploitation of the

Hutu by the Tutsi and that the cow was always presented during the twentieth century as an instrument of that exploitation.

Consider the following passage of White Father Arnoux(1953,p.18) : “ Cattle, above all, are the means by which the Batutsi exercise their domination over the lower races within the framework of a feudal system exactly equivalent to the one which flourished in Europe in the Middle Ages “. When President Habyarimana recalled this in a speech dedicated to an annual political programme, he gave importance to the ideology of the races in a development project. And yet, serious studies had already indicated that cows could not be associated with a racial identity (Leurquin, 1960).

During the celebration of the sixteenth anniversary of independence, on 5 July 1978, the Head of State did not miss the opportunity to praise the 1959 revolution: “In 1959, by changing the course of events, Rwandan peasants launched a new basis of perception in the historical movement of Rwanda: from now on, to govern this people, they have to be reckoned with... Democracy and Republic have not only aimed at overthrowing the monarchy, but have also allowed the people to perceive in the emerging process of new people, the legitimate children of the people, a guarantee of justice, as they became interpreters of the aspirations of the people “ (Habyarimana, 1978, p. 99).

In the 1959 revolution context, artisans of that revolution can otherwise only be seen as Hutu. Habyarimana went on saying further that since leaders of the revolution were Hutu, they formed the “legitimate people”. As the ruling leaders were almost

exclusively Tutsi, it became evident that they were not “legitimate children of the people”. Since the Tutsi were regarded as not belonging to the “legitimate people”, they were not, therefore, considered as Rwandan citizens. This speech echoed the racial interpretation that presented the Tutsi as having been the conquerors of Rwanda.

#### **4.3.2. The twentieth anniversary of independence: 5 /7/ 1982**

On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of independence, on 5 July 1982, Habyarimana, during the official festivities, took up the theme already developed on the occasion of the tenth anniversary in 1972. He repeated the refrain of “popular and laborious masses who have endured for several centuries injustice, humiliations of all kinds, exploitation by the feudal power “with “the complicity of the colonial power “(Habyarimana, 1982, p.3).

The slogan “for several centuries “had become a cliché to account for the depth of the duration of that system, while the ill-defined phrase “humiliations of all sorts” aimed at highlighting the gravity of the accusations against that system. Republic authorities had to accuse the “feudal regime” of all ills to emphasize their attachment to the Hutu cause. The complicity of the “feudal power “ with the “ colonial power “ for several centuries was rather surprising when it was a reality of the twentieth century. Racial reconstruction of history does not escape anachronism.

Further on, the Head of State became more specific about the duration of the “feudal system “by evoking the history of a country subjected to a “medieval feudalism for 400 years”. What was “several centuries “in the beginning of the speech was reduced to “four centuries” in the middle of his intervention. He then recalled

the main lines of the Hutu Manifesto of 24 March 1957, presented as a document which publicly denounced for the first time “four centuries of useless and humiliating chores”.

The “ 400 years “ was probably a postcolonial invention since it is mainly found in racialised discourses and the press close to the power during the Second Republic,1973-1994. It is once again surprising that Habyarimana thought of citing the “Hutu Manifesto “ when speaking of 4 centuries of the “feudal system “while the signatories of the “Manifesto” rebelled against what they called the “famous nine hundred years of Tutsi domination” (Nkundabagenzi, 1961, p.27).

The importance of the “Hutu Manifesto” is that it is often revised to justify the present. Thus, for example, the title “Hutu Manifesto” is absent from the original text given to the Provincial Secretariat in Usumbura on 29 March 1957 and submitted to Harroy, the then Deputy Governor-General of Ruanda-Urundi. It is a text under constant construction depending on ideological tendencies. Clearly, recalling atrocities peculiar to the “feudal system “on the occasion of the commemoration of independence was not for Tutsi a cause for celebration.

## **5. Conclusion**

The results and discussions of the study are validating the second hypothesis, that is, the content of the official messages sent on national days celebrations conveys a racist propaganda. The message was a manipulation of symbols,i.e. Hutu and Tutsi identities for the sake of controlling public opinion in context characterized by power, influence and authority relationship between people and groups of people, i.e. between Hutu and Tutsi.

The symbols of Hutu and Tutsi are linked to safety, wealth, prestige and power as indicated through the racial interpretations of the Rwandan society.

The agriculture associated with the Hutu identity, the cattle breeding, with the Tutsi identity, the mass exploitation linked to the Tutsi identity, the majority and minority associated respectively to Hutu and Tutsi identities in power relation 'have both an expressive and a propagandist function in public life'.

Those interpretations have inspired a racist propaganda that was to be remembered to Rwandan citizens and adapted to national days celebrations. It is worth noting that the results and discussions are reliable with the second hypothesis and the theoretical framework.

The racial interpretations have been inspired by the racial ideology built in Western Europe during the nineteenth century, but then the race is a pseudo-scientific category. So the racial interpretation of the Rwandan society is not credible.

Padover (1943) has already noted a very interesting observation during the Nazi hegemony: "The dogma of race is an ugly weapon in the hands of the Axis precisely because it has no scientific validity.

But it has, apparently, a visceral appeal to large masses of men. Informed people know that there are no superior races nor inferior races, nor indeed pure races at all. It is an established historical fact that all major people are mixed and their culture is the cumulative product of multi-hued mankind, not the monopoly of any mystical Chosen Tribe. The "blood "explanation of any event is pure fraud".

The racial interpretations, in case of the Rwandan society, have dominated the Belgium administration era in Ruanda-Urundi during the Nazi hegemony and when such racial theories were at the same period challenged by the scientific approaches. It is useful to note that the scientific views—which were available—would have constituted a valid alternative method to study the Rwandan society out of the racial prism.

The results and discussions lead to certify that national days celebrations during the period conveyed a racist propaganda against Tutsi. Other scholars (Chretien, 1995; Thompson, 2007) have already studied the role of media in the perpetration of the genocide against Tutsi, then the original contribution of this study has been to focus on the analysis of the content messages spent by official speeches and reports as well as political parties publications and songs. Another interesting study should focus on databases challenging the Rwandan racial interpretations built during colonial period.

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