From Fatigues to Three-Piece Suits: East African Guerrillas in Power

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POLITICAL PARTY SYSTEMS IN AFRICA PROJECT

This project investigates the processes, structures and challenges facing countries in consolidating their transitions to democracy in post-independence Africa. The current area of study is specifically the evolution of political party systems. This project examines factors affecting political contestation and political parties in Africa, and analyses how these influence the crystallisation and consolidation of democracy as a whole. More specifically, the project examines case studies of political party formation in Africa.

ABSTRACT

Since decolonisation in African countries ethno-political differences have led to guerrilla warfare. Through these movements, authoritarian regimes have been created. In Uganda, after the National Resistance Movement took power a 'no-party democracy' system was implemented, which remained even after a constitutional referendum was presented to the public in 2000. Uganda's 'no-party democracy' system inspired the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF). Since the 1960s, Rwanda functioned as a one-party state. In the early 1990s there was a brief period of multipartyism, but the extreme Hutu/Tutsi clashes led to genocide in 1994, after which the RPF became a dictatorship. Similarly, in Eritrea an ethnic division gave rise to the guerrilla movement — the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), where Eritrean nationalists felt a separate identity to the Ethiopians. This nationalism driven by self-determination transformed the ELF, in the 1990s, into the totalitarian Popular Front for Justice and Development, and has left no space for political or civil activity. Similarly to the Eritrean strife for independence, the Southern Sudanese guerrilla movement — the Sudan People's Liberation Army — which came to power in 2005, initially fought for the independence of Southern Sudan from the Khartoum government, and although it has not received statehood, it functions as a separate entity.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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INTRODUCTION

Over the last six to eight years real elections have increasingly become the preferred means of political regulation in Africa, a definite improvement on the first twenty years of independence when life presidencies alternating with military coups were the rule. But in between these two periods, during the mid-1980s and the late 1990s, guerrilla warfare led to the establishment of a number of regimes which in many ways could be seen as a 'second decolonisation'[1], when highly distorted ethnopolitical relationships bequeathed by the colonial era were violently reset.

The first of these cases was Uganda in 1986 where Yoweri Museveni forcefully realigned ethnopolitical structures with the socio-economic realities from which the country had been divorced during the 20 years before. The Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa — roughly the eastern part of the continent — constituted the main laboratory for this process[2] which has never been looked at systematically.[3] In various countries former guerrilla movements turned into 'political parties', which then ran the state.

Do they constitute a single category? What is their relationship to the ethnic and religious realities of their past? What kind of a state have they been trying to create? Are they a carry-over from the past, a portent of the future or just an expression of post-colonial hiccups? We will try to examine these questions — and perhaps a few others — in looking at four cases of solidified guerrilla power over the past twenty years: Uganda, Rwanda, Eritrea and the yet incomplete 'state' of Southern Sudan.

NO CLEAN BREAK FROM THE PAST: THE HISTORICAL INHERITANCES GUERRILLA MOVEMENTS HAVE HAD TO ACCOMMODATE

Uganda

At the time of its independence in 1962, Uganda was a complex patchwork of situational contradictions: four 'independent' kingdoms constituted a first tier of political relevance while the rest of the country, divided into districts, was ruled directly from the capital Kampala. The kingdom of Buganda, whose name had become a synechdoche for the whole country although the Baganda tribe represented only 17% of the population, had modelled the political landscape on its special relationship with the British colonisers.

London had imposed its king as president of the whole country without clearly defining the nature of this president-king's relationship with his 'national' prime minister.[4] This complex construction worked for only three years before it led to conflict between the monarchical president and the elected prime minister, ending in a coup by the latter against the former. But since the prime minister, Milton Obote, was Northern Nilotic and the president-king Southern Bantu, the stage was set for a violent confrontation in the future. In 1966, Obote, suspended the constitution, and declared himself president.

Between 1966–1986, Uganda was run by Northerners who represented barely 20% of the population, who had received no education from the British[5] and whose participation in the monetary economy was essentially predatory. In 1979 the fall of the Idi Amin Dada

dictatorship was regarded by the Southerners as a window of opportunity for re-framing the political landscape. But the rigging of the December 1980 elections by the Northerner Milton Obote who once again became president, left them with no other option than to take up arms.[6] This took place in a special context:

- Ethnic polarisation was at a maximum, with all Southern Bantu groups lined up against the Northerner government.[7]
- A long history of party politics since the first Ugandan political party had been founded in 1954, eight years before independence — the Democratic Party (DP), a party modelled on and closely linked with Germany's Christian Democrats. The DP was widely regarded as the real winner of the 1980 elections.
- Party politics were deeply marked by religious rivalries going back to Uganda's pre-colonial civil wars, the DP being Catholic and Obote's Uganda People's Congress Protestant.

Because of these complexities, the guerrilla was far from operating on a *tabula rasa*; Museveni's National Resistance Army/Movement's (NRA/M) constituencies were roughly Bantu, Leftist and Protestant (in that order). It had to accommodate the anti-Protestant Uganda Peoples Congress (UPC) West Nile Sudanic tribes and the conservative Catholic DP.[8] So, from its first days in the bush, the NRM needed to compromise, negotiate and create alliances.

Museveni assembled a guerrilla movement by recycling religious, party and tribal elements that pre-existed in the political landscape rather than building from scratch, which would have been impossible. As a result, when he took power in January 1986, his outlook and that of his NRM comrades were based on a set of mixed arrangements they dubbed 'no-party democracy'. Political parties were tolerated but not encouraged while elections were free but the playing field was far from level.

The NRM became central to political life but it never acquired an exclusive status. 'Old style' politicians coming from the old party culture were encouraged to join the NRM or ally themselves with it. Ugandan political life developed into a polycentric cluster which was largely inclusive, without being truly democratic, and authoritarian, without being autocratic. Later, the problem increasingly became Museveni himself, particularly after the elections of February 2006 when he seemed to want to remain in power indefinitely by manipulating the constitution. The constitutional manipulation was met with irritation and resentment by the general public in Uganda, including even the Southern Bantu tribes who have been Museveni's main electoral base. Among the youth particularly, which does not regard the president as the *mukombozi* (liberator) their parents still admire, the constitutional manipulation has caused a barely restrained anger. This does not bode very well for the smoothness of the next election.

Rwanda

Today it is difficult to discuss the Rwandese political system because it is overshadowed by the monstrosities of the 1994 genocide. But we have to make the necessary intellectual effort to go back to early 1990 to understand where the war — and its genocidal consequences — came from. At that time the Rwandese political system had been hostage

to the dual Tutsi/Hutu ethnic dichotomy which antedated decolonisation.[9] Decolonisation itself had given birth to a one-party state typical of the 1960s, but very peculiar in that it was officially a political apartheid state in which the Tutsi minority had only limited rights. The increasing tensions that later developed within the ethnic dictatorship were paradoxically not related to the Tutsi-Hutu dichotomy but rather to the lack of democracy within the dominant Hutu polity.[10]

What triggered the evolution of the (too) stable ethnocratic system was President François Mitterrand's speech at the Franco-African summit of La Baule in April 1990. France, which was on par with Belgium as a neo-colonial protector, 'strongly suggested' to its African clients that the days of one-party states were over. President Juvenal Habyarimana duly complied with the French 'suggestion' and started to open up Rwanda's political system to multipartyism, keeping such multipartyism within the framework of a Hutu political monopoly. But he could not contain the impetus for change because of the role Tutsi exiles next-door in Uganda had played in the Ugandan NRA struggle.

The 1959 *Muyaga*[11], the period of anti-Tutsi decolonisation violence, had driven about 130 000 Tutsi into exile, with a little less than half of these fleeing to Uganda. There they had thrived and, for all practical purposes, were assimilated into the Ugandan environment.[12] Paul Kagame, who was three years old when his family left Rwanda, virtually was a Ugandan and in 1979 had joined Yoweri Museveni's political party, FRONASA, which was then fighting against the Amin dictatorship alongside the Tanzanian army. He later joined the NRA and emerged as one of its top cadres in 1986. In 1988, when he and other Rwandan exiles launched the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF), he was 31 years old and had not been in Rwanda for the last 27 years. Most of his comrades were in similar situations. This exile flavour heavily infused the RPF, although it was seen in Rwanda as a purely Tutsi front.

The first RPF leader, Fred Rwigyema, a long-time Rwandese friend and associate of Museveni, was keenly aware of the problem and was aiming for the 'no-party democracy' the NRA/M had implemented in Uganda.[13] He was planning to fight a Chinese-style 'protracted people's war' because he feared that a rapid victory would only lead to shallow success in which the RPF would control the military end of things but without having politically transcended the Tutsi/Hutu dichotomy. He was killed on the second day of the invasion in October 1990 by his close associates who simply wanted to acquire power and he was replaced by the Tutsi hardliner Paul Kagame who had a much simpler view of the Rwandese ethnic conundrum.

For Kagame, the decision to attack Rwanda was simply motivated by the hope that intra-Hutu struggles had reached such a point that a small minority group could possibly wedge itself in and acquire power. Which is exactly what happened, at the cost of 800 000 lives. The result was nowhere near the concept of 'no-party democracy' which had inspired the NRA/M. It started as a 'government of national unity' between the RPF and the survivors of the Hutu opposition parties[14] which broke down after the April 1995 Kibeho massacre when anywhere between 5 000 and 30 000 Hutu internally displaced persons were killed by the RPF.[15] Once the coalition had fallen apart the RPF progressively tightened the screws, forced all its independent Hutu allies into exile or subservience and, finally, jailed Pasteur Bizimungu, the Hutu it had used as a puppet president (April 2002), replacing him with Kagame himself.[16] Within seven years the RPF had gone from a self-proclaimed beacon of democracy to a tight ethnic dictatorship.

Eritrea

The Eritrean guerrilla movement is rather special in that it did not, as in our other examples, try to change the country's regime, but was secessionist — a contentious term since Eritrean nationalists have argued that Eritrea was [and had long been] a country distinct from Ethiopia.[17] But any serious study of Abyssinian history shows this to be an untenable theory, which even foreign nationalist sympathisers of the Eritrean cause have had to dismiss:

> Eritrea is a modern creation and 'Eritrean' as a national identity is of even more recent provenance. The projection of the terms 'Eritrea' and 'Eritrean' onto the pre-colonial past is therefore a matter of literary convenience and in no way implies that this particular identity existed before 1890.[18]

This of course does not imply that the dual episodes of Italian colonisation (1890–1941) and perhaps even more remarkably of British occupation (1941–1952) did not foster a strong sense of separate identity among 'Eritreans'. It was this newly developed sense of identity that led to the birth of the nationalist guerrilla movement in 1961.

The first organisation, the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) was largely dependent on the support of the Muslim lowlanders and it is only because the Haile Selassie regime went from blunder to blunder in its treatment of the former Italian colony that it finally managed to alienate the Christian highlanders who had been at first its natural partisans.[19] But as young Christians joined the anti-Ethiopian struggle, religious divisions quickly developed, leading to the large-scale killings of the non-Muslim militants at the hands of those they had just joined. The radical Muslim elements that performed these killings did not enjoy the undivided support of their fellow ELF members, which gave rise to the *Islah* (renovation) movement inside the organisation. Although this split between 'old members' and reformists was mostly along religious lines, it was not entirely the case: there were Christians aligned with the core ELF while there were many Muslims on the side of the 'reformists'.

By the early 1970s, the ELF was split asunder and at least four main factions were fighting each other. At the beginning of the Ethiopian revolution (1974) the Eritrean guerrillas spent more time doing this than fighting the Ethiopian army.[20] By then the general pattern of the movement had been defined:

- nationalistic and fiercely ideological;
- strongly linked with Arab nationalism on the Muslim side;
- strongly linked with European and US leftist movements on the Christian side; and
- violently divided.

It is on the last point, in the eyes of some analysts, that the movement exhausted the 'social capital' which used to link the various ethnic and religious components, leading to its eventual dictatorial perversion.[21]

By the mid-1970s one of the reformist factions, the Eritrean Popular Liberation Front (EPLF) led *inter alia* by Issayas Afeworki, openly challenged the ELF and eventually crushed it militarily, pushing its remnants into the Sudan and eliminating it from Eritrean

territory in 1981. But given the extremely centralised hard-line Leninist style of the new organisation, it was itself soon challenged by a reformist democratic movement nicknamed, in the Tigrinya language, *menqaay* (bat) because its supporters met at night. The mainstream Issayas group accused the *menqaay* followers of being 'anarchists' and simply eliminated them physically. By the time of its triumph in 1991, the EPLF was an efficient, disciplined and centralised organisation, replete with human capacity but definitely short in the democratic and human rights features.

Southern Sudan

Like the Eritrean movement, the Southern Sudanese guerrilla movement was initially fighting to separate its territory of reference from what it deemed to be a kind of colonial control by Khartoum's 'Arab' government. The first Sudanese civil war (1955–1972)[22] aimed at the independence of Southern Sudan, but it eventually settled for a form of advanced regional autonomy after the February 1972 Addis Ababa agreement. The autonomous regional government lasted eight years, until President Jaafar al-Nimeiry decided to abrogate it to extend direct control for Khartoum over the newly found oil resources in the South.

Three years later (May 1983) a new civil war broke out. But this time its parameters were different. The newly created Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) was in many ways distinct from the first civil war organisations:

- It was largely militarised because the initial group of insurgents were mutineers from the Sudanese army.
- Although dominated by Bor Dinka (the ethnic group of the SPLA leader, Colonel John Garang) it was multi-ethnic while in the first war the southern guerrilla groups had been mainly dependent on the support of the Equatorian tribes.
- Garang had a distinct view of the Sudanese problem and was not aiming for secession. He wanted to co-opt all the non-Arab groups against Arab domination and invested much in attracting ethnic groups from the so-called 'marginalised areas'.[23]
- As the SPLA was based in Ethiopia, which was then fighting a war against secessionist Eritrea, the only policy Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam would support for 'his' Sudanese rebels was one of national unity.

In its next few years the SPLA had to adapt to tremendous changes in its diplomatic environment. From 1983–1991 it had been a disciplined member of the 'progressive' camp, completely aligned with Moscow's policies, whether they were Yuri Andropov's or *perestroika*. By 1991 it had to flee Ethiopia, directly under fire, seduce Uganda's Museveni and Kenya's Daniel arap Moi into supporting it and then turn capitalist and adhere to the twists and turns of United States (US) foreign policy from Presidents Jimmy Carter to Bush (the First) to Clinton and then back to Bush (the Second).

Internally it had inherited from its Leninist days a brutal security structure and an authoritarian outlook which made Garang the absolute master of a tight ship. The difference with the EPLF was that the intermediary cadres were absent. Although well-educated himself — he held a PhD in social studies from the University of Iowa — Garang did not trust intellectuals and kept the Southern Sudanese diaspora in Europe and the

US at arm's length. The result was a highly militarised guerrilla movement somewhat resembling the Angolan Unita movement, with the same cult of the great leader, no civil administration worth the name, complete concentration of power in the hands of the boss and soldiers running all levels of the organisation. Just as with Unita, violence towards dissenters was an approved method of internal functioning.

This redoubtable war machine was brought to a negotiated halt in January 2005 when the US administration pressured Garang into signing the so-called 'Comprehensive Peace Agreement' (CPA) with the Khartoum regime. Garang did not agree but did not have a choice. He then organised a transitional regional government in the South (GoSS) while setting out to try to win the scheduled 2009 elections. But he died six months later in a helicopter crash in the Imatong Mountains and he was replaced by his second in command, Salva Kiir Mayardit, an honest but unimaginative soldier who was hard put to fill the shoes of his predecessor.

Salva stood little chance of attracting the Arab electorate and winning the elections. As a result the SPLA found itself thrown back on the secessionist option which had a large public backing in the South, even though the movement's cadres remained largely supportive of the late Garang's unitary vision. The GoSS was remarkably weak in the sense that, given Garang's military option and reluctance to use diaspora capacities, there were no solid organisational links between the movement's cadres and the local administration. The result was a high degree of corruption and confusion in SPLA policies.

GUERRILLAS IN POWER: IN-GROUP SOLIDARITY VERSUS BROADER STATESMANSHIP

Civil society and the democratisation potential

In many ways, the political structure — and behaviour — of the guerrilla movements once they achieved legality, political party status and state power was a cross between the pre-conflict society they were rooted in and their past history during the armed struggle period. Once again, specificities trump the easy generalisations and have to be taken into account before a global assessment can be made.

Uganda
The NRA has been and remains by far the most open and legalistically inclined of all the movements, for a very basic reason: It never had an absolute claim to 'revolutionary legitimacy', even if it tried to establish some kind of primacy among the variety of forces by which it was surrounded. The creation of the National Leadership Institute at Kyankwanzi shortly after the NRA/M took power was a half-hearted attempt at staking a 'revolutionary' claim within the Uganda political field.[24] All its specificity claims notwithstanding, the NRA/M was only one political factor among many. Contrary to the monolithic environment created by the one-party state (Rwanda) or the absolute wilderness of non-organisation (Southern Sudan), Ugandan political life was the result of a complex web of criss-crossing and competing structures:

- The oldest were the kingdoms which the British had manipulated but with which they had not done away. Nowhere else in Africa have centralised traditional authorities had so much political weight as in Uganda. The kingdom of Buganda retained massive relevance and to this day remains one of the major political forces in the country.[25] Museveni, as a 'progressive', was philosophically hostile to the existence of the kingdoms. Nevertheless, after seven years in power he felt obliged to restore them to bolster the institutionalisation of his regime.[26] Tooro, Bunyoro and Busoga could be handled without too much difficulty, but Buganda remains a permanent headache for the central government.

- Right behind the kingdoms, the churches were a factor of structural limitation to the free exercise of power by the central government, which applied to the NRA/M as much as to the previous regimes. The extraordinary power of politicised religion in Uganda (the country has rightly been called 'an African Ireland') dates back to the late 19th century and to the development of organised political religion supported by foreign sponsors.[27] When 'modern' political parties developed in the 1950s, their popular names — *wafaranza* [the 'French ones'] for the Catholic DP and *waingereza* [the 'English ones'] for the UPC — harked back to their 19th century sectarian origins. When someone mentioned the DP or the UPC, it was difficult to know whether the reference was to a political party or a religious persuasion. It was almost impossible to separate them in the public mind.[28]

- In addition, the Ugandan protectorate had been one of those highly sophisticated British colonies where the coloniser had fostered a bevy of associational structures (student groups, professional organisations, recreational groups, trade unions) which criss-crossed civil society and gave it texture.

Thus, regardless of its 'progressive' hegemonistic tendencies, the NRM was faced with a complex and solid body of structures and organisations which it simply could not dismiss, even when it did not like them too much. In other words, the NRM never found itself in the position of even beginning to dream about creating a political monopoly, something which was a real if unspoken goal in the cases of Rwanda, Eritrea and Southern Sudan; hence the concept of 'no-party democracy' under which it lived its first 15 years.[29] 'No-party democracy' was one of those *post facto* concepts, like 'African socialism' in its days, created to legitimise and give intellectual credentials to an essentially pragmatic situation. After 20 years of civil strife, Museveni found that he had to reconcile a number of contradictory needs and demands emanating from the whole of society:

- create and maintain civil peace;
- balance the tribal/regional factor;
- respect but discipline the religions;
- keep under control a highly fissiparous body politic whose quarrels had killed over half a million people between 1971–1986;
- introduce a measure of democracy; and
- satisfy foreign donors whose economic support was vital for Uganda's economic recovery.

'No-party democracy' was the theoretical formulation of a practical gimmick: How to let civil society express itself[30] without allowing organised political parties — seen not only by the new regime but also by a large segment of the public as dangerous factors of sectarian division — to return to the forefront of political life. This was a delicate balancing act between societal liberalisation and continued centralised political control. It could not last and did not.

The break came with the 29 June 2000 constitutional referendum. The furtive manner in which the referendum law was passed in parliament was in itself a sign that the regime was ill at ease with the idea of submitting its preferred form of political functioning to public scrutiny.[31] The NRM gave the citizenry a choice between continuation of the no-party democracy system or a return to full party politics. But the innuendos were even more important than the explicit political text: The latter was equated with a return to civil war while taking the no-party democracy option was presented as a way towards increased political participation, including of the party kind.

What then was the difference? In the case of a 'yes' vote the NRM would be sure of controlling and channelling the progressive re-empowerment of parties and of telling them how far they could go. The NRM 'won' the referendum with 90% of the vote; but there had been an abstention rate of 49% which reflected the puzzlement of the electorate over the complex dichotomy with which it was presented.

As a result, when the Movement — as it liked to call itself — was presented with a full challenge during the presidential election of March 2001, it reacted violently and very poorly because the opposition came from within the NRM itself. Museveni's main challenger was Dr Kiiza Besigye, a medical doctor who had been a participant in the guerrilla war against Obote and who was widely respected for his personal integrity. He was doubly dangerous because to his NRM credentials he added a strong connection with the old DP through his wife Winnie Byanyima, the daughter of a founding member of the DP.

Besigye's campaign was centred on denouncing the corruption of the Movement and on the concomitant loss of its guerrilla ideals. Museveni won by 70% of the vote anyway but his rival — hounded by every means fair or foul — hung on with remarkable courage.[32] He returned to the fray in February 2006 and managed to get 37% of the vote, while Museveni fell to 59% in spite of continued rigging. By then the victory of the man in the cowboy hat had become a thin edge, showing the progressive erosion of his popularity and, even more, that of his corrupt cohorts. The vast majority of Ugandans had been children during the guerrilla war of the early 1980s and had become more sensitive to the extremely unequal sharing of the fruits of the Ugandan 'economic miracle' than to the oft-repeated argument of civil peace and tranquillity. Besigye's party, the Forum for Democratic Change, established as a civil society 'forum' to circumvent the electoral law, loomed menacingly on the political horizon, turning the perspective of the 2011 elections into a real threat to the hard-won Ugandan stability.

Rwanda

Unlike Uganda, at the time of the RPF's victory Rwanda did not have a coherent history of independent civil society structures, good or bad. It was the typical product of a dual process, Belgian colonisation and its brutal central control, and a one-party state dating back to the very first days of decolonisation. There were civil society organisations in Rwanda, but they either belonged to the Catholic Church, which was closely allied to

the one-party state,[33] or were direct branches of the party itself. I have called this in another context — that of Mobutu Sese Seko's Popular Movement of the Revolution — a case of right-wing Leninism. During the 1960s adepts of 'African socialism', who were usually solidly pro-Western and anti-communist — definitely the case with Habyarimana's National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development (MRND) — borrowed with great profit all the organisational characteristics of the Marxist-Leninist parties and put them at the service of conservative policies. This included fake trade unions, bogus professional organisations, a controlled press and state-sponsored 'free' citizens' organisations.[34]

As a result, there was no history in Rwanda of anything even vaguely resembling an independent civil society. But the years between 1990 and the 1994 genocide had seen a brief, violent and contentious flowering of political democratisation. Following the opening up of the Rwandese political space after La Baule,[35] multi-party democracy exploded in Rwanda. 'Exploded' is actually the word since, from the beginning, the various political parties were seen as subversive and illegitimate by the old MRND, while they themselves tended to react violently and create their own armed militias to confront the still-entrenched one-party state. This should be seen against the background of civil war, since the RPF invasion of October 1990 closely followed in the footsteps of political liberalisation and of the creation of independent political parties.

In many ways the Rwandese political parties were never 'normal', since they started as contenders in a system where violence was the order of the day. One of the new parties — the *Parti Libéral* (PL) which had a large Tutsi membership — was seen as a sympathiser with the RPF guerrillas. But the two other main opposition parties — the *Parti Social-Démocrate* (PSD) and the *Mouvement Démocratique Républicain* (MDR) — were almost completely Hutu. Given the country's ethnic make-up this made them all the more dangerous for the MRND before the genocide and later for the RPF after the genocide, when they entered the post-genocide government of national unity.

The genocide radically altered the newborn rules of the democratisation game. From the beginning the Hutu coalition partners in the government of national unity — which was officially the embodiment of the August 1993 Arusha Agreement — were seen by the RPF as junior partners — even though they represented the vast majority of the population — who were suspect until proven guilty.[36] In spite of its minority status the RPF could drape itself in the legitimacy of those who had been able to stop the genocide while the international community was doing nothing.

Conversely, the Hutu parties, although they had fought against the Habyarimana regime, found themselves tarred by the collective guilt of their community's participation in the genocide. For the RPF this was a fantastic opportunity — particularly if one keeps in mind the collective guilt felt by the international community over its passive acquiescence to the genocide. The RPF lost no time in operationalising this advantage. By 1995 the violent evacuation of the internally displaced persons (IDP) camp in Kibeho — where it killed a minimum of 5 000 IDPs — gave it the necessary opportunity to dismantle the government of national unity after its Hutu partners protested against the slaughter.

Faced with no civil society worth the name, with a Catholic Church which had been deeply tainted by its complicity in the genocide, with 'opposition' political parties which could be disenfranchised for their alleged sympathies with the *génocidaires* and with a guilt-ridden international community, the RPF was left with a clear field of fire.

Pasteur Bizimungu, the RPF Hutu president, was deposed in 2002 and later arrested under spurious charges. The political parties which had been members of the coalition government were then deftly eviscerated and a cosy presidential election was later organised in which Paul Kagame, the new Tutsi RPF president, could win by 95%.[37] The rump political parties which were left were then allowed to compete in the 2008 legislative election where they all supported the now hegemonistic RPF in exchange for a few parliamentary seats. From then on, any mention of the words 'Tutsi' or 'Hutu' was ascribed to 'divisionism' and could land the person who had uttered them in jail for 20 years.

Eritrea

Any study of 'Eritrea' has to be complex since, both before 1890 and between 1952–1993, it was a province of another country, Ethiopia. So any investigation of its pre-independence has to focalise on the colonial period (1890–1952), even if some additional light can be shed by looking at the last period of Ethiopian administration (1952–1991). Italy did not have a very progressive attitude towards its colonies. Nevertheless, it did develop an embryo cadre of native civil servants for two reasons: As its oldest and for a while only colony, Eritrea was slated for economic development in order to provide emigration opportunities for the then rapidly growing Italian population. Later, when Italy acquired other colonies, it used its Eritrean native army for colonial conquest both in Libya and in Somalia.[38]

As a result, by 1941 when Italian colonialism was eliminated by the British armed forces, Eritrea had reasonably developed governmental organisational resources (in colonial terms) and a non-negligible industrial base. Strangely enough, far from leaving these resources idle, the years of the British mandate developed them considerably. The British introduced political parties, created a Parliament, allowed the organisation of free trade unions, created a free press and favoured the creation of religious and civil society organisations.[39] One may be surprised by what seemed like a controlled experiment in colonial social and political development, unparalleled in Great Britain's own colonies. This was due to two factors only: the British knew they would not stay in Eritrea — which was administered by the British Military Administration for Occupied Enemy Territories on a provisional basis — and the personalities of several of its administrators, such as Sir Kennedy Trevaskis (a member of the British administration of the occupied enemy territories) who were open, inquisitive and had curious minds.

Everything changed when the United Nations (UN) gave Ethiopia a mandate over the territory. For the Emperor it was out of the question to tolerate in Eritrea the type of independent civil society which he would never have accepted in Ethiopia itself — where it would be considered as 'rebellious' and 'subversive'. Thus Eritrea's takeover by the Ethiopian administration was a great leap backwards for the former Italian colony and caused an enormous amount of frustration, leading directly to insurrection in 1961.

As a result the Eritrean guerrilla movement embodied a massive contradiction. In many ways it was part and parcel of the youth movement in the last days of the Haile Selassie regime, which was strongly structured along the lines and ideals of the Marxist extreme left of the 1960s and 1970s. More 'orthodox' than its European and North American counterparts, it was much more illiberal. The Ethiopian student movement which would result in the creation of the Mei'son and Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Party (EPRP)

was not exactly enthusiastic about a free civil society.[40] The Eritrean guerrilla mindset was exactly the same and pointed towards an 'integrated' and potentially totalitarian view of society. 'Democracy' as a slogan was an element in the 'Popular Front' ideological tool kit many Third World revolutionary movements had inherited from the communist dictator Joseph Stalin's tactics in 1930s Europe.[41]

This meant that the Eritrean guerrillas, particularly after the EPLF triumphed over its rivals in 1980, would find themselves on a direct collision course with the very society that had produced them. This is where nationalism came in: Had not the Eritrean guerrilla movement been secessionist/nationalist, it would have had to deal directly with the hopes and aspirations of a society whose liberal and creative ambitions had been fostered by the British during the 1941–1952 period and reinforced by the independence struggle. It would have been extremely difficult for the victors to get the genie back inside the bottle. Nationalism gave the EPLF the opportunity to transcend the very aspirations of the society for which it purported to have fought. This is what lies behind the transformation of the EPLF into the brutally dictatorial 'Popular Front for Justice and Development' (PFDJ) after its Third Congress in 1994. Eritrean nationalism had become a mantra justifying any policy as long as it was deemed to be 'in support of our independence'.

The first period of independence, between the 1991 military victory and the war against Ethiopia in 1998, was one of hopeful uncertainty. The dominant style of the PFDJ was authoritarian but there were open vistas and a lively political debate, particularly during the elaboration of the first Eritrean constitution between 1993–1997. The first hint that all was not well came when President Issayas Afeworki refused to implement the newly elaborated constitution. This spurred an intense debate between him and several of the historical leaders of the EPLF/PFDJ, including the man who had led the Constitutional Committee, Bereket Habte Selassie.

It soon became obvious that something was amiss when Issayas began to use the semi-secret People's Party which had existed as a core organisation within the EPLF since 1976, as a war vehicle against his comrades.[42] The outbreak of war with Ethiopia in 1998 put the whole process on ice over the next two years. But it restarted at the end of the war in 2000 and in May 2001 the 15 most senior EPLF commanders wrote a solemn letter to Issayas, questioning the authoritarian drift of the movement, asking for the implementation of the constitution and for the unblocking of the national political debate.[43]

Tension was high for the next four months. But then, confident that there would be no international reaction in the frantic international atmosphere of 11 September 2001, Issayas arrested all his critics, closed down the free press, rounded up protesting students, sent them to work camps and dismissed the constitution.

Since then the country has been turned into an absolutely totalitarian space. All civil associations have been either disbanded or absorbed by the state, the churches have been brought under absolute control,[44] the youth of both sexes has been completely militarised and obliged to work for an unlimited number of years on public work projects without salary, the free press has disappeared and most of its journalists are in prison, there are no trade unions, no political parties outside the PFDJ, no elections, no due process of law and the omnipresent security police can get anybody arrested for exercising the simplest forms of free speech.

This was all done in the name of defending Eritrean independence. Critics are routinely dismissed as 'traitors' working for Ethiopia, which is presumed to be permanently on the

lookout for opportunities to roll back the independence process. Political and civil space is non-existent. The 'government' has become a one-man show run by the president and a limited number of obedient cronies. The only exit now seems to be through violence, whether it arises from foreign war, internal revolt or political assassination.

Southern Sudan

The coming to power of the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M) in January 2005 did not mark the beginning of any kind of 'normal' civil administration in the region. Rather it could be seen as an army acquiring control over a vast territory which not only did not have any civil society worth the name but never even had a solid form of colonial administration in British times.[45] Southern Sudan had gone from colonial neglect (1898–1955) to war and superficial commercial exploitation by the North (1956–1972), to mismanagement by the semi-autonomous High Executive Council (1972–1980), to a renewed war of a quasi-genocidal nature (1983–2002).

Administration could not be 'restored' since the Khartoum government had ruled the South as a military free-fire zone and the SPLA had taken the support of the civilian populations for granted, considering it as a mere reservoir of fighters, not as a bona fide political constituency. There were hardly any 'civilian' structures operating in parallel with those of the military.[46] Given the communist past of the movement, we could speak of a form of 'Army Leninism'. In many ways the social space was filled by foreign UN and non-governmental organisation groups, particularly after 1988 when war and famine had claimed 300 000 lives and brought about the creation of the multi-agency Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS) based in Kenya.[47]

Apart from the SPLA/M there were only two other structural shapes: The churches and the tribes. And these were problematic, not least because they recouped each other. The Nuer people, for example, were essentially Presbyterian while the Dinka were either Catholic or Anglican, depending on the areas they occupied.[48]

Thus the Southern Sudan, long before the OLS had taken over its socio-economic functioning, had a tradition of extroverted administration run by foreigners who devoted themselves benevolently to the welfare of the inhabitants. Civil society was barely embryonic and definitely no match for the SPLA/M. In addition, 19 years of war had churned the population into a socio-ethnic maelstrom of gigantic proportions with perhaps up to half the population living either as IDPs in Sudan itself or as refugees in the neighbouring countries. Those who were neither refugees nor 'official' IDPs often did not live in their traditional areas but were 'unofficial' IDPs in various parts of the territory.

Indeed, democratising such a human landscape was a daunting task when even traditional authorities had barely retained a precarious toehold on 'ruling' the people. Thus it was not particularly surprising that the large influx of oil money allocated to the GoSS by the January 2005 Nairobi CPA triggered first and foremost a massive wave of corruption.[49] Under-administration, over-armament and financial haemorrhage have been the main characteristics of the GoSS since its birth. Now two years away from a possible independence vote, the Southern Sudanese government has first to exist beyond its present shadow reality.

CAN THESE WARS EVER END? FORMER GUERRILLAS INTRA-COUNTRY VIOLENCE AND REGIONAL MANIPULATIONS

The international community is very keen on peace agreements. But their content and relationship with the long-standing problems which have caused the conflicts in the first place are usually not looked at so closely because:

- many are felt to be intractable;
- the international players are usually not very knowledgeable about the past history of these problems;
- the actors, local and international, are often more interested in the media impact and its concomitant legitimacy gains than in the complicated business of actually unravelling ancient and complex socio-economic problems;
- post-conflict situation management tends to be formulaic, with a one-size-fits-all approach largely determined by the prevailing international community catchwords;[50] and
- border porosity and the cross-border interlocking of ethno-political problems seldom allow for the containment of the causes of the previous conflict within the boundaries of partially theoretical nation-states. And peace agreements tend to be contained at the national level.

As a result the end of an overt conflict is seldom the end of the story, as in our four cases:

Uganda

In Uganda the military leaders of the defeated regime withdrew to the Sudan and started a low intensity guerrilla war against Museveni and the NRA/M. This war soon gave birth to a bizarre millenarian cult involving the large-scale uprising of the Acholi tribe which had been the military mainstay of the Obote regime.[51] After the sect was defeated in 1987 and its founder Alice Lakwena had fled to Kenya, it nearly disappeared. But it was later resuscitated through the good offices of the Khartoum government which, after it reached the Ugandan border in its 1993 offensive, found it expedient to finance and arm the heirs of Lakwena.

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), led by Joseph Kony, a relative of Lakwena, has morphed into one of the strangest military-social phenomena on the continent. Following strong military pressure from the Ugandan Army, it migrated first to Southern Sudan, to be closer to its Khartoum sponsors, then to the Congo and finally to the Central African Republic. It now sits astride all these countries, moving all the time. It kidnaps the children it needs to replenish its mad army, and lives on Sudanese money and illegal mining and trafficking. It buys second-hand guns from the militias which have flourished in the region for the past twenty years and receives parachute drops from its sponsors.

This 'killers-without-borders' outfit is not even aiming at any 'national' political goal anymore, it simply parleys its nuisance capacity into political support and a warped measure of diplomatic legitimacy. Even if it is false to say that the NRA/M deliberately tolerates this perennial irritant — which cannot really threaten its continued grip on national politics — one has to recognise that,

- it allows the regime to maintain a high degree of militarisation which can easily be switched to some other purpose than fighting the LRA; and
- it buys a modicum of somewhat reluctant support from the donors who are permanently presented with a picture of dangerous insanity as a form of opposition.[52]

Rwanda

If Uganda has a genuine if mad form of continuing armed opposition, Rwanda has tactically played with its own adversary, the *Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda* (FDLR), a Hutu armed movement which is a distant emanation of the *génocidaire* regime overthrown in 1994. Officially Rwanda wants to destroy or, when it tries to be politically correct, 'reintegrate' the Hutu guerrillas. In fact, although their presence was the official pretext for invading Zaire in September 1996, the RPF regime has been very careful never to destroy them.

The main thrust of its battle corps in 1998–2000, at the height of its onslaught on the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire regime it had installed in power in Kinshasa, was directed at the armies of its former protégé and not at the FDLR. Later the FDLR tended to become an unofficial business partner for a number of Kigali-linked businessmen involved in wild-cat mining. Today the relationship between the FDLR and the pro-Kigali Tutsi guerrilla movement in North Kivu is extremely ambiguous. The RPF never gave the impression that eradicating the FDLR was an order of high priority and this was because the FDLR had several uses:

- it kept the sores of the genocide open and acted as a constant reminder to the international community of the way in which it had abandoned the Rwandese Tutsi in their hour of need;
- it gave Kigali a permanent pretext for meddling in Congolese affairs; and
- it defused any criticism of the complete absence of democracy in Rwanda itself since the presence of the FDLR created a constant reminder of how horrible an alternative to the RPF regime could be.

Eritrea

The case of Eritrea is more complex. In the wake of the 1991 military victory and of the 1993 independence referendum, it looked as if the country had solved once and for all the basic problem that had haunted its long and painful birth process since 1961. But then a completely new problem arose, that of the interference in Eritrean affairs of Khartoum-backed Muslim fundamentalism. The National Islamic Front regime in Sudan gave support to a gaggle of three Islamist groups which had united under the name Jihad Eritrea in 1988, i.e., before independence.

At first they were nothing more than a peripheral nuisance in the Beja populated provinces of Barka and Gash-Setit. But when their importance grew as a result of Sudanese support, Asmara countered by backing the so-called 'Eastern Front' which was then fighting the Khartoum regime.[53] This precipitated Eritrea into an ever-growing confrontation with the Sudanese regime, which ended when relations with Addis Ababa fell apart and the two countries went back to war in May 1998.

As soon as this happened, Asmara reconciled with the Sudan to bring it on its side in the renewed conflict with Ethiopia. Khartoum duly disbanded Jihad Eritrea, while Asmara forced the Eastern Front into a quick 'peace agreement' with the Sudanese regime. Since then Asmara has dug itself deeper and deeper into a confrontation with Addis Ababa, backing guerrillas inside Ethiopia and even using the Somali conflict to fight a proxy war with its enemy through support for the Somali Islamist militias.

As a result Eritrea has worked itself back into a conflict situation when initially its good relations with its Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF) ally in Ethiopia should have allowed it to walk away from the old conflict on very good security terms. The explanation obviously lies in the very peculiar nature of the Eritrean regime which we defined above, i.e. an absolute, personalised dictatorship in which no dissenting opinion to that of the chief can be factored. The decision to confront Ethiopia progressively surfaced from 1997–1998, in the year before the return to war, and it was purely a decision taken by Issayas Afeworki at the same time as he dismissed the new constitution. Both paths — internal and international — were completely centred on the president and are a product of the out-of-control centralisation and personalisation of the regime.

Unlike the Ugandan and Rwandese cases where unending violence was a direct (avoidable?) inheritance of the previous bouts of crisis, the recurrent conflict in the Eritrean-Ethiopian case could have been avoided had it not been for the internal drift of the Eritrean regime itself.

Southern Sudan

The case of Southern Sudan is completely different in that it has not yet achieved statehood although, for all practical purposes, it functions as a separate entity. Here we have two lingering conflict systems which, although quite separate, have had a tendency to feed into each other. The first conflict system is that of tribal rivalries within the South. The second one is the North–South contradiction which, unlike what had happened in Ethiopia in 1991, has not been decisively dealt with.

The first set of conflictual problems has given rise to a series of clashes and civil confrontations all over the South since the signing of the January 2005 peace agreement, always with the danger that the Khartoum government will exploit these tensions as an excavating tool to exploit the North–South contradiction to deeper levels.[54] The second problem is not yet solved and actually might very well lead to a return to war. It has to do with the 2009 legislative and presidential elections and with the further organisation of a referendum of self-determination for the South in 2011.

Both electoral consultations are fraught with peril and might lead to a complete breakdown. But suffice to say that the post-guerrilla SPLA/M regime has shown very poor adaptation to the situation by,

- completely failing to deliver any peace dividends to the general public because of its massive corruption — topping up the bank accounts of the regime's worthies was a much higher priority than providing the population with basic services;
- failing to go beyond tribalism in the exercise of post-conflict power in the various regions of the South; and

- failing to steer a clear political course either for or against independence, leaving the situation to fester.[55]

AN ATTEMPT AT A CONCLUSION

Globally, the record of the guerrillas in power has been disastrous for democracy. At best, in the Ugandan and Rwandese situations, we witness latter-day cases of enlightened despotism, where a modicum of social stability, peace and limited economic progress is bought at the expense of political freedom, free speech and civil liberties.

Uganda is probably the most liberal mix, where a fair amount of benevolent authoritarianism has been combined with a respect for basic freedoms as long as they do not threaten the regime's monopoly on political power.

Rwanda has peace and some economic development but not much else in the way of a liberal society: No press freedom, no freedom of speech, a completely frozen political system and an overriding preoccupation with security.

Southern Sudan offers a mixture of corruption and inefficient authoritarianism which, even if it can turn violent at times, does so more out of clumsy heavy-handedness than out of a resolve to clamp down on signs of dissent. At present, the SPLM enjoys a temporary monopoly on political power, free from any democratic encumbrances, simply because the North–South conflict still overwhelmingly determines everything and pushes every other preoccupation into the background.

As for the Eritrean regime, it can hardly be called a government anymore. On par with North Korea, it has become an absolutely totalitarian structure where the will of one man aided and abetted by obedient sycophants substitutes itself for any expression of the popular will or concerns.

Why this overall disaster? The answer is probably rather simple: Structures tend to be uni-modal and they work rather poorly when asked to perform roles for which they were never intended. Or, in plainer English, a knife is fine for cutting but it does not do a very good job as a screwdriver.

Guerrillas are for fighting. Fighting, especially in a guerrilla war, requires many qualities: the vision necessary to espouse a popular cause, the capacity to organise from scratch under dire and improvised circumstances, enormous self-confidence on the part of the leadership, physical courage, a spirit of defiance and rebellion and an absolute belief in one's guiding star and the righteousness of one's cause, against the whole world if necessary.

All of this is glorious but it is not particularly conducive to democracy. One can even say that a democratic guerrilla is an oxymoron. Democracy means dissent, confrontation, disagreement and finally compromise. None of this is very good for a guerrilla movement where such democratic vocabulary translates itself into splintering groups, sectarian in-fighting, irresolution and giving comfort to the enemy.

Guerrillas have to be responsive enough to the feelings of their popular base but they have to be ruthless enough to impose a dominant tactical line, even if it means killing some of the leadership when it disagrees with the rest. Of all our examples, Museveni was certainly the mildest of the guerrilla leaders and he did not kill any of his subordinates. Not so within the RPF, where a number of deaths, starting with that of its first leader Fred

Rwigyema, were highly suspect. As for Issayas Afeworki and John Garang, their political progress was littered with dead bodies.

The qualities (and defects) of a successful guerrilla do not prepare its leadership to turn itself into a balanced government, even less a democratic one. Old quarrels die hard and the preferred methods of resolving those remain more or less deeply rooted in the good/bad habits of the guerrilla days. Unquestioned and triumphant guerrilla leaders,

- monopolise legitimacy;
- have little patience with the negotiations and compromises they used to consider as so many Gordian knots; and
- tend to look ever upwards. They come from a dynamic background where the sky was the limit. Presidential mandates and limited terms are seen by them as so many fetters to be dispensed with as much as possible.

Garang died, which took care of any time limit on his political mandate. But who could put a term to the continuation of Paul Kagame, Yoweri Museveni or even more Issayas Afeworki in power? The danger is of course that the termination of their power will come from an assassin's bullet or a new revolt against their ossified regimes. In both cases, the lack of institutionalisation of their 'parties' might very well lead to generalised civil strife upon their leaving power, dead or alive.

The best counter-example/confirmation of this inability of guerrillas to adapt to civilian political power is the case of Somaliland where victorious guerrillas did not ascend to power. In April 1991 the Somali National Movement (SNM) was as absolutely triumphant as the Eritrean EPLF or the Ugandan NRA. And yet it did not turn into a political party and it did not create a monopolistic structure over the first government of what was in fact a newly independent country.[56]

Why? One could say that both the best qualities of Somali society (its deep democratic strains) and its worst defect (its fissiparous nature) combined to play in its favour.[57] The years 1991–1993 were taken up by a low-intensity civil conflict among the various clans which had made up the SNM during the anti-Siad Barre war. And after two years, it became obvious that the new state would never be internationally recognised if it kept going that way and that it might even disappear completely in the general Somali chaos. This led to the organisation of a long (March–May 1993) *shir* (consultative assembly) in the town of Borama and to the creation of a fully democratic state, complete with a parliament, a clanic 'senate', political parties and a supreme court.[58] This has been achieved because the SNM accepted dissolving itself during the Borama *shir*, a success partly due to the fact that it never had any charismatic figure at its head during the war but a series of congresses which had periodically elected ordinary leaders.[59]

Paradoxically, the rest of the world has refused to recognise this one smooth guerrilla transition into civilian democracy.

ENDNOTES

1 These guerrillas were fundamentally different from anti-colonial ones because their targets were post-colonial 'independent' regimes.

2 The two extreme departures from this trend have been Somalia — where the guerrillas could never recreate a state after their overthrow of the Siad Barre dictatorship in 1991 — and the Democratic Republic of Congo where the guerrilla assumption to power morphed into a transition from guerrilla to elected government.

3 Clapham C, (ed), *African Guerrillas*. Oxford: James Currey, 1998, is probably one of the best global approaches. But it is made up of juxtaposed studies that do not provide a systematic treatment of the phenomenon.

4 The whole horrific conundrum was embedded in a British document called *Report of the Uganda Relationships Commission*. Entebbe: Government Printers, 1961, designed to be a constitutional blueprint for the future independent Uganda.

5 They were deemed to belong to the 'martial races' the colonisers liked to identify among the colonised. Northerners had guns and very little education, Southerners were educated but kept out of the military. The juxtaposition was deadly.

6 London had arranged for the rigging to be condoned by the Commonwealth Mission of Observers as a way of expiating British support for Idi Amin's coup in 1971. Obote, perceived as left-leaning in Cold War terms, managed to garner both Western and Communist support, leaving almost no room to manoeuvre for any opposition.

7 An 'Idi Amin-leftover' rivalry pitched the West Nile tribes against Obote's Langi and Acholi, thereby dividing the North. But the West Nile guerrillas never blended with the Southern ones.

8 A DP cadre, Andrew Kayiira, had started a Catholic/Baganda guerrilla movement, the Uganda Freedom Movement (UFM). It collapsed when the UFM prematurely attacked Kampala in February 1982 and was militarily smashed. Some of the UFM survivors joined the NRA while others reorganised within the much smaller FEDEMU movement which was unable to grow to sufficient military size.

9 This duality created a generation of pro-Hutu and pro-Tutsi authors, also among foreign scholars. For two ideologically opposed views of the decolonisation process and its consequences see Harroy JP, *Rwanda: du féodalisme à la démocratie*. Brussels: Hayez, 1984; and Chrétien JP, *Le défi de l'ethnisme: Rwanda et Burundi 1990–1996*. Paris: Karthala, 1997.

10 The Hutu represented about 87% of the Rwandese population, the Tutsi about 12% and the Twa about 1%.

11 'Unpredictable wind' in Kinyarwanda.

12 This was particularly true in the western province of Ankole where most of them lived, which was populated by ethnic groups closely resembling the Banyarwanda, to the point of having the same high class/low class dichotomy, called in Ankole Bahima (high) and Bairu (low). Many Tutsi contracted marriages with local Bahima Banyankole.

13 Given the massive ethnic over-determination of the Rwandese political landscape, 'no party' actually meant 'ethnically neutral', a tremendously difficult goal to achieve.

14 Those (MDR , PSD, PL and Centrist Democratic Party — PDC) had been decapitated in the genocide when at least 30 000 'wrong-thinking' anti-Habyarimana Hutu had been killed by the *génocidaires*. The surviving cadres were often no match for the RPF's efficient organisation.

15 See Prunier G, *From Genocide to Continental War: The 'Congolese' Conflict and the Crisis of*

Contemporary Africa. London/New York: Hurst/Oxford University Press America, 2009, Chapter Two.

16   The RPF had had a number of Hutu in its ranks. Those who were forced out of the country after Kibeho were either politically marginalised or assassinated. The remainder were subservient yes-men.

17   See for example Sabbe OS, *The History of Eritrea*. Beirut: Dar-al-Masirah , 1975 and particularly Kurdi N, *Erythrée: L'histoire retrouvée*. Paris: Karthala, 1994.

18   Killion T, *Historical Dictionary of Eritrea*. Lanham (Md): The Scarecrow Press, 1998. This work is a sum of all things Eritrean.

19   For an insider's point of view on these mistakes see Retta Z, *Ye Eritrea Gudey 1941–1963* [The Eritrean Question. In Amharic] Addis Ababa: np, nd.

20   Given the close relationship of the Eritrean guerrilla movement with European and American leftist circles, the bulk of the literature on the Eritrean struggle tends to be of a militant nature. The only good sources on the violent internal convulsions of the movement can be found in Poscia S, *Eritrea, colonia tradita*. Rome: Edizioni Associate, 1989; and more recently Kibreab G, *Critical Reflections on the Eritrean War of Independence*. Trenton (NJ): Red Sea Press, 2008.

21   This is Gaim Kibreab's main contention while some of the Eritrean movement's strongest foreign supporters, like Dan Connell, remain in a state of frustrated puzzlement to this day.

22   The date 1955 is interesting in that the anti-Khartoum insurrection predates the proclamation of Sudanese independence (January 1956) by six months. The feelings of alienation of the African minority in Southern Sudan were so strong that the rebellion started even before the British left, simply because they had decided to leave the South under the authority of the North.

23   That is, those areas like Southern Blue Nile or the Nuba Mountains that belonged to a transitional zone between 'North' and 'South', as defined by the internal colonial border set by the British in 1898.

24   This author, who was residing in Uganda at the time, remembers vividly the worried whisper campaign in the Western diplomatic community. The Cold War was waning but mentalities were still very much shaped by it and Kyankwanzi, a mildly nationalistic effort at setting an original political course, was rumoured to be a 'Communist training school'.

25   Professor Apollo Nsibambi, prime minister of Uganda, has always shied away from publishing his essential PhD dissertation, aptly titled *Integrating Buganda into Uganda* in book form. Professor Nsibambi is at the same time (a) a scholar, (b) a respectful Buganda kingdom subject, (c) a Ugandan nationalist and (d) an NRM supporter, embodying all the country's contradictions.

26   See Prunier G (with Henri Medard), *The Restoration of the Uganda Kingdoms* (forthcoming).

27   Egypt supported the Muslims, France the Catholics and Great Britain the Protestants. The result was a triangular civil war in the 1880s. See Wright M, *Buganda in the Heroic Age*. Nairobi: OUP, 1971.

28   The Muslims, the great losers of the 19th century civil wars, never developed a party of their own. In a very partial way — the southern Bantu Muslims never bought into it — the Idi Amin dictatorship (1971–1979) was their political expression.

29   For a good overview see Mujagu J & J Oloka-Onyango (eds), *No-Party Democracy in Uganda: Myths and Realities*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2000.

30   This it did, also through the press. Contrary to the *Uganda Argus*, the old 'official' newspaper of the 1970s and early 1980s, the NRM daily *New Vision*, run by its idealistic left-wing British chief editor William Pike, was remarkably free and independent.

31   See Barya JJ, 'Political parties, the movement and the referendum on political systems in Uganda: One step forward, two steps back', in Mujagu J & J Oloka-Onyango, *op. cit*. pp. 24–39.

32   The vote had been rigged, giving Museveni — who would have won anyway — a higher percentage than what he had really got. Besigye was threatened with death, beaten, arrested and released without being charged, smeared as HIV positive, accused of raping his house servant and finally denounced as an agent of Rwanda. After the election he took refuge in the US for a while.

33   To such an extent that the Bishop of Kigali Mgr Vincent Nsengiyumva was an active member of the MRND, Rwanda's single party. Mgr Nsengiyumva resigned in 1989 on orders from the Vatican.

34   Such as the massive *Umuganda* teams which performed 'voluntary' civic and public work. Participation was about as free as participation in the developmental communal organisations of communist China.

35   See above Part One, subsection II.

36   See Prunier G, *From Genocide to Continent, op. cit.*, Chapters 1–2.

37   See 'Kagame won, a little too well', *The Economist*, 30 August 2003.

38   See Taddia I, *L'Eritrea colonia (1890–1952)*. Milano: Franco Angeli, 1986; and Negash T, *Italian Colonialism in Eritrea (1890–1941)*. Sweden: Uppsala University Press, 1987.

39   See Trevaskis GKN, *Eritrea: a Colony in Transition (1941–1952)*. London: Oxford University Press, 1960; and Ellingson LS, *Eritrea: Separatism and Irredentism*. Unpublished PhD thesis available through University Microfilms International: Ann Harbor (Mich), 1986 (see particularly pp. 39–154 on the British Mandate period).

40   For a revealing view of the origins of the movement see Balsvik R, *Haile Selassie's Students: The Intellectual and Social Background to Revolution, 1952–1977*. East Lansing: African Studies Center, Michigan State University, 1985. For a detailed history of the EPRP see Tadesse K, *The Generation*. The first volume was published by Trenton (NJ): Red Sea Press, 1993 and the second by Lanham Md: University Press of America, 1998. See particularly Volume II pp. 248–268 for the relations between the EPRP and the Eritrean guerrillas.

41   Other African examples include the Algerian National Liberation Front, both Unita and the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola in Angola and Mozambique's Frelimo. South Africa's African National Congress is not entirely free from the syndrome. There were many other examples in Asia and Latin America, where Hugo Chavez's Venezuela can be seen as a very distant incarnation of the phenomenon today.

42   For a discussion of the role of the People's Party inside the EPLF and of the subsequent political crisis see Connell D, *Conversations with Eritrean Political Prisoner*. Trenton (NJ): Red Sea Press, 2005.

43   These included the key EPLF leaders such as Haile Wold'ensay, Mesfin Hagos, Petros Solomon, Mahmood Sherifo, Sebhat Ephrem, Ogbe Abraha, and Alamin Mohamed Said.

44   Control of the 'established' churches such as the *tāwahādo* (Monophysist) Church, the Catholics and most Protestant denominations. But less recognised groups were deemed to be 'subversive' and brutally suppressed. The PFDJ has a particular hostility towards the Jehovah's Witnesses because of their anti-militarist, non-violent doctrine.

45   For the extreme 'lightness' of British colonial administration in Southern Sudan (the South was run by London as a separate entity from the North) see Collins R, *Shadows in the Grass: Britain in the Southern Sudan (1918–1956)*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983.

46   The first conference which had attempted to set up a civilian SPLM administration had taken

place in Chukudum in 1994, i.e. after 11 years of war and then only because Garang felt that he had to do something to fill the vacuum his rebel commanders were denouncing since they had risen against him three years earlier.

47 For a history of the OLS see Burr M & R Collins, *Requiem for the Sudan: War, Drought and Disaster Relief on the Nile*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1995.

48 In colonial times the British had largely sub-contracted social work and education to the various churches which were divided geographically into 'concessions' so as not to compete with each other and bother the colonial administration. This led to a mottled tribal-religious map of extreme complexity.

49 By mid-2008 the GoSS was receiving around $200 million per month for a population only slightly exceeding eight million people. Lower oil prices have since eaten into that bonanza.

50 Having all the right words at the right place at the right time matters much more than actually applying them to reality. Hence the mantra-like quality of many 'peace agreements' — once they have been signed, the emphasis falling not so much on how they actually work but on the 'sanctity' of the agreement itself.

51 See Prunier G, 'Le mouvement d'Alice Lakwena, un prophétisme politique en Ouganda', in Chrétien JP, Perrot CH, Prunier G & F Raison (eds), *L'invention religieuse en Afrique: Histoire et religion en Afrique Noire*. Paris: Karthala, 1993, pp. 409–429.

52 One would have hoped that the reasonable Kiiza Besigye would have had no truck with the heinous LRA. This was perhaps too much to expect. In 2003 he sent an emissary, Colonel Opoka, to explore the possibilities of collaborating with the armed cult. True to form, Kony killed Opoka, even though the emissary was himself an Acholi.

53 The Eastern Front's main guerrilla group was the *Mutammar al-Beja* (Beja Congress), supported by the *al-Usud al-Hurrah* (Free Lions) whose members mainly come from the Rashaida tribe.

54 Examples of such tactics on the part of the Khartoum regime include the Missiriya/Ngok Dinka standoff over Abyei, the use of the Toposa in Eastern Equatoria, the discreet rearming of the Nuer militias in Eastern Upper Nile and the Murle raids against the Anywak and Nuer on the Ethiopian border.

55 This was particularly true after the second SPLM Congress in Juba in May 2008, when the leadership ended up with policy resolutions which were completely at odds with the popular feeling.

56 There are three political parties in Somaliland: The ruling party Udub, which got 33 seats out of 82 in the October 2008 elections, and two opposition parties, Kulmiye, which got 28 seats and stands a good chance of winning the next (presidential) election and Ucid, which won 21 seats. All derive their support from a mixture of clanic, regional and personality factors, like most other political parties in the world.

57 Actually the qualities and the defects are two sides of the same coin, a strong taste for an anti-hierarchical type of social and political functioning.

58 So efficient and respected that in the April 2003 presidential election, after the winner Daher Riyale Kahin had won by only 0.01% of the vote — a few hundreds in nearly two million, and this after a recount of the ballots — the loser Mohamed Silanyo graciously conceded defeat. Not a shot was fired.

59 While 'big men' may determine whether movements transform themselves to political parties, one of the key problems is the hegemony (or even monopoly) of Leninist-type organisations, which also carry an arrogance linked with being the perceived incarnation of the legitimacy of the struggle. This is not conducive to democracy.