The London School of Economics and Political Science

Claims to Orphanhood
An Ethnographic Investigation of Childhood Adversity in Post-Genocide Rwanda

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Declaration

I certify that the thesis I have presented for examination for the MPhil/PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work other than where I have clearly indicated that it is the work of others (in which case the extent of any work carried out jointly by me and any other person is clearly identified in it).

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I can confirm that my thesis was copy edited for conventions of language, spelling and grammar by Marian O'Dea, Children's Research Network, Dublin 2, Republic of Ireland.

For the children, young people and families in Rwanda who want the world to know their hardships

In memory of all who did not make it to see these words in writing

Acknowledgements

Abstract

Based on 16 consecutive months of fieldwork with children, their families and communities, this thesis explores the lives, experiences and perspectives of children, young people and their families who live in northwestern Rwanda and have experienced many hardships. In the context of war, genocide, migration and flight, it examines children and young people's experiences of, as well as the social dynamics pertaining to, parental death or absence.

The analysis addresses a key underlying question that remains little examined: how does a dominant global development category, such as that of orphan, become meaningful in the daily lives, subjectivities and identities of children and young people who become associated with such a category when it meets locally available identity and status constructions? What emerges is a messy, complex cultural reality that often seems contradictory in nature. Orphanhood appears simultaneously as a desirable status and a stigmatised and embodied identity; as a means to much-needed social and material resources, such as patrons or inclusion in NGO projects, or as an existential reality.

The central argument is that children, young people and their families make diverse and sometimes contradictory claims to orphanhood for a variety of moral, political, social, economic and existential reasons, the primary aim of which is to achieve a more dignified life. Orphanhood is a condition of inherent existential insecurity that children want to overcome. In order to do so they sometimes first have to officially cast themselves as orphans. They have to become orphans to unbecome orphans. But whether they are successful in doing so depends on one key factor that is only sometimes visible to children themselves: post-genocide political-ethnic categories heavily influence children's experiences of orphanhood by determining their access to charitable and communal support. These in turn are affected by the particular topography of remembering and forgetting that shapes post-genocide Rwanda.

Contents

List of Figures

Explanatory Notes

Language

The fieldwork for this thesis was conducted in multiple languages and is therefore a result of a collaboration with a local research assistant conversant in all these language. The three dominant languages were Kinyarwanda, French and English. I have translated all quotes into English for ease of reading but where terms or expressions are of importance, I have added the original Kinyarwanda terms or expressions in brackets or as a footnote. Some conversations took place in Kiswahili or Lingala as well as another Congolese language. As I do not have any proficiency in these languages, I relied entirely on my research assistant in these conversations and am not able to provide relevant original quotes. For Kinyarwanda/English translations I have relied on Zembach's 2009 dictionary, which includes English, French and Kinyarwanda. I have also relied on the official online dictionary, www.kinyarwanda.net. Northern Rwanda has a slightly different dialect and spelling for some words, which may explain deviations in some of the quotes provided. All quotes are emphasised with " ", while terms adopted from other scholars are emphasised in ' ' and quoted appropriately. Quotes from research participants are emphasised in italics while quotes from literature are quoted in normal font.

Confidentiality and Safety Measures

Rwanda continues to experience political tensions that require particular attention to the safety of research participants. Precautions taken are discussed in Chapter 2 but a few comments are necessary here. All personal, geographical and organisational names have been changed. I have confined the area specification to 'northwestern' Rwanda and will not provide any further details on the exact location. I have deliberately kept descriptions vague enough that the area is not identifiable. Socio-demographic descriptors are thus 'rural', 'urban', close to a town (unnamed) or road. Only one organisation is mentioned by name, Care International. This organisation works across Rwanda and across villages and can thus not be used for identification of people or areas. The project referred to ceased prior to commencement of fieldwork. Where statistics and precise figures are referred to these have been modified to remain true to the meaning but so as to obscure, which area may be referred to. I have included children's drawings and worksheets but have anonymised them and covered where they have written names of areas or people. I have not included any photographs. Finally, I have consulted with an expert on data archiving and anonymisation to ensure that I have done my utmost to protect the safety and integrity of my participants in this and all my publications.

Figure 1 Regional Map of Rwanda.

Introduction

Theoretical Underpinnings for Understanding a New Category of Childhood Suffering in Post-Genocide Rwanda

Claims to Orphanhood

Paul is a 20-year old Rwandan youth (*ubusore*) who lives with his father in Kigali and often talks of visiting his mother in the far southwest whom he hasn't seen in eight years. I initially became friends with Paul as he taught me Kinyarwanda, but in our many lazy afternoons, perched over an African tea or fruit juice in one of Kigali's cafés, he usually wanted to talk about my research. As he always said, his own life was so relevant to research on orphans that he wanted me to "know his orphanhood". Paul's family survived the 1994 genocide against Tutsi but his parents divorced shortly after and Paul's father brought him along with him to Kigali. Badly injured as a soldier in the war, the father has been drinking heavily since. To support his unemployed father, Paul teaches during the day and works as a night guard. In order to save up for university, he is also taking a course in tourism, hoping to get a job as a tour guide to help with university fees. In his spare time in-between teaching, guarding, studying, cooking and meeting me, he is trying to develop a film project with a close friend and spends long days in the friend's music shop. When he feels he needs support, he nurtures personal relationships with westerners working for the huge NGO industry or as missionaries. Paul is generally cheerful and full of innovative ideas and plans for his future. There are also days when his mood is solemn and he feels downbeat. He worries about looking poor,

> *"When people see me they look at my body, my clothes, my phone and they see*
> *that I belong to the category of poor people and they do not want to know me".*

Paul is frustrated he does not have the same chances in life as his peers. He is saddened by his father's lack of attention, conflicts within his family and various authorities' lack of recognition of him as an orphan and of his mother as a genocide survivor, because she has since married a Hutu. In

frustration, he used to shake his head and say "but this is Rwanda, we do not love each other[1]". This is what he wanted me to know of his orphanhood.

Paul's claim to orphanhood is to be understood within a context where such claims are many and diverse and are often both person- and context-dependent. Mama Seraphine in one context labelled her children orphans when she came to "to register her orphans for support", assuming I was an NGO worker, while in another context she became offended when I asked a question about her children's orphanhood. Her daughters identified as orphans but denied that life was consequently difficult; yet some people spoke of one daughter as problematic because she had had a child with a sugar daddy while still in secondary school, which they perceived as a negative implication of the lack of her father. Ten-year old Husina had lost both her parents to AIDS and lived with her paternal aunt. Most community members highlighted Husina as the quintessential suffering orphan but not as expected as an AIDS orphan. In spite of Husina's young age, she was to most people *imfubyi ya jenoside* (genocide orphan). Yet Husina on several occasions refuted such claims – "I have my mother, I am not an orphan" (*"mfite mama wanje, sindi imfubyi"*). On another occasion, she wondered if she might be an orphan. What such claims to orphanhood suggest is an ambiguous pendulum motion between a desired orphan status associated with a pitied suffering child who receives support, care and positive attention, and a stigmatised, often deviant, outcast who experiences exclusion.

The Question

In sub-Saharan Africa today, as in other developing regions, there is an astonishing number of children who are thought to grow up as 'refugees', 'street children', 'child soldiers', 'children affected by war', 'orphans', or 'heads of household'. These are just some of the most well-known and reported upon categories of 'vulnerable' childhoods that have come to the attention of scholars and humanitarian organisations over the last few decades. Many of such children's lives are often subsumed under the dominant development category 'OVC', orphans and vulnerable children. This thesis attempts to understand the social dynamics of one such category, orphans, through an ethnographic investigation of the lives of Rwandan boys and girls who either self-identify or are labelled as *imfubyi*. The analysis aims to address a key underlying question that remains little

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[1] See Veale (2000:236) for a brief discussion of this sentiment.

analysed: how do development categories, imported into local settings through non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and national policies, influence how children experience their lives as a particular kind of child, and a particular kind of suffering child, within their social worlds? In what ways, if any, does association with the term *imfubyi* make a child different from other children? I trace this through emerging, entangled understandings of childhood, family and suffering that are characterised by the context of a developmentalist, post-genocide state.

From 2010 to 2011, I conducted 16 months of ethnographic fieldwork with children and young people with and without parents, in diverse situations and geographical locations – Kigali and two villages in northwestern Rwanda, semi-urban Kaganza and rural Mwiza. Working with a local research assistant, I combined a range of ethnographic and child-specific methods (detailed in Chapter 2). Through theatre plays, drawing sessions, worksheets designed together with children, and through leisurely days of spontaneous music and dance contests, I elicited children's views on and experiences on the variety of categories, modes of identification and social encounters that pertain to their self-understandings as particular kinds of children. The research comes from a long-standing interest in children's lives within contexts that are challenging and cause children substantial hardships. My interest in *Rwandan* children's lives arises from a perplexity emerging from the abundant AIDS orphan literature that dominates scholarship on African childhoods. I started to wonder what it was like for orphans whose orphanhood was not caused by AIDS. I turned to Rwanda and discovered the same intense focus on only one category of children – genocide orphans. Thus with both 'types' of orphans, Rwanda seemed a particularly interesting case study to explore potential influences of the apparent quintessentialising of some kinds of children over others and how this may influence children's perceptions of being children.

Participating in children's everyday lives, talking to their families, joining them in school and at various NGO programmes and activities, it soon became apparent that references and claims to orphanhood were often so inconsistent as to make the term orphan appear obsolete. Of course, it is not. Through a comparative approach, it slowly became evident that orphan claims expressed a series of moral, social and political concerns specific to the post-genocide context. Thus, I start from Leach's position that foregrounding and analysing apparent inconsistencies can lead to an understanding of social change (Leach 1954, quoted in Hutchinson 2006:12). In doing so, I provide an ethnographic account of the emergence of a dynamic social category that has developed from an explosive encounter between local and global categories.

The growing body of literature on adverse childhoods in sub-Saharan Africa warns of the dangers in employing universalist categories such as the child, the suffering orphan or the rights-bearing child through uniquely northern cultural understandings of children's rights, capabilities and status (Boyden 1997, Chin 2003). Many such categories sit uneasily with local perceptions of childhood (Boydon 1997; Bray 2003; Henderson 2006; Meintjes and Giese 2006) and entail ideals that are expensive and difficult to achieve for most children in developing countries (Chin 2003:309; see also Dawes and Donald 1994; Hart 2009; Moeller 2002:45). Nonetheless, the reality is that a multitude of northern-derived categories, concepts and ideas are exported to the south and become reality for children and families through their encounters with NGOs, state bodies, religious authorities, representatives of popular culture and other transmitters of global ideas. An ideal childhood is imposed, which children must "contend with, measure up to, subvert [and] manipulate" as part of their own identity (Wedel et al 2005:37-8). In the words of Tsing (2005), they become 'engaged universals' with unique local meanings. Such meanings often emerge from what Meinert (2009) has conceptualised as 'hopes in friction', drawing on Tsing's argument that globalisation leads to the ignition of unpredictable sparks when the global and the local meet (Tsing 2005).

Several scholars have suggested that many African languages do not have a word for "orphan" but have local terms to denote a destitute child with no social moorings, kin or other network to offer support (Henderson 2006:307; Hutchinson 2006), not dissimilar to language used about the poor and destitute (Iliffe 1987). Kinyarwanda is an example of an African language that has a native term for orphan, in fact two, *umwana udafite ababyeyi*, (a child who does not have parents), and *imfubyi*. In the literature, *imfubyi* appear as children who, upon the loss of parents, fail to integrate within a household in the extended family and thereby end up day-labouring and offering assistance in other people's homes (De Lame 2005:185-193; see also Codere 1973:74-75). This original meaning of *imfubyi* persists today but only in a complex web of contradictory, always changing claims to different kinds of orphanhood. On the one hand, the original life associated with biological orphanhood is not the kind of life Paul, who opened this thesis, has. Although Paul feels neglected, he is immersed in an extended kin network and has local and western friends who are dedicated to helping him achieve a good life. On the other hand, there are parallels. Paul does not wander widely for day labour, however, he travels daily and nightly across Kigali to combine enough resources to sustain himself and his disabled, drunken father, with insufficient support from his conflict-rife family.

Paul is making particular claims to a suffering that he labels orphanhood, and which he grounds in a particular reading of Rwanda ("we do not love each other"), where families' affective

economies and ethics of care are considered in decline and where exclusionary political-ethnic categories (Tutsi survivor) and socio-economic classifications (poor) inhibit wider social responsibility. His claims thus hold within them important intergenerational and political debates which at first sight may not appear related but which upon closer inspection are intrinsically intertwined. The central argument proposed is that these political and intergenerational debates converge: orphanhood has become an important domain through which post-genocide identity politics and associated access to resources are actively played out and consecrated in the most intimate aspects of people's lives: their ability to care for their own children. Entangled in such contestations and debates over post-genocide structures, orphanhood holds within it instrumental value but also the power to moralise, control and condemn, and thus to ostracise. This tension is at the core of the polyvalence of Rwandan orphan understandings and experiences. The diverse meanings and evocations of *imfubyi* suggests a shift from orphanhood as exclusively a kinship category of children who grow up without their biological parents to orphanhood as an available interpretative framework for understanding hardships and suffering that is not obviously related to the fact of parental death. As such, this thesis departs from existing work on orphanhood, which has not examined the ways in which the orphan category is productively instrumentalised to make very specific claims about sociality, kinship, family and communal politics – and indeed to make claims on the state that oversees all such institutions.

Theorising Orphanhood

Literature on orphanhood has been dominated by a widespread preoccupation with 'saving children', perceived to be harmed by their local contexts (Hart 2006; D.M. Hoffman 2011). A considerable amount of humanitarian-focused scholarship emphasises the fast-rising numbers of 'AIDS orphans' in sub-Saharan Africa (Barnett and Whiteside 2002; Hunter 1990; UNAIDS et al 2004) and predicts unprecedented changes to children's lives, such as radical transformations in the "family institution" (Nyambedha 2007) and a series of social problems (Guest 2001; Henderson 2006). Philanthropic agencies highlight orphans' vulnerability in attempts to raise funds for them, what Judith Ennew terms a donor-media complex (quoted in Abebe 2009:71). Reflecting a wider trend of using children to headline conflict news stories (Moeller 2002), emotive and evocative images are distributed on television, the internet, public posters and in publications all over the world, with written captures encouraging people to save a child (Hutchinson 2006; Panter-Brick 2002; Wells 2008, 2013), leading Klouda to suggest that development is not a logical but an emotional business

(2007). Waters refers to this as publicising righteousness, which arises from a need to generate emotion on a large "bureaucratised" scale in order to command humanitarian interest and therefore donations (2001:2,13). Development agencies "make the maximum use of categories and labels that they think will attract the greatest funding" (Klouda 2007:98-99), often through the use of melodramatic modes deployed to elicit a visceral emotional reaction (Wells 2013). Bray has termed this a trend of apocalyptic predictions (2003:39) mirroring views of Africa as the "tragedy" of the world (Ferguson 2006; Scheidtweiler 2004). This has prompted Hart to raise concerns over the "representational practices of child-focused humanitarianism on the grounds not only of the influence they wield over popular understanding of children's lives, but also of the political uses to which such representations may be put" (Hart 2006:6; see also Wells 2008).

Academic literature provides more evidence that orphanhood sometimes and in some places presents children with different vulnerabilities not commonly faced by non-orphans, including poor schooling and health outcomes (de Walque 2009; Johnson et al 2010; MacLellan 2010; Oleke et al 2007; Siaens et al 2003; Thomas 2010), early sexual initiation and risk of HIV-infection (Kang et al 2008; Nyambedha 2007:287), increased poverty (Andrews et al 2006) and psychological distress (Atwine et al 2005; Cluver and Gardner 2006; Howard et al 2006; Webb 2005:236). While each individual study has made particular conclusions, the overall picture that emerges is inconsistent and inconclusive. Reasons for this include that studies often compare orphan statistics across many sub-Saharan African countries (e.g. Case et al 2004; Goldberg and Short 2016; Schenk 2009) and sometimes have methodologically gaps (Abebe 2009:74). Consequently, cultural nuances are missed that may explain the inconsistency of outcome assessments. Another reason, I suggest, is that children's views are often neglected on what may make orphanhood a difficult or different experience. Thus, the evidence may be representative of the statistical reality but the over-emphasis on the negatives without an equal estimation of people's, communities' and states' resilience give a dire image that is less representative (ibid.). Thus, in a systematic review of the meaning of 'AIDS orphan', Sherr et al also found that "although some studies report some negative effects, there are often no differences and some evidence of protective effects from quality of subsequent care and economic assistance" for AIDS orphans (2008:527).

In response to the harrowing apocalyptic predictions and the general casting of African children as inherent victims, a larger and more critical body of scholarship has sought to move beyond stereotypical representations (Evers, Notermans and Ommering 2011). Such scholars highlight the resilience and agency of children (Boyden and Cooper 2007; Cook and du Toit 2005; Henderson

2012) and critique the focus on 'categories' (Panter-Brick 2002). Becoming a 'street child', 'child soldier' or 'AIDS orphan' in this view means neither the doom of society, or inevitable delinquency or stigma of the individual child (see Hart 2006). The resilience scholars show children's strengths and assets as well as coping mechanisms that create new useful strategies for navigating daily life (Eloff et al 2007). Children's lives rarely match the disastrous predictions (Bray 2003; Henderson 2006). Thus, Ziehl (2002) critically investigates South African orphan rhetoric and statistics in her sarcastically titled article "Baby headed households". Nonetheless, Dyregrov et al warn that "the notion of resiliency in children could easily become a new form of denial of trauma among children, whereby political systems evade responsibility for helping war-traumatised children" (2000:14). Taking a resilience approach equally inhibits encompassing and accurate representations of diverse kinds of experiences and does not provide "the field with improved analytical precision" (Boyden and Cooper 2007:ii).

Recently, there have been attempts to move beyond the dichotomous debate of vulnerability and resilience, although these remain important considerations, when a number of scholars have started to investigate the dynamics of the orphan category itself. In Malawi, emphasising the many divergent meanings and uses associated with the term orphan, Hutchinson (2006) describes differential private and public understandings of orphanhood. In private, it is something families try to hide from children and protect them from; in public, orphanhood has gained significant political value as politicians canvas votes through promises of improving orphans' lives. In Botswana, Dahl (2014) writes of 'fat orphans' who have gained materially from their orphanhood to such an extent that, in contrast to the normal skinniness of starved orphans, children who receive support from NGOs and government schemes due to their orphanhood have become 'fat', with well-nourished bodies dressed in the latest fashion. Cheney in a similar vein has spoken of an 'orphan addiction' through which American missionary organisations especially provide such substantial orphan support – primarily through orphanages – that children or their families begin to desire the orphan label in order to access much-desired and needed resources (Cheney 2014), a point also made by Hutchinson of orphan villages (2006:190-205). Of relevance here, Utas (2005) suggests that children and young people often rely on a strategy of 'victimcy': in particular contexts and at different times self-identifying as particular categories of somehow suffering children and youth to assert some form of choice or agency. Victimcy, thus, is different from passive victimhood and is a means to respond to a difficult situation, within challenging political or socio-economic contexts.

These studies raise a crucial question: What does it mean for a child to have to navigate through childhood with a new range of categories that are externally defined and underwritten (by national and development agendas) with which he or she is forced at one point or another to engage with? Paul's and others' claims to orphanhood suggest that it is a context-dependent experience. This resonates with Mann's interpretation of Congolese refugee children's experiences as a process of being, becoming and unbecoming a refugee (2011). The feeling of having choices prevents identification with the category 'refugee' but once those choices disappear, children begin to feel like refugees. Children can unbecome refugees by acting in unrefugeelike ways. Refugeeness is thus enacted or performed, a way of thinking and feeling in the present. This momentary or transient nature challenges common definitions, grounded in past experiences of fleeing from war, which cast them as always 'being' refugees. A similar argument can be made of conceptualisations of orphanhood. NGOs typically define orphans as "a child under the age of 18 who has lost at least one parent to death or permanent absence" (Veale 2001:xii). Much literature, concurrently, focuses on the impact of death, mourning and the status as parentless, in other words past 'traumas' (Eyber and Ager 2004:204; Henderson 2006; Mann 2011). This same literature assumes that orphanhood is a 'condition' that follows children until adulthood. Orphanhood is essentialised. However, as Paul's story illustrates, orphanhood appears as a condition of particular vulnerabilities (Veale et al 2001), the "challenges, privations and indignities of daily life" (Mann 2011:21), in which parental death does not always have an obvious role. Paul has both his parents yet the term orphan helps him to make sense of a life he finds intolerably difficult. In light hereof, I seek to address the underexplored question of *whether*, and if so, *how* orphanhood, as a consequence of the support provided to orphans by NGOs and the state, takes on new meanings and effects changes in local understandings of kinship, community care, suffering and state-community-family relations – as grounded in present experiences rather than memories of pasts gone.

Making Claims to Orphanhood

Orphanhood can beneficially be conceptualised as a culture of claims-making, as an instrument for a diverse range of moral, political, social, economic and instrumental claims. Orphanhood is normally a stigmatised identity that children and families seek to 'forget' or 'hide'. At the same time many young people and adults looking after *imfubyi* make repeated attempts to register on a bureaucratic list of orphans and vulnerable children, known locally as the "orphan list". Like Paul who on gloomy days desires an official status and recognition as orphan, these young

people and orphan carers desire the official status of orphan because of the hope of resources and support that come with it. It becomes a never-ending 'desiring' machine (de Vries 2007). Dahl (2014) writes of an orphan industry in order to capture this desirability and economic implication of NGO support for orphans. Yet desires to be registered as orphans go beyond material hopes. The desirability of orphanhood is equally part of new kinship ethics and wider social negotiations around the recognition of hardships, suffering and dignified claims to support. What emerges is children's instrumental use of the orphan category as a strategy for generating hopeful agency and as a language for asserting a new (emotional) morality of kinship that deems many parents as insufficient in fulfilling the most basic of children's needs. No-one 'desires' to be without family or to be associated with a bad life inherent in orphanhood but in certain contexts and situations making a claim to orphanhood is the most meaningful strategy or response for a child or young person. Thus, Meinert's (2009) notion of hopes in friction is analytically productive. Not all claims to orphanhood represent 'hope', yet the complexity and social force of the term *imfubyi* has arisen through a new association of *imfubyi* with hopes of better lives. Through access to communal sympathy and, ideally, resources these hopes collude and collide, cause friction and tension, when they meet more traditional notions of parentless, often deviant, children that challenge people's ideals of social cohesion and unity.

Orphan claims are also part of a larger desire to be recognised as a particular kind of person: the orphaned child who can draw on a recognised suffering and enter culturally appropriate relations of dependence with important adults in order to become respected persons by achieving *agaciro* (dignity/integrity/self-respect). Cheney (2012) has observed that Ugandan children and their families approach local NGOs and projects, casting the children as orphans in a joint family strategy to access much needed resources and thus appropriating 'tropes of vulnerability'. In her critique, Cheney argues that this appropriation renders people passive subjects rather than rights-bearing and enacting (empowered) citizens (ibid.). Here I recast 'tropes of vulnerability' as agentive 'declarations of dependence' (Ferguson 2013) within a socio-historical landscape that Scherz (2014) has described as an ethics of interdependence. Rwanda has a long history of clientelism in various forms, which continue to influence sociality. Children, young people and adults do not make claims to orphanhood as passive subjects but in an attempt to establish meaningful relationships of dependence, as clients to patrons, beneficiaries to benefactors, or indeed as children to new sets of parents. Such declarations can be made on people as well as bureaucratic lists and grants, whether through NGOs or local authorities. Thus while 'tropes of vulnerability' may be a form of agency that 'seeks its own submission' (Ferguson 2013:237), it is nonetheless a form of agency.

At the same time, other evocations of orphanhood denote notions of stigma and abuse and thus an undesirable status. We thus need to distinguish between orphanhood as a way of making particular claims about one's own life, on the one hand, and as a status that arises through other people's claims about one's life, on the other; that is as a self-ascribed and enacted category of suffering or as an externally ascribed status and identity. Similar to Paul's concern with how his peers perceived him, in Mwiza, children and young people spoke of not liking to walk in the streets because they felt other people "knew" their orphanhood simply by looking at them, by seeing their ragged clothes and grey skin. They also felt that no authorities would write them on the orphan list because they had no parents to speak up for them and protect them. For Mwiza orphans, orphanhood is an essentialised status that they wanted to overcome (*kwirenga*) but could not easily shed because of the obstacles created by their orphanhood. While I describe their elaborate daily 'significant routines' (Grøn 2005) of washing their clothes and bodies to appear normal to others, and while they made claims to 'instrumental' orphanhood as Paul above, none of the girls for whom this was so important, ever felt they succeeded in eradicating orphanhood's stigmatising signs. Overcoming orphanhood was a desirable possibility but structurally unavailable. Paul only felt like an orphan in particular circumstances but Mwiza orphans felt it as a stigmatised status imprinted on their bodies and near-impossible to disembody. This suggests that orphanhood must be understood as claims that run along a continuum from a momentary, or transient, feeling or status to an increasingly embodied, essentialised 'identity', as ascribed and felt, and thus an existential condition. How people ascribe orphanhood to children affects where on the continuum a child's experiences of orphanhood fall. New kin moralities contain strong neoliberal trends of state rhetoric that restructures the nexus of parental, community and state responsibilities towards children. Because of this state influence, orphanhood is in many ways deeply political and age-old notions of the deserving and undeserving poor have a structuring effect herein.

A Continuum of Orphanhood

The term orphan was for Paul a reference to a particular feeling of disadvantage that was momentary, arising in encounters with peers and in situations of particular hardship, even if such moments could drag on for substantial periods of time. Feelings of being an orphan thus appear as something that is felt in the present moment and come and go depending on how children feel in a particular context. This implies that it is transient and can be overcome. For Paul, his feelings of orphanhood disappeared when an American friend offered to pay half of his university fees. The near-

realisation of his hopes facilitated him to "unbecome" an orphan. Yet Mwiza orphans' experiences suggest that this ability to 'unbecome' an orphan is not available to all orphans.

Paul suggests that the continuum of orphanhood is structured by current post-genocide identity politics, as does a comparison of the two communities, Mwiza and Kaganza. 20-year old Jeanine from Kaganza poignantly described, "orphans are orphans but they are different." The difference arises from their proximal relation to the genocide. According to the literature on Rwandan orphanhood, children's wellbeing within their families and communities depend on whether their parents died from genocide, AIDS, malaria or in a traffic accident (Caserta et al 2016; Thurman et al 2008) and whether their parents were genocidaires, repatriated refugees or survivors of the genocide (HRW 2003; Whitman 2005:102). Death is thereby not crucial to the experience of orphanhood in the way that we may expect and in the way that many scholars assume, by causing children unalleviated grief and continuous psychological distress (Atwine et al 2005; Cluver and Gardner 2006; Howard et al 2006; Webb 2005:236). The *cause* of parents' deaths, however, appears crucial. One particular cause has a unique structuring effect on notions of orphans' suffering – the genocide.

When I first arrived in Rwanda, warned of widespread research fatigue, I was surprised by the positive reaction I received from people when I introduced my research as focusing on children with bad lives (*abana n'ubuzima bubi*):

> *"Oh you are studying orphans! That is very good, we have so many of them here because of the genocide."*

> *"Ah it is very good to study all these children without parents because we have a real problem today... you must know our bad history of the genocide."*

> *"Yes it is very important to understand children's lives because they have seen many bad things because of our history of genocide."*

"Children with bad lives" was immediately interpreted as relating to orphanhood and to the country's traumatic event of the genocide. The genocide took place sixteen years prior to my arrival, yet it was this event that instantly came to people's minds when I told them about my research with children. Legally, *umwana* (child) refers to a person under the age of 18 but people primarily use the term to refer to pre-adolescence. Children who are old enough to have bad lives from the genocide are in their late teens, at least, a generational category increasingly referred to as *abasore* (youth). The dominance of such a strong genocide-orphanhood association is thus ethnographically interesting. Of the many difficult experiences children could encounter, such as extreme poverty, HIV/AIDS, war, a life on the street, flight and forced migration, orphanhood was considered the

dominant difficulty for children. Of the many reasons children could be orphaned, genocide was the predominant, even though child orphans can no longer technically be orphans of genocide.

The link between orphanhood and genocide also implicitly emerges in the literature on Rwandan orphanhood. Firstly, most studies on Rwandan orphanhood are concerned with genocide orphanhood (Doná 2001; Kaplan 2013; Schaal and Elbert 2006), although references to AIDS orphans are also found (Caserta et al 2016; Minki et al 2005; Thurman et al 2006). This is expected as the genocide created high numbers of street children, orphans and traumatised children (Schaal and Elbert 2006; Veale and Doná 2003). Secondly, according to a study on fostering, the genocide seems to have had some influence on the meaning of the term *imfubyi*. The study suggests that prior to the genocide, *imfubyi* had a positive association of "children without parents to whom one must offer affection and care" (Veale and Doná 2002:55). Since the genocide, this understanding, according to the study, has been replaced by connotations of a difficult life and experiences of differential treatment for the worse. Other studies suggest that the large numbers of orphans created in a short space of time by the genocide have led to different dynamics surrounding orphan care; people are less able to look after orphans and the genocide is thought to cause such trauma in orphans that orphan care must involve new priorities of emotional support (Doná 2001:12).

Such references to the genocide as an instigator of change in the term, *imfubyi*, suggest that orphanhood has become a different kind of experience and situation, for the worse, *because of* the genocide. Thus, it seems that the genocide has been considered to Rwandan orphans as what the HIV epidemic has been considered to "African orphans": an all-defining event that has contributed to the exceptionality of a particular kind of child's unique suffering. Pertinent here is that a recent study found AIDS orphans to suffer more from stigma, marginalisation and poor mental health than genocide orphans, and that while genocide orphans are more likely to live in orphanages or with foster families, AIDS orphans are more likely to live in child-headed households (Caserta et al 2016:736-739). This finding I significant in light of evidence that Rwandan orphans have better mental health when living in orphanages rather than communities (ibid.; Dyregrov et al 2000). Available research therefore suggests that life as an AIDS orphan may be more difficult than life as a genocide orphan. The genocide thus appears as a 'critical event':

> "periods in time when large-scale transformations occur in space by which peoples' lives are propelled into new and unpredicted terrains. After such events, new modes of action come into being which redefine traditional categories."   (Das 1995, quoted in Meinert 2009:3)

An examination of orphanhood in post-genocide Rwanda thus requires a particular focus on the relationship between the country's critical event(s), consequent political-ethnic structures and current orphan understandings, albeit recognising that these 'events' were as much *processes* as time-confined events (Fujii 2009).

Critical Events: War, Genocide and Meta-Conflicts

Three major historical events are crucial to people's lives: the "1959 Hutu Revolution", "*intambara*" and "*jenoside*". These events are interrelated and cannot be understood without reference to each other and the overarching theme of racialised ethnic and political identities (Mamdani 2001:19-25). Although often described in ethnic terms, Rwanda's history cannot easily be described through 'ethnicity'. Regional diversities, ecological transformations, political priorities and complex patterns of internal cultural variation were much more important to Rwandan socio-political history, than corporate entities with clearly, distinct and internally homogenous racial categories normally associated with identity (Newbury 2001:266,275-280). Prior to colonisation the labels Hutu, Tutsi and Twa referred to broad collective identities, contextually defined and based on concepts of descent, occupation, class and personal characteristics in different combinations, and often overlapped with class identities (d'Hertfelt 1971 quoted in Eltringham 2001:18; Newbury 2001:271-5). The terms used to denote corporate groups with internal integrity were *umuryango* or *inzu,* commonly used to refer to major and minor lineages and kinship units (ibid.), rather than *ubwoko*, used to denote a category or 'ethnic group' and which prior to colonial rule was only applicable to the broad classification of items (herds of cattle, plants or species) (Eltringham 2004:18). In particular, a north-south division has strongly influenced ordinary Rwandans' access to political power and economic prosperity (Fujii 2009; Pottier 2002:33).

In order to understand the complexity of identities that have informed Rwandan history, Mamdani's distinction between political, market-based and cultural identities is useful (2001:19-25). In Mamdani's conceptualisation, Hutu, Tutsi and Twa as identities had by the time of the genocide become political rather than market-based or cultural. Prior to colonisation Hutu, Tutsi and Twa referred to rather loose cultural *and* market-based identities where occupation roles (cattle herding, cultivation, pottery) were rich in cultural aesthetics and strongly influenced people's self-understandings (Taylor 1999). Embedded in patron-client relations, blood pacts, kinship and friendships, these self-understandings were fluid in nature. Colonisation strengthened these loose modes of identifications and turned them into racialized political identities (Mamdani 2001:19-25).

Drawing on the Hamitic hypothesis, the minority Tutsi who constituted only 10% of the total population were upheld as a superior, nonindigenous race, more socio-politically similar to the 'white man' than Hutu and Twa who became suppressed through a divide-and-rule policy (Taylor 1999:55-97). Hutu, Tutsi and Twa became legal and political identities through which rights to land and education amongst others were granted (Mamdani 2001:19-25).

When the struggle for independence swept through Africa, the imposed political identities continued to assert immense influence. In the 1950s, the Belgian colonial government came under increasing pressure to ensure majority political representation and switched to support Hutu instead. The struggle for independence thus became a 'Hutu Revolution' in 1959 to overturn the Tutsi elite, which erupted in massacres of wealthy Tutsi throughout the country (Prunier 2001), particularly horrific in northern Rwanda (Uvin 1998:15). For the next five years, thousands of Tutsi fled the country, in particular to the Kivu regions in Congo where they still lived at the time of the genocide (Eltringham 2004:41). 1959 has since been reframed by the current government as the "1959 genocide[2]" (Eltringham 2004:33). The 1959 revolution instigated an ongoing regional 'crisis of citizenship' that continues to plague the region (Mamdani 2001; Prunier 2009) and influence the categories and modes of identification within which Rwandans situate themselves.

Despite the consecration of Hutu, Tutsi and Twa as political identities spurred by the colonial powers, people's cultural identities continued to be loosely defined in the post-independence years and social structures continued as a complex web of social cleavages (Tiemesen 2005:7). Amongst the general population, the divide between the wealthy elite and the poor majority was greater than that between the political groups Hutu and Tutsi (Prunier 2001; Uvin 1999). These cleavages were actively manipulated into racial differences by powerholders in order to strengthen political power during times of crisis (Fujii 2004, 2009; Uvin 1999). When the RPF who had formed in southern Uganda of Tutsi who fled the violence in the late 1950s and early 1960s invaded the country in 1990 and fought a hard civil war, the social cleavages were strengthened through an intense propaganda campaign instilling popular fear of the invading Tutsi 'cockroaches'. It was amidst such social disintegration that the 1994 genocide could be deliberately planned and promoted as a mass responsibility and thus become a "deliberate choice of modern elites to foster hatred and fear to keep

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[2] When people in northwestern Rwanda referred to this period, they simply referred to it as 1959.

itself in power" (HRW and FIDH 1999, quoted in Eltringham 2004:xii) through a well-rehearsed "fiction" or "myth" of ethnicity (Jefremovas 1997; Lemarchand 1999).

In April 1994, the President's plane was shut down as he returned from peace talks in Arusha to end the civil war, killing everyone on board. Within hours, roadblocks had been erected across Kigali and massacres of Tutsi were quickly underway. Evolving was one of the most brutal and 'effective' genocides recorded, minutely planned and prepared by fractions of the political elite surrounding President Habyarimana (IPEP/OAU 2002:138; Pottier 2002:30-32). In the hundred days the genocide lasted, nearly a million people were killed, including 300,000 children (Veale and Doná 2002), with grenades, guns, machetes and nail-studded clubs in churches, schools, sports stadiums and their own homes. Victims became killers (Mamdani 2001) when neighbours killed neighbours and family members killed other family members (Fujii 2009), often forced to do so, and children were recruited and forced to kill their own families (HRW 2003; Veale and Doná 2002). This mass participation is one of the genocide's most troubling aspects (Fujii 2009; Mamdani 2001). Estimates vary but it is probable that a few hundred thousand participated in the killings (Eltringham 2004:69; Mamdani 2001). Nearly two million people fled to neighbouring countries, 1.2 million alone to the Kivu region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (then Zaire) (IPEP/OAU 2000:212; Eltringham 2004:21). Only 10% of the Tutsi population residing in Rwanda at the time survived while around 50.000 Hutu were killed (Fujii 2009:56). Tutsi women were specifically targeted due to their historical aesthetic value, thus attracting Hutu men (Baines 2003:483; Taylor 1999:150-179), and "subverting the clear racial boundary between Hutu and Tutsi" (Eltringham 2004:24).

As the genocide unfolded, the international community stood silently by, refusing to confirm that the massacres constituted a deliberate genocide of the Tutsi population (Eltringham 2004; Melvern 2000). When the UN finally confirmed it as genocide, over half a million people had already been killed (ibid.:2-3). The guilt of not interfering[3] has since led western powers to pour massive investments into Rwanda (Pottier 2002:154; Reyntjens 2004:198-9) and has been used extensively by the Rwandan government as a trump card[4] for asserting more than usual control over aid money (Hayman 2011; Hasselskog and Schierenbeck 2015). The "genocide card" has also been used by the government to justify many of its military actions in neighbouring countries (Curtis 2015; Hasselskog

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[3] It has been clearly demonstrated that the internationally community could have relatively easily stopped the genocide, which the African Union has termed "the preventable genocide" (2000; see also Melvern 2000).
[4] Reyntjens calls it 'the genocide credit' (2004).

and Schierenbeck 2015). Up until the early 2010s, there were only limited sanctions against Rwanda despite well-documented evidence of massacres against Hutu residing in refugee camps in Congo after the genocide, for which the RPA has not been held accountable, contributing to a damaging "culture of impunity" (Eltringham 2004:144; Zorbas 2004:41).

The final "*intambara*" (war) occurred in direct response to what unfolded in the Congolese refugee camps, which were criticised for allowing genocidaires to reorganise (IPEP/OAU 2000:211-212,217), and which became the instigator of Africa's 'world war' (ibid.; Prunier 2009). Over 200.000 people, including many sick, women and children, were killed and many more injured and sexually violated (Umugwaneza and Fuglsang 2008), leading some (including a UN fact-finding body[5]) to speak of a double-genocide (ibid.:275; IPEP/OAU 2000:257). Many northwestern Rwandans had fled to the camps but returned to Rwanda once the shooting and massacres started, although many also repatriated themselves voluntarily. In early 1997, the camps were closed (African Rights 1998; Jackson 2004:19) and former genocidaires launched a rebel attack on northwestern Rwanda in an attempt to overturn the new Tutsi dominated government (ibid.; IPEP/OAU 2000:217).

A rebel insurgency war, locally termed the infiltration war (*abacengezi:* infiltrators) (Jackson 2004:19), ensued and destroyed much of the region, where "support for the insurgents' agenda [was] probably stronger than anywhere else within Rwanda" (ibid.:20), before it slowly fizzled out in 2000 (Reyntjens 2004:196). Whether sympathetic or not, many were forced to join the rebels or participate in the killings (Reyntjens 2004:195), caught between rebels who raided the villages to recruit more soldiers through a campaign of fear (amongst others targeting schools – African Rights 1998; Jackson 2004:21) and systematic attacks by government troops fighting the rebels (IPEP/OAU 2000:266; Reyntjens 2004:195; Roessler 2016:259), often brutal and ruthless in who they killed, assuming all villagers to be linked to the rebels (Jackson 2004). In a 1998 African Rights account of the war, the number of civilian deaths is estimated only in the thousands but as the war continued for another two years the number is likely to be considerably higher (Reyntjens 2004:195). More than 650,000 were displaced (HRW 2001; IRIN 1999). While, the motivations of the rebels resembled genocide more than regaining power (2004:23[6]; see also IPEP/OAU 2000:218), the majority of victims were Hutu

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[5] Stating however that there was insufficient evidence to confirm this (IPEP/OAU 2000:257; Eltringham 2004:137).
[6] Apart from references to the account by African Rights (1998), it is unclear from what basis Jackson (2004) makes his arguments.

(Newbury 2011:231). The government has silenced its responsibility in the civilian killings (African Rights 1998) and it has become something in particular northern Hutu fear talking about. In contrast to the still burgeoning literature on the genocide, it is nearly impossible to find any detailed descriptions of the infiltration war other than the African Rights account[7]. The research's location in the northwest is central to the findings it produced.

Current understandings of the genocide have complicated the already complex mesh of ethnic and political categories and identifications of the pre-genocide years. The government strongly encourages a united identity of Banyarwanda and has in the reshaping of collective identity outlawed the use of Hutu, Tutsi and Twa as political identities (Buckley-Zistel 2006a; Eltringham 2011:273; Pottier 2002:12). Instead, the state has adopted a "genocide framework" for categorising the population politically (Mamdani 2001:201-202). The 1994 genocide is "singled out as an event producing the only politically correct categories for identification and guidelines" for state policy (van Hoyweghen quoted in Mamdani 2001:201-202). These categories are returnees, refugees, victims, survivors and perpetrators but they implicitly map onto the former political identities of Hutu and Tutsi (the Twa have been rather forgotten). Hintjens (2008) has argued that the new Rwanda is founded on a particular national narrative or 'myth', based upon 'corporate ethnicity', that officially denies the existence of ethnicity (as political rather than ethnic groups, following Mamdani), but which is strongly guided by a generalised reading of the past in which Tutsi have been victimised throughout decades by Hutu, collectively cast as perpetrators (see also Eltringham 2004; Zorbas 2004:45). In this 're-imagining' of Rwanda (Pottier 2002), through the "RPF healing truth" (Zorbas 2007, quoted in Eltringham 2011:269), the RPF have become the "new guardians of Rwanda's culture and destiny" (Pottier 2002:109). Politically, only Tutsi are considered real 'survivors' of genocide (Guglielmo 2015) because Hutu do not belong to the group targeted in the genocide (Eltringham 2004:70). Due to a new 'bureaucracy of trauma' that structures access to resources and land entitlements, this has implications for access to resources (Guglielmo 2015; Thomson 2009). Returnees are differentiated between old and new 'caseload' repatriates. While old case load returnees make up a mix of Hutu and Tutsi, although predominantly Tutsi, new caseload refer to people who fled post-genocide, by-and-large Hutu who fled the RPF. New caseload returnees are often thus believed to be guilty of genocide on the grounds that they would not have had anything to fear if they

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[7] Reyntjens (2004), African Union (IPEP/OAU 2000) and Roessler (2016) each contribute only ½-2 pages to the war.

had not participated in the genocide. Being an old caseload returnee on the other hand means access to land entitlements, but again primarily for Tutsi.

Thus, while the national myth operates on a simple Hutu=perpetrator / Tutsi=victim logic, the new hierarchy of political identities is more complicated: Tutsi returned from exile in Uganda dominate the powerholding elite (Ansoms 2009:295) with other Tutsi (form Congo, Tanzania and elsewhere) only occasionally able to carve out places for themselves in the higher ranks. Survivors hold an ambiguous place within this hierarchy. Some argue that they feel marginalised and neglected by government and international development support (Blewitt 2006, 2010; Schimmel 2010), and accused of being accomplices in the genocide due to doubts of how they survived when other Tutsi were killed, thus being accused of working with the (Hutu) enemy (IPEP/OAU 2000:163; Prunier 2001:359). Others argue that survivors are favoured in aid provision and are protected from certain policy measures (Guglielmo 2015; Hilhorst and van Leeuwen 1999:35). Although there are signs that social relationships may be improving (ibid.; Ingelaere 2009:39), communities are through a national villagisation policy (RoR 2009) increasingly 'ethnicised' (Hilhorst and van Leeuwen 1999:44; Prunier 1997:365) according to the new post-genocide political constructs, leading to concerns of a *'Tutsicracy'* (Prunier 1997:369). Thus, the term 'post-genocide' is not a mere temporal reference but a highly appropriate descriptor of the nature of current political trends in present-day Rwanda.

From the Politics of Identity to Modes of Identification

In this socio-political complexity, it is important to attend to the nature of concepts such as identity and categories. Here it is noteworthy to point to Handler's (1994) critique of 'identity' as a cross-cultural concept, as a "reifying imposition of a Western concept of identity on others" (Sökefeld 2001:542). According to Handler, scholarship has relied on a use of 'identity' according to the following definition: "the identity of a person or group is what it really is, uniquely, in and of itself, in its inner being and without reference to externals" (1994:26). This kind of 'identity' is absent in many cultures (ibid.; Comaroff and Comaroff 2010). Not only is 'identity' not a useful 'cross-cultural' concept, it lacks analytical value (Brubaker and Cooper 2000). Being either too strong or too vague, Brubaker and Cooper (2000) instead suggest that we employ the terms of relational and categorical identification, self-understanding and commonality, connectedness and 'groupness' that are not dissimilar to Mamdani's distinction between different kinds of collective identities such as political or cultural, even if Mamdani continues to use the word 'identity'.

Similar to the critique of identity as an analytical concept, Fujii and Eltringham critique the focus on fixed categories when understanding the Rwandan genocide and history of ethnicity. Eltringham suggests that the focus on Rwandan 'ethnicity' as a category of identity has tended to 'misplace concreteness' (Eltringham 2004:8) and has thus failed to appreciate that categories (of any kind) are only 'contingent approximations' of reality (ibid.). In Rwanda, this reality is that Rwandan 'identity' history has been one of sanctioned ethnic-political categories (Eltringham 2004:8) while modes of identification have primarily been relational in nature and revolved around lineages, patron-client relationships and 'blood pacts' between close friends, as well as regional and occupational 'identities' (Fujii 2004; De Lame 2005). Fujii writes:

> "The problem with this system of categorising is that it 'fixes people in a way that is not borne out by the realities of genocide. Membership in categories is assumed to be exclusive and stable such that a perpetrator cannot also be a rescuer and once a perpetrator always a perpetrator. In dynamic settings, contexts and conditions change, sometimes in an instant. These changes, in turn, can shift actors' relations, perspectives, motives and identities. Static categories cannot capture these shifts. Another problem with standard categories is that they smooth over tensions that exist both within and between categories. Actors do not confine their activities to one category; rather they often move back and forth between categories or straddle multiple categories at the same time." (2009:8)

Within the Rwandan context, it becomes crucial to tend to the dynamic intertwining of category ascriptions and identification, and in particular to the relationship between personal experience and political stance (Bernstein 2005). In this thesis, it becomes evident that people face an abundance of categories of identification with which they are constantly forced to engage. Some of these categories are the explicit 'Banyarwanda' to which all Rwandans are meant to ascribe and the more implicit 'perpetrator Hutu' or 'victim Tutsi', which are rarely spoken or labelled but which heavily influence access to power and political-economic capital. Other categories are orphans, widows, orphan carers, entrepreneurs amongst others. One of the central tenets in this thesis is that such categories are intensely contested in many different ways and contexts and thus influence people's self-understandings to various degrees and through complex processes. Like the orphan category, political categories are not easily incorporated into people's self-understandings. During the infiltration war, African Rights (1998) reported an instance of violence deliberately committed against a school to "kill the seeds of hope". As infiltrators entered the school, they divided the pupils into Hutu and Tutsi. The pupils however "showed solidarity and refused". Most were killed. The children's rejection of the ethnic-political ideology caused considerable anger amongst the infiltrators but was also, according to African Rights, the one positive factor, which emerged from the tragedy:

a new generation of united Rwandans (ibid.). Not enough is known about the massacred children to establish why they may have refused the imposed ideology, nor do we know how children in other contexts may incorporate elements of 'Hutu' and 'Tutsi' understandings, yet the incident requires us to point attention to processes of appropriation and rejection of certain categories.

Most people in Kaganza do not identify with a simple term of Tutsi but rather locate themselves through their regional and linguistic histories, shared ties with other villagers, experiences of war and genocide and in some instances religion. Through a 'logic of contagion' (Fujii 2009:101-102), people who had lived in exile had incorporated much of their host cultures, whose associated categories (Ugandan, Burundian, Congolese) were often used to label people. Nonetheless exile affiliations merged in different ways with a strong notion of being 'Rwandan' and wanting to return to their 'Rwandan family' (a term interestingly only used by Tutsi who had lived in exile). People who had lived in exile might describe themselves as having lived in Congo and as Lingala-speakers but they would never call themselves 'Congolese'. They seamlessly switched between languages according to which relations of 'commonality' they wished to be part of in any given context – as dissenters of the penetrating culture of remembering the genocide, as a former soldier fighting in Congo or as part of a new 'Rwandan' community. This reflects Mamdani's argument that while within Rwanda dominant political categories were those of Hutu and Tutsi, across Rwanda's borders, the dominant category was ethnic because it referred to "a cultural community [that] signifies a common past and historical inheritance" (2001:22). These ethnic categories were however not Hutu or Tutsi but Banywarwanda because Hutu and Tutsi prior to the genocide had not taken on political characteristics in exile (ibid.). Upon mass repatriation, this mix of political and ethnic/cultural categories makes not only for complex identity politics, but for an ambiguous web of identifications and self-perceptions. Being a 'person' with particular self-understandings and representations is not simple and continues in some contexts to be a question of life or death (whether social or actual). Thus, while 'survivor', 'returnee' and other categories have been politically constructed, they also involve cultural identifications. As Grant suggests, differences between people are now experiential and embodied: "The fact of having lived through the genocide – be it as a survivor, perpetrator, bystander, witness, or any other combination therein – engenders very particular kinds of social, moral, and political knowledge and praxis." (2014:16).

In Mwiza, similarly, where the majority of residents come under the imposed political category of Hutu, indeed 'perpetrator Hutu', Hutu was not a particularly meaningful category, except when used to explain the region's marginalisation in the current political landscape, but even then it

was expressed in regional terms more so than 'ethnic' – the difference between Mwiza and Kaganza was expressed through *hano* and *hariya* (here, there). In people's everyday lives, what situated them locally were kin ties and conflicts, positions of prestige or authority, being a catechist, a soldier, or a 'loose woman' infected with HIV. Conflicts were expressed in land entitlements, church affiliation (youth often 'rebelled' against parents by converting from the parents' denomination), marital disagreements or arguments over appropriate care and obligation-fulfilment. Ethnic categories surfaced only as other-identifications, such as when I asked two boys where I might locate the grandfather of two orphan girls and they told me he had gone for a walk with "the Tutsi man" (*gutembera na muhuntu muTutsi)* or when a group of Twa women passed me on the path and my research assistant and a young woman we were walking with immediately asked me in a whispering, condemning voice if I had ever seen Twa before and if I had noticed their bare feet[8].

The complexity of such category constructions and concurrent ascriptions to selves and others surface throughout this thesis and intertwine with the contestations and instrumentalisations of the orphan category in interesting, and at times frightening, ways. Adults' modes of identifications and subjectivities are intricately intertwined with that of children, as are political categories and those imported through the development 'industry'. Following Tim Williams (2016), these can only be properly understood by attending to the data from three 'vantage points': 1) subjective-experiential, 2) intersubjective, and 3) macro-historical. I have not structured my thesis according to these perspectives because as we will see these are not easily discerned as distinct in children's and their families' lives. While all three vantage points are included, it would not be reflective of people's experiences to separate them out for imposed academic and intellectual structure.

Throughout this thesis when I refer to Hutu or Tutsi, it is only to indicate – where such indication is relevant or necessary – that they belong to the group of people who have historically been denoted by this label. In most contexts, I instead refer to Kaganzans or Mwizans. These labels are not locally existent categories of belonging but are merely used as a shorthand for referring to people who live in one or the other village with all its implications of political and ethnic categories, access to political, social and economic capital and the 'bureaucracy of trauma'. When I wish to denote the particular post-genocide political constructions of survivor, perpetrator etc. I use the term 'political-ethnic' when 'political' alone is too vague.

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[8] It is illegal to walk barefoot in public.

Never Again another Genocide: Saving the Country through its Orphans

The post-genocide government has framed itself as the "Government of National Unity" (IPEP/OAU 2000:179). Its ultimate goal is "never again another genocide" (Hintjens 2008:6), which it hopes to achieve through rapid economic development and education of the population. In the post-genocide chaos, the government sought to re-engineer the political machinery and to change the 'mentality' of the Rwandan population through a variety of policies involving penetrating social reforms. The logic was that ethnic hatred could be overcome if everyone had access to the same resources and were 'taught' the right way to live together. The most important and defining policy paper in post-genocide Rwanda, and the best known to people, is Vision2020 (GoR 2000), which is aligned with the UN's Millennium Development Goals (The Rwanda Research Group 2009:288) and is a highly ambitious 20-year plan for moving the country from one devastated by war and genocide to a prosperous and fast developing nation in which people are encouraged and empowered to work hard for their country and their own development (GoR 2000:9-11). This requires an equally ambitious social reform (Ansoms 2009; Thomson 2011:331). Together these policies have created a new understanding of the Rwandan person (*Munyarwanda*), the socially responsible citizen who is an "agent of [his] own change" (Agaciro Development Fund 2012), with responsibility to become educated and support the development of the country as well as to make peace with neighbours. While laudable for its ambition and advancements (Hron 2009), the government has been criticised for being anti-rural (Ansoms 2009) and overly authoritarian (Reyntjens 2004; Thomson 2013) and for forcing modernity into existence (Reyntjens 2008:1). Despite impressive economic growth, poverty reduction has been slow, with rising inequalities and more than 55% of the population living below the poverty line (Ansoms 2009:290).

In an acute repeat of history, the genocide and international development have intertwined in the post-genocide political context (Curtis 2015) and have given rise to new types of (closely interrelated) claims to authority and suffering. The government partly gains its legitimacy from the vast international aid it has brought to the country (Pottier 2002), resulting in favourable policies for those previously marginalised socially and economically, such as orphans, widows and other 'vulnerable' categories. Thus, Kuehr writes:

> "Orphans play a particularly symbolic role in Rwanda's national vision because they represent the legacy of genocide, as Prime Minister Pierre Habumuremyi explains in a speech: 'Orphans were not part of Rwandan culture' before genocide but turned into a reminder of the past."

As a consequence of the genocide, substantial changes have taken place in relation to the conditions and interpretations of childhood. Historically, although Rwanda has seen several periods of mass violence, children remained relatively protected from such violence (IPEP/OAU 2000:159). Their protected status was lost in the genocide when women and children became deliberately targeted in the attempt to completely eradicate the Tutsi population (IPEP/OAU 2000:159; HRW 2003:8; see also Eltringham 2004:24)[9]. Rwanda therefore now has one of the world's largest orphan populations, with approximately 810,000 orphans and nearly 100,000[10] children living in child and youth headed households (Unicef and The African Child Policy Forum 2006:15). The genocide initially accounted for many of these orphans but the infiltration war, HIV/AIDS and malaria have all contributed significantly in later years (Caserta et al 2016; HRW 2003; Thurman et al 2006). In addition, a large number of children witnessed and survived the genocide and more than 100,000 children were separated from their families[11] (IPEP/OAU 2000:170). Sample surveys conducted by psychologists suggest that the majority of children who lived through the genocide were exposed to trauma (Dyregrov et al 2000:14, see also IPEP/OAU 2000:171). Around 5000 children were used as child soldiers (*kadogo*) during the genocide and infiltration war (IPEP/OAU 2000:173-4; HRW 2003:13-14)[12]. Due to widespread sexual violence during the wars, thousands of children have also been born of rape, who now face into particularly stigmatised lives and intense 'identity' struggles (Torgovnik 2009; Weitsman 2008). Finally, impoverished young men played a significant role in the genocide, manning road blocks, participating in killings and committing sexual violence (IPEP/OAU 2000; Maclean-Hilker 2014), reflecting trends in contemporary Africa where a "crisis of youth" (Peters 2011) and generational conflicts affect heavy youth involvement in violence and war (Hoffman 2003, 2011; Wells 2008:238-239).

Consequently, the government has focused on improving children's lives through a multitude of political initiatives, especially focusing on education and 'sensitisation' campaigns on children's rights and families' responsibilities (Doná 2001; Kuehr 2015; Pells 2012). Children quickly became seen as a 'window of hope' for the possibility of eradicating 'genocide ideology' (Kuehr 2015).

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[9] This partly reflects the "new wars", emerging after the Cold War, which are distinguished from other conflicts by deliberately drawing civilians into conflict (Kaldor 2011, quoted in Wells 2008).

[10] Estimated at 300,000 in 1998 (Ntete 2000, quoted in Schaal and Elbert 2006:96).

[11] The highest number of separated children registered by UNICEF since its foundation in 1946 (Hick 2001:112)

[12] In neighbouring Uganda, Hick makes a link between orphanhood and children's motivation to join the rebel army in the North, attracted by the guarantee of regular meals, clothing and medical attention (2001:115).

Adoption of the United National Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) became strongly linked to the post-conflict recovery plan. Thus, while Rwanda was an early signatory of the Convention, having ratified it already in 1990 (Veale 1999:108), the CRC became an explicit government priority in the aftermath of the genocide and was incorporated into law in 2001 and into the country's constitution in 2003 (Pells 2012:429). Rwanda also signed the African Charter in 1991 but again did not ratify it until 2001 when the current government had come into power (ACHPR 2016). In 2005, the government adopted a Strategic Plan for Street Children (RoR 2005), in 2007 a Strategic Plan for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (RoR 2007), and in 2011 the Integrated Child Rights Policy (2011). Rwanda has been complimented for a parallel implementation of the CRC, prioritising participation rights on equal footing with provision and protection rights, unlike many other countries where participation rights lag behind (Murray 2010). Finally, the large proportion of female politicians in Rwanda has been positively linked to the advancement of children's rights (Powley 2008; Unicef 2006). Nonetheless, despite the strong legislative focus and progress on ensuring children's rights and welfare, there is significant evidence of continuous use of child soldiers by RPF troops in Congo and other substantial children's rights abuses (HRW 2006). Importantly, research suggests that children continue to feel that they do not have rights (Pells 2012).

As part of implementing stronger rights for children, the government has through a variety of campaigns tried to encourage the population to carry part, indeed most, of the responsibility for supporting vulnerable children (see for example RoR 2011), with a focus on community-based approaches (RoR 2007). On big billboard posters and at community meetings held by local authorities, adults are asked to foster children without parents (see also UNDP 2000:8), to "take every child like [their] own". In the immediate wake of the genocide, the large number of orphans from war, genocide, flight and disease had to be cared for in 'emergency' orphanages, set up by organisations such as the Red Cross and a variety of local organisations (IPEP/OAU 2000:170-1). Due to the vast evidence of the negative impacts on children of growing up in institutional care[13], during the course of research the government implemented a policy of de-institutionalisation, requiring orphanages and similar institutions to close and reunify resident children with their families or communities (ICRP 2011). According to Kuehr, the rationale and rhetoric is that Rwanda cannot fully return to a stable and balanced social order until all children are reunited with their families

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[13] For an overview see Morantz and Heymann 2010 and Sherr et al 2008; see also Christiansen (2005) for a critique of these negative attitudes – based on the positive role of boarding schools.

(2015:2). Other campaigns include *Singurisha!* (I am not for sale!) where sugar daddies (and mamas) are condemned for exploiting children and young people (Isugi 2012). Adults are warned against passing HIV onto children and youth through breastfeeding and sexual relations, while parents are strongly reminded to do what they can to prevent their children from getting malaria and other preventable diseases (see also Mukombozi 2008). Perhaps most importantly, parents are strongly encouraged to facilitate their children to focus on school and complete at least 12 years of education[14]. Finally, many schools display posters promoting children's rights in pictures. These campaigns are visible in the work of local authorities who at community meetings always emphasise that everyone has responsibility (*inshingano y'abantu bwose*) to facilitate the care, shelter and protection of homeless children, children in extremely poor households and orphans without much support. It is emphasised that monthly public works days (*umuganda[15]*) should, when necessary, be dedicated to building houses for homeless families or to work in the fields of orphans who struggle with cultivation. People are also strongly encouraged to report on neighbours physically harming children.

The new ideals of childhood promoted by the government have been argued to be at odds with Rwandan cultural ideals that emphasise children's obedience to parents and reciprocal relations that require the fulfilment of tasks and duties by children in exchange for parental care (Veale 1999:108). Historically children's identity was formed and expressed through the collective rather than inherent in the individual (Veale & Doná 2002:57). In such a context, tensions can be expected when children are given an individual legal identity (André and Godin 2014a, 2014b) that gives them rights in the face of perceivably failing parents and communities where individual rights must be negotiated alongside group and family rights (Panter-Brick 2002:155). Moreover, enshrining children's rights in legislation facilitates a change in understandings of appropriate childhoods (Henderson 2006:304) and makes available to children and young people a new language for describing and evaluating social relationships important in childhood. Children's rights campaigns promote not only the "legal child" but the "responsible parent", which endows local understandings of parenthood with new meanings. Such neo-liberal normative discourses (André and Godin 2014a:2) can have immense influence on how people interpret their local moral and social worlds.

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[14] The length of mandatory, universal education was extended from 9 to 12 years in early 2012.
[15] One Saturday morning every month, every able person in Rwanda is expected to participate in communal works to improve their community. Work can include anything from making the village look neat, cultivating orphans' fields, building a house for a widow or orphans, or help in local rubbish dumps, amongst others.

The government's emphasis on community-based care is part of a more general trend in responding to the 'orphan crisis' (Donahue 2006; Foster 2005; Foster and Germann 2002) where a caregiving gap is starting to emerge (Rose 2005:913). As localised extended kin structures have historically absorbed orphans, child-rearing and the care of vulnerable children have been a joint community responsibility – albeit less so than idealised by scholars (Kuehr 2015; Varnis 2001). Under the disintegrating and fragmenting effect of the HIV epidemic, rising urbanisation, war and migration, communities are experiencing increasing strain in their care of children (Dahl 2009; Lloyd 2008; Thurman et al 2006, 2008). A key effort in orphan care interventions have consequently been community interventions that seek to rebuild communities' capacity (Donahue 2006; Schenk 2009; Varnis 2001). In Rwanda, communal capacity to care for children were greatly diminished by the genocide as few communities continued to exist *as communities* (Veale 2000) and few people were available and had the resources to provide for orphans. The immense distrust following the genocide weakened whatever community was left (ibid.). As responsibility for orphan care traditionally has been with the patriline and as men, in particular, were either killed or imprisoned, the structural conditions of orphan care had all but ceased (Doná 2001; Veale and Doná 2003). It is however notable that in late 1995 over 300,000 children had been taken in by other families (IPEP/OAU 2000:170).

A number of authors warn of overestimating the transformative role of events. Thurman et al emphasise that communal orphan care practices were already showing limitations pre-genocide as people declined to offer care to AIDS orphans (Keogh et al 1994, quoted in Thurman et al 2008:1558). Scholars on Rwanda have shown that the current politics of history, the distribution of power and rewriting of ethnic categories are but reinventions of past trends (Jefremovas 1997; Zorbas 2004), including the prevalent influence of international development (Uvin 1998). Grant (2014) shows how a significant section of the population, most predominantly urban youth, artists and religious leaders, seek to reposition Rwanda as a country not solely defined by genocide and its post-genocide context but as a united nation of love (*urukundu*) and respect (*agaciro*) (see also Uwamahoro 2015). In a similar vein, Pells (2009) quotes her child informants: "We've got used to the genocide, it's daily life that's the problem". The children and young people who informed my research would certainly agree. They did not spend their days thinking or talking about the genocide. At the same time, however, they were constantly met by references to it and learned to interpret their country's past through this lens. Thus, the genocide has asserted an influence as a 'critical event' on Rwandan discursive landscapes, sociality and social structures in ways that other events have not and the genocide and subsequent infiltration war have fundamentally changed the premise of orphan care.

Critical Events, Orphanhood and Access to Hope

Hutchinson suggests that the private and public meanings of orphanhood are mediated through children's community (2006:160-175). The comparative approach that guided my fieldwork indicates that different critical events affect the two communities and by implication effect differential mediation of the 'private and public meanings' of orphanhood. Mwiza and Kaganza are made up of profoundly different categories of Rwandans with equally different experiences of the country's 'critical' event(s). Their belonging to these categories defined their community's access to state resources and by extension their communal, social capital (Bourdieu 1997). It quickly became obvious that the kind of community in which one grew up and the kind of child one was, had a significant influence on children's experiences. In Kaganza, children were deemed deserving due to genocide. In Mwiza, children and young people were orphans of the infiltration war and were cast as burdens to their communities. Just like genocide exceptionality and victimhood structure current political hierarchies, so orphanhood is structured by a notion of the quintessential deserving genocide orphan so strong in nature that it could entirely hide from vision other kinds of suffering. By implication, orphans such as infiltration war orphans, come to inhabit their communities' nationally stigmatised identities. The process of how this happens is the focus of this thesis. Locally, quiet and louder debates constantly take place as to the extent to which the genocide should continue to exert influence over politics, hierarchies, sociality and understandings/recognitions of suffering. Due to the legal ban on discussing ethnicity, many such debates are played out in apparently "non-political" terms, such as claims to orphanhood. In a political context of citizenship based on genocide suffering, orphanhood has become a way to negotiate new socio-political hierarchies and practices of inclusion and exclusion. As post-genocide recovery properly came underway in the late 1990s, new development categories also became increasingly visible, especially that of OVC and AIDS orphans, the current-most dominant development category (Green 2011). Such internationally derived categories only become meaningful through their local contexts.

Thesis Overview

The thesis starts by examining the two communities in which the majority of the research was conducted (Chapter 1). It follows with a description and discussion of the methodological and ethical challenges of research with children in difficult circumstances and in a politically sensitive context

(Chapter 2). It then delves into an analysis of the existential foundations of childhood and the role of parents herein (Chapter 3), before it turns to the investigation of the process of 'orphaning' in Rwanda: for children and young people to self-identity or being ascribed a status of orphanhood. First, it looks at the instrumental use of the orphan label as children seek to bureaucratically register their names on local 'orphan lists' (Chapter 4). These lists suggest an intrinsic ethnic structuring of orphans' access to state and NGO support (Chapter 5) as well as in lay understandings of orphans' lives, status and conditions (Chapter 6: Kaganza and Chapter 8: Mwiza). I also explore children's own understandings of orphanhood and the ways in which they incorporate, or not, orphan claims and evocations in their own subjectivities and social identities (Chapter 7: Kaganza and Chapter 9: Mwiza). To conclude, I consider the wider implications of the political structuring of orphanhood within the post-genocide context.

Chapter 1

Vision, Village, Hill and History

Hope, Nostalgia and Local Lives in Post-Genocide Rwanda

When preparing for my research, a key question – practical as well as epistemological – raised by academic literature was how to position myself as a researcher in a different cultural setting (Bourdieu 1980; Collin 1999; Geertz 1973; Hastrup 2004; Lorimer 2004), in particular with respect to children, who seem inherently different due to their biological age and social–psychological immaturity (Barker and Smith 2001; Punch 2002:321). Questions of empathy, of cultural and moral relativism, and of understanding the existential scruples and dilemmas of people inherently different from ourselves as researchers were not foreign to me when I first settled into northwestern Rwanda. Yet, my research was never shaped as much by the intercultural differences between me and my Rwandan participants (I was very quickly described as *nkaBanyarwanda*, 'like Rwandan') as by intracultural divergences, contradictions and oppositions that research entailed in neighbouring Kaganza and Mwiza. In particular, the process of learning to relate to children in the two communities provided an important insight into how significantly different child-adult relationships and age categories can develop, even within the (seemingly) same socio-cultural setting. This influenced not only the methods appropriate and possible to employ, but the very conceptions of childhood from which 'child-friendly' research necessarily had to start. This is significant in light of evidence that communities are key determinants of orphan marginalisation and mental wellbeing (Bray 2003; Deacon and Stephney 2008), an observation recently also evidenced in Rwanda (Casera et al 2016). Thus, in this chapter, I describe and compare some of Mwiza and Kaganza's relevant social features.

Northwest Rwanda

The northwest of Rwanda has a different history to the rest of Rwanda (Fujii 2009:27). Prior to colonisation, the north had its own Hutu kingdoms with strong agricultural and commercial cultures but without formal state organisation or permanent army posts from the central state (Lemarchand 1966:605; Newbury 2001:299). These kingdoms were highly independent and few Tutsi settled in the area (de Lame 2005:45). Where western Rwanda consisted of small polities based on concepts of

ritual power and eastern Rwanda of clearly articulated and hierarchical dynastic traditions (based on political use of force), the north was structured around kinship, which served as "connecting tissue of political discussion" (Newbury 2001:281). Important lineages controlled land. Political identities combined *umuryango* (lineage) and *ishanja* (subclan) (ibid.). Northern Rwanda was only fully incorporated into the central Rwandan state with military force during colonisation (Pottier 2002). It remained predominantly Hutu as most of the few Tutsi settlers were forcibly removed to the south (Hilhorst and van Leeuwen 1999:12). The Tutsi who remained lived in small pockets, rather than side-by-side with Hutu as elsewhere in the country, and "psychological assimilation" never took place (de Lame 2005:45; Tiemessen 2005), in that the categories Hutu and Tutsi remained rather rigid with less mixing, intermarriage and fluidity than the rest of Rwanda (Tiemessen 2005). Thus, when the genocide happened, Tutsi were easily identified in their confined localities and killed, with little impact on non-Tutsi communities. To most northern Hutu, it is therefore not the genocide but the surrounding wars that stand out in memory.

In the post-independence decades, Rwanda was ruled by President Kayibanda from the south who politically excluded northern Rwanda. When Habyarimana ousted him in 1973, he reversed the trend and his own northwest region prospered on expense of the south (Taylor 1999:47). Like the rest of the country, communities in the northwest are affected by a national village resettlement scheme[16], which in the immediate post-genocide years was the government's most highly prioritised policy (Hilhorst & Leeuwen 1999:14) of turning scattered habitation into structured villages. The term village was a rather new invention as traditionally settlements spread across hillsides (DeLame 2005:27; Gravel 1965:324; Hilhorst and van Leeuwen 1999:17). Each hill provided the locus of a loosely-defined community in which people were as closely linked to the next hill's population as to others within the same community (DeLame 2005:27-28). Similar schemes elsewhere in Africa, including Tanzania, Mozambique and Ethiopia, have had relatively disastrous consequences (Scott 1998:3). Nonetheless, it was considered the most appropriate response to the refugee crisis that instigated the 1990-1994 civil war and formed an important part of the 1993 Arusha Peace Accords (Pottier 2002), as well as to the housing crisis following the genocide (RoR 2001:9). The goal was to settle displaced people in constructed villages on infertile land, providing more fertile land for cultivation at some distance from the village (Hilhorst and van Leeuwen 1999:27). Shortly into the

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[16] Often referred to as villagisation.

life of the policy, it was expanded to include the entire rural population, thereby becoming a long-term development policy and an important strategy towards the overriding goal of reconciliation (Leeuwen 2001:641). Despite controversy, the policy has been well-resourced by organisations such as UNHCR, the World Bank and WHO (ibid.; RoR 2001:9).

A strong criticism of the policy has been its unequal implementation, with some villages receiving considerably less services, infrastructure and resources than others (Hilhorst and van Leeuwen 1999:30,42-3; Newbury 2011:235; RISD 1999). These differences run along political-ethnic lines (Pottier 2002:185), leading Prunier to speak of 'ethnicised communities' (1997:369). Many of the constructed villages (*imidugudu*), centring around a market and with newly constructed houses, are built for genocide survivors and repatriated Tutsi while Hutu continue to live in war-damaged pre-genocide habitation sites (Ingelaere 2009:35). Villages also tend to attract people of the same background, creating villages known as "village of survivors", "village of Tanzanians" etc., instigating concerns about jealousy and a potential undermining of reconciliation efforts.

There are mixed views on the success of the villagisation policy, primarily due to lack of infrastructure in many of the villages and a decline in agricultural productivity as well as doubts of its voluntary nature (Leeuwen 2001:633-4; RoR 2001:11-12). Rwandans themselves have varied in their reactions, yet many who have moved to the villages have, over time, become satisfied with their lives there (Isaksson 2013). The policy became particularly controversial in the northwest where it was rolled out to address security and housing needs during the infiltration war (RoR 2001:12,17) and was thus hastily implemented with little provision of external resources so people largely had to build their own houses (Newbury 2011:231-232). Infrastructure by implication is poor. By 1999, 620,000 northwestern Rwandans had been resettled in 351 villages (IRIN 1999). Views from here are therefore particularly mixed. One study suggests that people in the northern villages are more satisfied than their southern and eastern counterparts due to the security the villages offer (African Rights 1999; RoR 2001:12,17) but others suggest experiences in the northwest have been negative (Jackson 1999). Nonetheless, the policy has not been considered as disastrous as elsewhere due to improvements over time (Hilhorst and van Leeuwen 1999:31). Under the policy, Kaganza was created anew and has become 'semi-urban' whilst Mwiza constitutes a more 'traditional' rural village[17] that

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[17] I use traditional to refer to the non-constructed nature of the village's origins: it has emerged 'naturally' as the population has expanded and developed (and retracted) in line with national development.

has seen only some restructuring as a consequence of the policy. Their different constitutions affect the two villages' access to political, economic and social capital.

Kaganza: A Village of Survivors, Widows and Orphans

Kaganza is a Cell[18] of five small village units (pl. *imidugudu*) standing so close together that they give the impression of one big, closely knit village sprawling along the main road. Built in 1997, it was not until the early 2000s, when the infiltration war ended, that the village started to develop into what it has become today. Initially, villagers say it was "still a village[19], like a forest" with no modern features. Today, it is "like town" (*nk'umuji*) with its association of development. Kaganza Cell has a population of 4500 people, of whom 55% are women. Children and young people make up 60% of the total population, with nearly 300 infants born in 2010, indicating a young, fertile and growing population. Each individual *umudugudu* (sg. of *imidugudu*) consists of about 200-250 households (approximately 1000 people), which vary in size from very small households of a lone widow or widower or a parent or grandmother with one or two children, to very large households of two parents with up to twelve children, or three generations living together. I knew and visited people in all the *imidugudu* but knew best the two at Kaganza's physical centre where I lived. These stand out from the neighbouring units and surrounding villages (including Mwiza) with their structure, coherence and orderliness (see also Hilhorst and van Leeuwen 1999:20,22). That Kaganza can be walked through and around in less than half an hour is a testament to the extremely high population density in this area: 770 people/km^2 compared to the national average of 417[20] people/km^2, making it the most densely populated area of Africa's most densely populated country[21] (André and Platteau 1998; RoR 2001:21). The new units, along with parts of some of the other units, were built as long, straight rows of houses by the government and NGOs under the resettlement scheme. The other

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[18] The Cell (Fr. cellule, Kinyarwanda akagari) is a rather insignificant administrative level in-between the individual village unit (umudugudu) and the Sector Office. The main decision-making power is held by the head of the Sector Office, and appointed by the central administration rather than the population (Ansoms 2009:307).

[19] Despite its imported, constructed history, the term village is often used to denote a poor, underdeveloped rural area without basic amenities. Mwiza was often described as a "pure village", an expression people described by pointing to the poor state of people's houses and clothes, and their perceived lack of regard for "development" and cultural "progress" such as accepting that women can wear trousers and be leaders, and children regardless of gender should be in school.

[20] Due to the rapid population growth, from just over 10 million in 2010 to just over 2012 million in 2016, population density is now nearly at 500 km^2. http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/rwanda-population/

[21] The dense population of northern Rwanda has been given as one of the reasons for why this region remained independent for so long (D. Newbury 2001:626).

village units in Kaganza existed prior to the scheme and developed more naturally around people's fields. Houses therefore lie more scattered and are of poorer quality, built with materials people could afford, or find, rather than those prescribed by government (iron roofs and adobe bricks; cf. Sommers 2012). This gives a sense of Kaganza being split into an old and a new part, as inhabitants also experience it and geographically locate themselves.

Kaganza has become a 'model' village, which unlike other villages (Hilhorst and van Leeuwen 1999), has excellent infrastructure. All facilities are within easy walking distance, buses and taxis run into town every 10-15 minutes and the village is completely flat. This is in contrast to most 'traditional' villages scattered across valleys and along mountain ridges, so even the village's many partly-immobile elderly can access communal facilities[22]. Kaganza also has a big commercial farm employing several people from the village, mainly young people and women. Beyond it lies a big village centre where several women run tea and grocery shops selling everything from toothbrushes and toilet paper to sweets, tinned fish, children's outfits and school materials. Behind the shops lies a food market that is open every morning and sells meat and fish (from the local lake) once a week. Several *cabarets* (local bars) are also to be found, offering locally brewed sorghum beer and bottles of Primus[23] beer; some have a television for important soccer games and the popular music competition Primus GumaGuma Superstar. The centre also includes barber and tailor shops, mobile phone charging stations and a cultural centre with a small cinema. On the other side of Kaganza's two new parts, away from the road, a modern World Bank-funded health centre was built ten years after the village's construction, around which much of the village's activity has since become centred. Behind it lie the fields attached to the village although most of these have been consumed by a guesthouse overlooking the volcanoes and frequented by wealthy people from town who come to drink and listen to the latest international and Rwandan pop music or to watch soccer. Locals cannot afford to come here except as day labourers to maintain the perfectly manicured gardens. In 2011, a big warehouse for food crops was built on many of the remaining fields as part of a national famine-prevention scheme.

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[22] A goal of the village resettlement scheme is to move people from hilltops and remote valleys to more accessible areas with paved roads.
[23] Bottled Primus beer is a sign of status for rural Rwandans who often cannot afford bottled beer (de Lame 2005:235).

The village has a number of international and local development organisations present, including the World Bank and the US-based Global Fund. Several of the rows of houses were built by the Global Fund and FARG, the National Fund for Survivors of the Genocide. FARG had a local representative, the village leader, Samira and the organisation was also strongly visible through promotional material, which hung on the wall of many survivor homes. Ibuka[24], an umbrella association coordinating survivor projects on a national level, was also present in the village through a local representative, Papa Charlotte (the local security officer). Other charities included Care International, which had supported some of the village's children through their *nkundabana* project, COSMO, until March 2010. Various international, religious organisations also supported some of the village's children through child sponsorships and a local NGO assisting HIV-infected women (with Samira as the vice-president), also supported some families. In late 2011, Haguruka – a national free legal aid centre for women and children – opened a large office in the village centre.

Figure 2 Two boys' drawings of 'My Village'. When asked to draw Kaganza, one of the boys immediately asked for a ruler to make straight lines, denoting the very linear and structured outlay of the village. Note the different colours in the drawing on the right, used by the child to denote the 'border' between the two new units.

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[24] Ibuka means 'to remember'.

Social Structure

According to Hilhorst and van Leeuwen, the success of constructed villages has depended on local authorities. Where they have taken a direct role, the villages have been better constructed and accepted by local populations (1999:44). In Kaganza, the village leader of one of the new units was in many ways crucial to the opportunities and dynamics of the community. Each *umudugudu* in Rwanda is headed by a village leader (*umutware*). As part of decentralising state power and empowering local communities, a policy launched in 2000 and revised in 2012 (Hasselskog and Schierenbeck 2015:951; RoR 2002:62-3), village leaders were given increasing powers in order to ensure local representation in political decision-making[25]. The village leader represents the village council, the lowest level of political authority and is accountable to the Cell Leader and Sector Chief Executive (see also Hasselskog and Schierenbeck 2015:952). One of the new unit's village leader, Samira, provides an ample example of the dynamics that govern life in Kaganza, a place that is characterised by strong personalities, progressive figures and a rather unique life compared to more 'traditional' villages such as Mwiza. Half way through 2011, Samira was elected into her third term. Samira strongly identifies herself as both Muslim[26] and as a Tutsi genocide survivor from the northwest. She is in her mid-40s and lives with her husband and seven children in the middle of the *umudugudu* she leads. Beaming with energy, authority and ambition, Samira is a charismatic but controversial figure, simultaneously feared and respected. Despite people's assertion that Samira is "corrupt" (*kwakire ruswa*: to receive bribes), many villagers still appreciated her and felt that her strong personality was necessary to ensure peace, stability and progress in a village that is home to different groups of people with clashing histories and experiences. Her implementation of national policies locally had immense influence on the social structure.

The new parts of the village are strikingly similar to the refugee camps in neighbouring countries (Malkki 1994; Turner 2010). Each row is built for a particular category of people so that NGO and government categories define its physical structure. The first two rows were built by the Global Fund for 'poor people' (*abakene*), locally interpreted as widows (sg. *umupfakazi*) and Tutsi

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[25] In 2011, the government started to introduce minimum requirements for the education of the village leaders to third degree level.

[26] Muslims in Rwanda were not typically incorporated into local ethnic categories but have occupied a neutral position as locally esteemed foreigners, historically Indian traders who integrated relatively easily. Islam has thereby come to represent healing and unification for both Hutu and Tutsi and has thus been growing exponentially since the genocide as a 'peaceful' religion (Tiemessen 2005). How Samira's family came to be both Tutsi and Muslim is not known to me.

returnees from Congo. Both descriptions seemed accurate. Except for one family (a widow "from the area" looking after four orphans), residents here were Tutsi repatriated from exile in Congo, many of them widows of varying ages looking after children and/or grandchildren (often both), thus reflecting some of the key categories set out in the resettlement policy itself: "a category of households which are homeless, often poor and vulnerable (widows, orphans, persons with disability…)" (RoR 2009:5, see also Hilhorst and van Leeuwen 1999:28-9,37). The next two rows were built by FARG for 'genocide survivors'. The last two rows were built by "private people", who could afford to build their own houses as prescribed by the government (cf. Newbury 2011:231). Two families from the area rent a house here but the rest are inhabited by Tutsi returned from Congo, Uganda and Burundi. Behind the last row, next to the health centre, was recently added a 'square' of 25 small houses with no real gardens or compound walls, built by an Anglican bishop for orphans[27]. Some of these houses have been sold on and are now mainly occupied by Tutsi returnees.

The physical structure of the two new units has strong undertones of the new politico-ethnic constructs of survivor and returnee, thus reflecting many of the constructed villages (IRIN 1999). It was important to many of the residents at a point early in our relationships, and often out of (obvious) context, to establish exactly where they lived and/or to which 'category' they belonged. People emphasised both their status as for example widow or poor and political-ethnic self-identifications, including "pure Rwandans" (*Umunyarwanda kavukire,* people who had never left Rwanda, a term used by survivors); "survivors" (*abacikacumu*); "from Congo"; "not on the side of the killers"; "from the region"; or "new to the village". "From Congo" referred to Tutsi who had fled Rwanda during the 1959-1964 massacres and returned in 1996[28], commonly denoted as Banyamulenge (Eltringham 2004:22; Lemarchand 1999:15; Prunier 2002:11). People never used 'Banyamulenge' to describe themselves and rather used 'from Congo' but many people from the area (those historically identified as northern Hutu) believed *Banyamulenge* feel strongly about their 'culture' (*umuco*) and thus to not 'mix well' with others (for example through endogamy). Some 'Banyamulenge' felt they were perceived more as Hutu (*nkaBahutu*) than Tutsi. "New to the village" referred to the lack of invitation to move to the village when it was built and to the lack of social moorings with other residents (many

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[27] This may have been funded as part of an initiative under *Imidugudu* to build 'orphan villages' (van Leeuwen 2001).
[28] Jackson suggests that most refugees returned to northwest Rwanda in April 1997 (2004:27) although he may here be referring to primarily Hutu refugees.

of the Congolese Tutsi knew each other from the village-like camps in Congo). This expression was only used by Hutu.

These politico-ethnic categories reflect those described in the introduction and convey some sense of a victim-perpetrator structuring of the social landscape. Even very young children knew and usually referred to each street as "the line of..." (*umurongo wa…*) and then naming the particular politico-ethnic group. This was particularly clear when I asked some of the children to show me around the village and they described to me the exact history of people inhabiting each row. When a woman saw us pass and came out to talk to us, with a bag of sweets, the children in whispering voices immediately introduced her as a widow from Congo who "loves children" (evidenced by the bag of sweets!). Due to a logic of ethnic contagion (Fujii 2009:100-102), returnees were believed to have incorporated their host cultures into their personality. A secondary school teacher known as 'Prof' or 'teacher' was commonly described as a womaniser due to his "Ugandan culture", my landlord was considered 'mad' and difficult because of her Burundian background and a local pastor was considered untrustworthy due to his Congoleseness[29] and was often referred to as the "Congolese pastor" rather than being known by his denomination (which never actually became apparent). These descriptions of people have not replaced pre-genocide modes of identification, which include religious affiliation, kin relations, occupation, and cattle ownership amongst others (Newbury 2001) but nonetheless appeared discursively more articulated and powerful. Residents often commented upon the variety of different regional histories and diverse war experiences.

As one moves down through Kaganza, the increasing size and quality of houses is notable. *Abakene* have the smallest houses, survivors slightly bigger and "private people" the largest. During fieldwork, however, many survivors' houses grew markedly in size and quality while many 'private people' and most *abakene*'s houses slowly deteriorated in the unusually heavy rains of 2011. The disproportionate improvement of survivors' homes was one of several indicators of the dominance of survivors within the community. In Kaganza, survivors had a strong presence, not simply in numbers but in social status and power, including taking up at least half of the positions on the village council.

The physical split between the new and the olds parts reflect the wider trend in the resettlement scheme of politically ethnicising communities. The older parts are predominantly inhabited by Hutu who originate from the region, whilst the new parts are inhabited by the different groups of Tutsi

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[29] Reflecting Rubbers (2009) "We, the Congolese, we cannot trust each other."

referred to above. The old parts were not referred to by political categories or terms of vulnerability but rather by their geographical location: "by the traditional doctor's house" (*hafi y'inzu y'umuvuzi*) or "near the forest" (*hafi y'ishyambi*) because a patch of trees had been left standing. These references have connotations of being uncivilised and lacking development[30]. Their references thus imply a lesser status of the areas' inhabitants within a developmentalist state where citizenship is based on one's ability to contribute to national development. However, although much of the activity in Kaganza is centred within the new parts where the infrastructure is, the old and new parts are not socially as separated as the physical structure may suggest. Kaganza has come to act as a trading centre for the local area. Economic activity, including markets, albeit small, have become an important source of bringing people and cash to the village, as was one of the intentions of the policy (Isaksson 2013). Kaganza's facilities cater for a much larger area than the cell itself, creating a constant flow of people from the old parts and beyond who come to sell produce from their fields, buy non-food items at the shops or for medical needs that traditional doctors are unable to address. Economic necessity also binds the two village parts together. With poor access to fields, Kaganza residents rely on neighbouring communities for crops for which they pay with cash earned through paid employment. In the old part of the village, on the other hand, people have much better access to fields but need access to cash for school materials, clothes and goods.

Community Dynamics

The stark political-ethnic organisation of Kaganza raises questions of inter- and intra-communal relationships. While community dynamics are amicable and considered a success in terms of reconciliation, officially and locally, certain tensions persist. Relationships in communities of forced migration, such as refugee camps, are often intensely politicised (Malkki 1995, Turner 2010). As many Kaganzans had spent large parts of their lives in refugee camps and camp style villages in neighbouring countries, they were used to a categorical structuring of their environment and never questioned the tendency to situate each other in terms of these categories. The artificial nature of the village also meant that people did not live primarily amongst kin but rather shared particular political and regional histories. As such, people's place in the village was defined not by how they were related to others (except for a few families) but by their past experiences. Hilhorst and van Leeuwen have

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[30] Traditional medicine is juxtaposed to modern medicine and many Ugandan Rwandans who considered themselves more modern than other Rwandans actively distanced themselves from traditional doctors.

observed that while ethnic tensions can be expected when the villagisation scheme has become so ethnically tainted, these have tended to be directed at officials rather than expressed between people (1999:44; see also Zorbas 2007, quoted in Eltringham 2011:279). Similarly, in Kaganza differentiation was attributed to Samira who was instrumental in the advantaged position of survivors.

Towards the end of Samira's second term, people's dissatisfaction started to outweigh appreciation of her as village leader. When elections were held in 2011 most villagers complained that she had gained insufficient votes to be elected and that many of those who voted did so out of fear. Several people wrote a joint letter of complaint to the Sector authorities but Samira was officially approved as the village leader, reflecting a common perception that village leaders are corrupt and difficult to remove from power (Hasselskog and Schierenbeck 2015:960). What is significant for Samira was Kaganzans' belief that her survivor status was used to justify her strong and continuous hold on power. Thus, Mama Chadarake thought Samira was protected by the government, while Mama Joseph thought her survivor status protected her and another villager thought her access to NGO and state resources kept her in power. As a survivor, Samira was believed to be harsh on non-survivors. This sentiment was strengthened when a widespread sickness required all banana trees to be felled[31]. This angered people everywhere I went. In town, an older man hung himself when the authorities came to cut down his trees. Before he died, he yelled that the trees were so important to his culture and life, that without them he might as well be dead. Many shared his thoughts, without however killing themselves. One morning I passed an angry Mama Joseph just as she had cut down her trees. As she looked across the street, she whisperingly commented on the injustice that survivors' trees were left standing, as they continued to be six months later. It thus seemed apparent to non-survivors that survivors were a protected population to whom normal rules did not apply. In daily life, in contrast, several significant relationships existed between survivors and non-survivors, Hutu and Tutsi. Despite Mama Joseph's dissatisfaction with the favouring of survivors, it did not prevent close relationships between her and people identified as survivors. Mama Joseph was often away visiting family in Congo or engaging in business in town. During such times her granddaughter Claire stayed with Shangaze, a survivor. When Shangaze in turn "fell sick with trauma" (*aratweye guhahamuka*) or had to travel from the village, her son and foster daughter, Husina, stayed with Mama Joseph. Such relationships also existed between people from the old and new *imidugudu*.

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[31] This was not a new problem (Huggins 2009:299-300).

In addition to the historical fluidity of cultural ethnicity, several important social activities facilitate close inter-ethnic relationships. Sharing a drink in the *cabaret*[32] and visiting each other (*gusura*) are often used as symbols of the success of reconciliation in post-genocide Rwanda (Hilhorst and van Leeuwen 1999:12). Sharing beer "seals" trust and reciprocal relations (deLame 2005:318). My neighbour, Papa Joiyeux who had grown up in the region, ran a cabaret that was visited by people of all backgrounds. Similarly, being visited and being able to visit others (*gusura*) were important for people's sense of social integration and wellbeing (deLame 2005:306-9; Gravel 1965:324), and is associated with a social necessity of 'being seen' that is implicit in a social structure dominated by clientelism (ibid.; see also Ferguson 2013). This emphasis on *gusura* also made it easy for me to fit into social relations and activities. Such visits were often a result of having gone for a walk or stroll (*gutembera*), which could bring people far and wide and get talking to people in other villages and areas. *Gutembera* was a highly valued activity by especially older people, often to escape the loneliness of their home, and as a term has interesting and culturally significant roots. *Gutembera* in its literal sense means to circulate and comes from the verb *gutemba*, which means to flow. As Taylor has especially shown, Rwandan notions of health in all its understandings are expressed in flows and blockages so that a healthy body is one where fluids can flow easily, while sickness arises from blockages to such flows (1992, 1999). To circulate as a social activity thus denotes social integration that is of existential value. The act of *gusura* (visiting) brings the social activity of *gutembera*, as a public encounter and relationship, into the private realm behind closed doors, and thus transforms a previously potentially lonesome space into an esteemed social activity where intimate and 'secret' conversations and relationships can be established. Sharing secrets is central to friendships and give prestige – those who have secrets with others are powerful people with whom it is worth having secrets (de Lame 2005:14-15).

Finally, people's religious affiliations, as elsewhere in Rwanda, cut across political-ethnic lines (Fujii 2009) despite a historically ambiguous relationship between the church and those in power (de Lame 2005:54-55; Mbanda and Wamberg 1997). Grant brings attention to the mono-ethnic nature of many churches, in particular ADEPR (Grant 2014). Similarly Cantrell writes of a specifically post-genocide church hierarchy that supports the image of Tutsi returnees as suffering refugees and shows the Anglican Church, specifically PEER, to be an essentially Tutsi organisation, clearly associated

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[32] A small local bar, often in people's private homes or in an annex to their house.

with the RPF (2007:337). However, churches attended by Mwizan and Kaganzan populations seemed to have mixed congregations, especially those by main roads and closer to town. I did not gather statistical data on people's denominations but there seemed to be a relatively equal number of Catholics and Adventists in the two villages, with a smaller number of Anglican. A significant number of people also attended one of the several Pentecostal churches in the area although the patronage of a number of these seemed in constant 'flux'. Kaganza had several Muslims, of whom some were survivors and some of historical backgrounds that never became evident. The mix of religious affiliations in the villages meant that there was lively religious activity much of the week and people mixed with each other as they walked to and from church together and established a number of important social relationships through church. It was not uncommon for people within the same immediate family to attend different denominations or different churches within the same denomination. Religious conversions were also a normal part of everyday life. Religious identity was therefore rarely fixed and facilitated dynamic social relationships across borders and boundaries.

Nonetheless, despite economic interdependence and important relationships across historical backgrounds, there is more activity, friendship and interaction within rather than across the *imidugudu* and within each of the rows. Both children's and adults' peer networks suggest that many, albeit not all, relationships are localised and thus in some form political-ethnic. Few children cross the 'border' into the old parts to play and many stay in their own and immediate rows. Claire and Husina are part of a particularly close group of friends that also includes Cindy and Giselle. The four girls are all ten years of age, attend the same class in school and live in the row of survivors, except Claire who lives in the row of *abakene* and goes to the other village school. Giselle spent most of her time with Husina, at whose house she normally studied due to lack of electricity in her own house. Other peer groups existed that were similarly structured within a confined locality. While boys are generally freer to move about, their peer networks did not expand much further than those of girls. When I asked children to draw a spiderweb (Appendix 1) of people they considered most significant in their lives, the majority of these lived in the same or adjacent row of houses as the children themselves.

Apart from the friendship between Samira and the traditional doctor, adult community members who established close relationships with people from the old parts, were primarily people who felt poorly integrated within the *umudugudu*, including Giselle's grandmother. Albeit a genocide survivor, she was often in conflict with Samira and felt marginalised from other survivors, amongst whom she considered there to be a strong relationship. Disabled in the genocide and thus often housebound, she depended on visits from other people, which diminished her network and sense of

worth. Amongst her friends were the grandmothers and aunts of Husina, Cindy and Claire, as well as a woman "from the area". Her limited network was transposed to Giselle who rarely spent time with children other than Husina, Cindy and Claire. Friendships thereby suggest that while relationships certainly exist across politico-ethnic categories, people seem to favour their own 'category' for closer friendships. Friendships are not only grounded in the sharing of secrets but the sharing of experiences and resources (such as children sharing clothes or neighbours sharing food). As people within the same rows often had similar pasts (as refugees, survivors etc.) and socio-economic status, it is logical that they became closer friends. My research assistant however believed that trust also played an important part. While he recognised that people have again learned to live together and share beer in the cabaret, he personally felt that it was still difficult to trust each other fully, so that close inter-ethnic relationships such as marriage and enduring friendships are difficult and full of tensions. He also believed that in any encounter with strangers trust could not be established until each person's background had been established. Kaganzans' ready narration of their backgrounds and reasons for arriving in the village would suggest that they felt likewise.

An Aspiring, Future-Oriented Population

Despite some tensions, the village's construction by the government seemed to facilitate, in most residents, a culture of appreciation of the government and its policies. People in Kaganza ambitiously sought to implement many of the government campaigns of taking responsibility for their own and their children's welfare as well as their community's development. Examples include higher than normal education enrolment rates of children of all ages (especially girls in secondary school and teenage mothers), as well as the immediate implementation of new legislation such as the requirement to wear shoes, remove weeds from front gardens and remove high walls from compounds (cf. Ingelaere 2011:74). "Giving voice" to women and children was one of the most appreciated government initiatives, a focus that was strengthened when Haguruka opened their office, as well as bringing development to remote villages. President Kagame was often spoken of reverently as a man who "loves all people" (*gukunda abantu bwose).* Due to people's histories, the appreciation of government policies and initiatives was often deeply emotional and of significant existential importance. As I sat down for milk with the village's security officer, a previous soldier and genocide survivor who lost every family member known to him in the genocide, he spoke of his pride in being facilitated to live in such a privileged village where the government loved and respected people and helped them develop. As he spoke of the village's history, he visibly struggled to keep back tears. He

composed himself by focusing his attention on all the plans and hopes, he had for his children and the village's youths more generally. The focus on children and youths' welfare is notable. The security officer was instrumental in starting a youth club, which became immensely popular with children and young people for whom it became a symbol not only of their community's aspirations on their behalf, and thus of their protection and welfare within the village, but also of their future aspirations. The official launch of the club drew in not only most Kaganzans, young and old, but many of the Cell and Sector authorities and surrounding village inhabitants. It was a proud and aspiring day that was talked about for months.

Despite being divisive at times, it was in particular Samira who was instrumental in the positive and beneficial relationship between Kaganza and the central state. Samira is a woman who wants to have a stake in everything. She has a great mind for business and is always looking for new opportunities, not just for herself but for her community, friends and family. She is a strong advocate for bringing new businesses and initiatives to the village, including electricity. She is close friends with the Sector Chief. In addition to representing FARG, she is also involved with numerous NGOs and cooperatives, including the NGO supporting HIV-infected woman and a soap-producing cooperative that also supports women. It is Samira's role to provide various documents and signatures for survivors' applications to FARG[33]. There is no doubt that the strong local presence of NGOs is partly due to her extensive work.

Samira's powerful position despite her status as divorced is representative of many women in Kaganza who have successfully managed the process of 'stigma exploitation' (Galinsky et al 2013; Gramling and Forsyth 1987), whereby characteristics normally associated with social undesirability become more desirable. Samira was not the only of her kind, she was simply the most powerful and dominant. Of Kaganza's five village leaders, four were women and three were either divorced or widowed (one of whom was an HIV-positive woman from the area). Widows historically depended on the goodwill of their natal family or adult sons (IPEP/OAU 2000:161). Kaganza, including the old parts, had a large number of divorced women, unmarried mothers and widows. Many of these women, including the traditional doctor and the village leaders, held high social status and had access to a

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[33] It never became clear to me whether it was her position as village leader or local representative for FARG that accounted for this role but it was extremely powerful as it could determine someone's official status as survivor and thus access to funds in the intricate bureaucracy of survivorhood (Gugliemo 2015).

variety of economic opportunities. At village meetings, several widows were active participants and debated village developments with the same authority and influence as men. It is likely that the large number of women without husbands removed the stigma associated with widowhood. Another contributing factor may be people's lack of land. This not only frees up women's time[34] to pursue other activities but leaves them less dependent on traditional kin structures (through which land is accessed). However a couple of widows had access to land and were often busy combining work in their fields with paid employment and engagement in village politics or initiatives, such as the youth club, and cooperatives. It was my sense that considerably more women than men held paid employment, at the commercial farm and warehouse, as teachers or labouring in people's fields.

What Samira and other women like her in particular represent is that normally stigmatised fates could be converted to powerful personas with important roles in the life and development of their community. Samira also represents the need for combining creative strategies for survival and social upward mobility in a context where the traditional land and kinship networks are greatly diminished, if not altogether non-existent. All she had left of family after the genocide was an aunt in the village and a sister in the neighbouring village. Even people who had not endured the genocide first-hand but had lived in exile had little more family than Samira. Most drew on a hybrid network of relatives and acquaintances spread across the globe and had to draw their support from cooperatives, new alliances as well as involvement in councils or as aid beneficiaries. The high number of progressive figures such as Samira meant that the national developmentalist values of productive, 'modern' citizens who are self-sufficient, entrepreneurial and future-oriented were strongly represented in Kaganza and led to a dominant sense of inclusion in the nationalist project. A rather different story emerges from Mwiza.

Mwiza: A Climb to the Forest

Like Kaganza, Mwiza is a cell of five *imidugudu*. Its population is slightly bigger than Kaganza's with 5000 inhabitants but with a similar male/female ratio and similar proportion of children and young people. However, despite the larger population and a greater proportion of females in their reproductive years, less than 50 infants were born in 2010, a sixth of infants born in Kaganza. The low birth rate reflects Rwanda's virilocal tradition, which was much less prominent in

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[34] Women spend considerably more time working in the fields than do men whose activities are focused on cattle.

Kaganza where young women wanted to stay close to their families. In Mwiza, young people in general were keen to leave and rarely spoke about their community in any positive terms. Most youth who found employment or spouses tended to move closer to town, even if they secured jobs in the local schools or hospital. Due to its physical outlay and my different access to the village, I worked across the cell and did not focus on a particular *umudugudu* within it.

People in Kaganza often turned suspicious when they heard that I also conducted research in Mwiza. When Mama Chadarake once saw me heading there with my research assistant, she asked in a whispering voice why I wanted to visit "people there [who] cannot teach anything about life in the real Rwanda". The condemnation was clear. Her disapproval was accompanied by fear. Mwiza was severely affected by the infiltration war of which it is dangerous to speak. The hushed voices and whispering tone became a normal feature of my research here. Conversation immediately died when men in uniform passed in the street or neighbours came within earshot. This sense of paranoia was pervasive and constituted embodied knowledge; I had not visited Mwiza for long before I too looked over my shoulder before speaking or lowered my voice if saying the word *intambara* (war). Such paranoia exists everywhere in Rwanda (Thomson 2009) but it was significantly more intense in Mwiza than in Kaganza or Kigali where people sometimes openly discussed matters of ethnicity. Williamson (2014) suggests that within the 'culture of silence' dominating public spaces, survivors have found an important medium in the national genocide archives through which to voice criticisms of many kinds. Grant (2014) emphasises popular culture as another medium through which critical voices are aired. As Tutsi dominate such media (ibid.) it would appear that people of Tutsi backgrounds primarily have access to 'mediums of contestation'. In his examination of the infiltration war, Jackson writes of a legacy of bitterness and narrative of grievance amongst Hutu (2004:22) that remains especially strong for northwestern Hutu who have remained more critical of the government (IPEP/OAU 2000:266) and feel unequally treated (RoR 2001:16). Here, however, I refute Jackson's claim that this is based on a 'false consciousness' (2004:22). Hutus' 'narratives of grievances' are not based on a false perception of disfavouring but are grounded in their substantially poorer access to economic, social and political capital, enacted through instruments such as the villagisation policy (HRW 2001:235; Newbury 2011:235).

Pertinent to Mwiza is the observation that Rwandans historically did not live in structured villages but scattered across hillsides. Steep and washed out paths meander in all directions, loop around and cross over each other like a never-ending labyrinth with contours that change with the passing seasons and give a charming, attractive secrecy to each part of the area. Small huts crop up

in-between fields, visible from a distance only after the harvest season. During the wet season, when maize, sorghum and beans stand high one cannot see far. Only occasionally do narrow paths open up to wider, cleared spaces where some bigger houses stand and a clear view over the mountainside emerges. It is amidst this continuous stream of settlements that Mwiza is located. Where it begins or finishes is neither obvious nor socio-politically significant. Mwiza was not constructed under the village resettlement scheme although it has seen some restructuring of its physical outlay, including the creation of village centres that lie scattered across the hillside and where several shops opened during the time of my research. *Umuganda* activities have been used to turn forest patches into clusters of small huts. Yet these areas are not like Kaganza's clearly structured rows but are rather long and narrow dirt paths with hundreds of tiny huts made from sticks and leaves, insulated with mud and surrounded by small gardens and intermittent fences. Politically there has been much less focus on 'recovery' from the infiltration war compared to the genocide. Consequently, much fewer resources have gone into reconstructing people's homes. To a large extent, people were themselves responsible for repairing or rebuilding their homes (cf. Newbury 2011).

Mwiza spans a much wider geographical area than Kaganza, making one big village centre impractical. Smaller village centres are scattered throughout the cell, most of them a 45-60 minute walk steeply uphill from the main road, on disintegrating ground; the shops are therefore not always open due to lack of stock so people have to go to the bigger village centres. Well-stocked markets are a similar walk away, increasing people's dependence on their own fields and somewhat reducing their access to a diverse range of income-generating activities[35] (see also Isaksson 2013). In the biggest of the centres, which lies at the very top of the hill, is a health centre. The village also has a primary school and a lower secondary school. Every morning and evening teachers and nurses are seen travelling on the back of bicycle taxis to reach work; most are coming from town or from villages nearer to town. In Mwiza itself, employment rates are low while access to temporary cash jobs and cooperatives are becoming increasingly important for survival yet harder to access. Many people struggle to make ends meet and live off land that has been passed down through generations and has been subdivided to such an extent that they can no longer sustain even very small households (Pottier 2002:20,184; RoR 2001:21-22; Rose 2005). Despite the naturally fertile volcanic soil, Mwiza is a

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[35] While in the African context an hour's walk does not seem much, the steep climbs with heavy bags of crops do deter people from making frequent trips to markets. According to De Lame, anything more than an hour's walk is 'far away' (quoted in Fujii 2009). For elderly widows and widowers and young orphans, the heavy walk is prohibiting.

community where people never feel far from the food insecurities and Malthusian trap that many have warned of (André and Platteau 1998; Huggins 2009, 2011). People who depend on their fields earn much-needed cash by selling crops but as these are often insufficient, people have to enter the labour market. The local need for labour cannot always satisfy these demands, leading to relatively severe poverty and a sense of insurmountable problems. *Ikibaso cy'amafaranga* (it is a problem of money) is a common conclusion to people's narratives and experiences of living in Mwiza.

Social structure

The physical dispersion, 'scatteredness', is reflected in a scattered social structure (de Lame 2005:111) that is experienced as loose and at times unsettling by Mwizans. Unlike Kaganza, each *umudugudu* does not vary in political-ethnic composition. The population is historically local to the area and thus predominantly Hutu with only a handful of Tutsi and Twa. As nearly all residents in Mwiza are of the same background and hold similar experiences of infiltration war, short periods of flight and exile and rapid return to Rwanda, historical experiences do not inform social power nor have relationships become 'politicised'. People do not refer to each other as living in 'the line of survivors' or 'poor people' but rather use physical markers in the environment to provide directions to people's homes. Prominent members of the community are 'the catechist', the shop owner or indeed a new category, *nkundabana* (orphan mentor). All of Mwiza's leaders are men in their late thirties to early fifties. This group of men also provides most of the shop owners and other prominent village figures, such as Vincent, a shop owner and *nkundabana* in the local orphan project, CYP. According to Hasselskog and Schierenbeck (2015:961), most village leaders have not taken on a particularly strong role in encouraging local decision-making or influencing their local community. Powerful leaders are the exception rather than the rule. Thus, where Kaganza had a number of highly visible, dynamic and authoritative village leaders with significant social and political power, Mwiza's leaders were not widely known (often entirely unknown by children and youth). People who did know their leader felt restricted in their access to them, perceiving them to be too busy to care for their particular concerns. Thus, the leaders' influence seemed to extend little beyond mediation in family and land conflicts. Here their judgements were often recounted with great disappointment.

The near-invisible role of village leaders has led me to portray Mwiza through Vincent who is not a village leader. Vincent is a cheerful and kind man in his early forties. He lives with his wife and five children not far from one of Mwiza's village centres and is the owner of the first shop as one enters Mwiza; his shop is poorly stocked but he sells beans and potatoes as well as non-food items

such as school materials, soap and matches. From the shop, he also runs a cabaret. Since the shop opened, it has become a place for people to spend some leisurely time and for children to come for sweets. Vincent is a visibly popular man who is always busily engaged in conversation with people. When Vincent is not in his shop or attending meetings or activities related to his role as *nkundabana*, he cultivates either with his wife or together with other *nkundabanas* in fields that they purchased through a loan from the NGO. Vincent is unusual for his positive attitude towards government policies and has great ambition for his community; he would like to see other villagers start up other types of shops and engaging in different entrepreneurial activities. Unlike Samira, whose success arose from the ready availability of NGOs supporting her personal cause of genocide survivorhood and that of the village, what characterises Vincent's attempt at implementing a variety of government policies in his private life and in his community, are the obstacles and setbacks that he meets on a daily basis.

Community dynamics

Mwiza closely reflects pre-genocide structures where people were situated within a wider regional network of kin relations, marriage alliance and patron-client relationships, with no clear distinction between internal and external structures (deLame 2005; Gravel 1965). The most significant local structure was the *inzu* (Gravel 1965), which literally means house but was used to refer to a minor lineage[36] (Eltringham 2004:18). Two significant differences from pre-genocide structures are the decline in relationships within families, affected by land conflicts and arguments over care of sick or orphaned relatives amongst others, and a decline in external relationships through marriage alliances, as fewer people can afford to marry (Sommers 2012). *Inzu* now has come to mean people's actual houses; 'clan segments' constitute no more than people's immediate families (siblings and parents), usually referred to as *umuryango*. It was notable that when I conducted kinship diagrams with people in Mwiza and used the word *umuryango,* previously referring to lineage, people only counted their parents and siblings. I had to specifically ask about grandparents and other family relationships to communicate any sense of an extended family. My research assistant especially was perplexed at the difficulty in conveying the meaning of 'extended family' or 'lineage' in light of its regional significance historically (de Lame 2005:45). When I asked whether people were still in touch

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[36] Gravel translates *inzu* as manor.

with their families on other hills most said that the distance was too far and they very rarely went to visit nor received any visits in return. People often felt they could not visit each other freely because visiting involves bringing a small 'gift' (Gravel 1965:324), which few felt they had the means to do. Life in Mwiza therefore seemed defined by a structure experienced as loose and lacking in guidance. Veale observes that, "instead of addressing potential conflict directly, conflict in communities appears to be directed through a formal, authoritative and hierarchical form of social relations" through the village leader who intervenes in the most intimate aspects of people's lives (Veale 2000:237). While this provides a 'safe' way to deal with conflict, it reduces communities' abilities to collectively solve a problem or mobilise spontaneously (ibid.). Evidence from Mwiza suggests that village leaders are not taking on this role although their populations expect them to. In such situations, people like Vincent are starting to take on an increasing role.

Mwiza's social dynamics are influenced not by issues of 'reconciliation' but by the dilemmas and tensions within close kin and family relationships: intergenerational conflict, disagreements over land ownership, crop theft, worries of poisoning and witchcraft, rumours of infidelity, HIV/AIDS and misbehaving youth. While such worries obviously surfaced in Kaganza, in Mwiza they seemed to define a large number of everyday experiences and social interactions that felt deeply disturbing. When a young soldier died, rumours immediately spread of poisoning due to jealousy (of his salary). The incidence created a deep existential fear amongst the man's friends, family and neighbours, another sign that their community was falling apart. In contrast, when a Kaganzan man of similar age and socio-economic standing died, accusations of poisoning centred on his status as survivor resulting in the police being called in to conduct a criminal investigation to establish if it was a 'genocide crime'. This incident incurred no existential fear but was simply seen as yet another incidence of survivors' protection with limited impact on lived relationships.

An important difference between Mwiza and Kaganza concerns the status of widows. Widows in Mwiza faced considerable socio-economic marginalisation. Mama Mutabasi lost her husband in the infiltration war. Since then her family-in-law have treated her poorly and have continuously tried to reclaim her husband's, their son's, land. Mama Mutabasi, however, is an intelligent, hardworking and assertive woman who does not give up. She needed her husband's land to feed her own daughter as well as Evelyne, a girl she took in when she found her by a roadside during flight to Congo. Mama Mutabasi has managed to hold on to her land but is consequently on such bad terms with her family-in-law that they do not support her daughters, even though this is a patrilineal responsibility. Like many other widows in Mwiza, she relies primarily on her own land and whatever support she can get

from her natal family. In this regard, Mama Mutabasi is lucky as they live only close by. Other women who faced similar problems had families much further away and thus relied upon much narrower support networks. Mama Mutabasi has also benefited from her determined personality; she has cultivated her land with such success that she was able to build a sturdy, beautifully designed brick house, toilet and kitchen hut and purchase a cow, unavailable to most people in Mwiza. As in Kaganza there are avenues for widows to improve their economic opportunities but in Mwiza this is associated with tense family relationships and an ambiguous social position. For Mama Mutabasi, her own tense relations with her family transpired to a difficult and sometimes violent relationship with her adopted daughter Evelyne. Yet the fact that women such as Vincent's wife are successful entrepreneurs and that about half of the Child and Youth Project's *nkundabana* are women, indicate that women are gaining some social status and economic opportunities.

Another stark difference is land conflicts, which in turn intrinsically implicate family tensions, as "to speak of kinship is to speak of land" (de Lame 2005:392). Such conflicts have been one of the implications of decades of flight and exile, war and genocide (Huggins 2011) and land scarcity was considered a predominant cause of the genocide, especially in the northwest (ICARDD 2006; André and Platteau 1998:8). As refugees have returned home in several waves and occupied abandoned property, or those who never left took over the fields of those who did, access to and ownership of land has caused significant problems (Huggins 2011; Ingelaere 2009; Pottier 2002).

A Struggling Population

Vincent's enthusiasm and determined attempts at inclusion in the national development project distinguishes him from many of his neighbours who displayed considerable scepticism towards government policies and felt excluded from "development". Thus, young Dusabimana's grandmother complained about the introduction of children's rights as she felt it made youth too demanding and neglectful of their responsibilities. A grandfather, Mukantagara, was angry about the intense focus on education and the need to have completed secondary school in order to access most jobs because so many children and youth in their community were not helped to access education. A policy of forced crop rotation met with similar frustration. The Sector and higher bureaucratic authorities in turn believe that people here have no desire to develop (see also Ansoms 2009). However, as Vincent frequently pointed out, the government is pushing through development at a rate people cannot keep up with due to a combination of lack of skills and material resources. According to him, the government is not doing enough to help residents in taking a role in their

community's development and there are not enough 'projects'[37] being established in the area. Young people in particular showed the willingness for development referred to by Vincent but felt unable to "develop themselves" and felt greatly impeded by their lack of status within the community (see also Sommers 2012). The community for example had no youth club like the one launched in Kaganza.

When people in Kaganza felt trapped by poverty, they often spoke of encouraging their grandchildren to work hard in school so they could achieve good grades and access scholarships for university to ensure future employment. This symbol of hope that education provided in Kaganza was unavailable to many people in Mwiza, such as for the large number of grandparents, aunts and uncles looking after children and youth who lost their parents in the infiltration war (see also Sommers 2012). In the case of the grandfather, Mukantagara, when his son died in the infiltration war, his grandchildren had had to leave school to earn money for the family and run the household and the youngest girl was unable to follow mainstream education because she lost most of her hearing in a grenade attack during the war. Widows and widowers can usually rely on adult children to assist them with resources; the infiltration war led to the death of most of the grandfather's sons and brothers and thus greatly diminished his kin network. Mukantagara's one remaining brother was contesting his access to the family land and their relationship had broken down with the ensuing conflict. Dusabimana's grandmother at a younger age was still physically able to work, had several fields, a bigger house and access to an extensive kin network with several sons and daughters living close-by. Yet she shared the grandfather's sense of being faced with more problems than she felt able to handle.

Younger generations held more hope; they were able to work, they could see opportunities and they had younger children for whose futures they could hold out hope. Yet Mukantagara's sense of an ever-increasing restriction in his strategies to improve or even maintain his and his family's conditions in life, the feeling of the insurmountability of problems, was shared by many villagers. Vincent, who was still young and could employ several strategies to improve his family's situation, was also often overcome by a feeling of overwhelming restrictions. Vincent is still struggling to make ends meet despite running a shop, being married to an entrepreneurial wife, being associated with an NGO and friendly with the local authorities, despite being able to take a leading role in *umuganda* activities and being engaged in projects with his church. On gloomy days, when I walked into his shop, cheerful as I always was when seeing him, uplifted by his usually happy spirit, he would sigh

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[37] The term people usually used to refer to the work of NGOs.

heavily while we all shared a bread roll, asking me again and again if I could find a project or benefactor for him or the village, so life would not be quite as difficult.

For many people there was a strong sense that they simply had to work too hard to survive and desperately needed support from an external source that seemed rather distant to them. The grandfather, like other people, contributed the inappropriateness or lack of implementation of policies to the fact that "this area is not considered" by the government, a reference in part to the lack of resource contribution to improving the village. In moments of 'insurmountability', people who remembered the time of President Habyarimana's rule longed with nostalgia for a time when they not only had had access to ample resources, but had felt respected within their communities and by their country, when people had not had to work so hard simply to survive. Iin contrast to Kaganza's enthusiastic and passionate strive for a better future, many people in Mwiza longed for a past with such a level of nostalgia that they felt detached from and unable to participate in the present nationalist project of development.

Between History and Vision Lies the Muddled Present

According to Hage, society acts as a mechanism for the distribution of hope. He writes:

"The kind of affective attachment (worrying or caring) that a society creates among its citizens is intimately connected to its capacity to distribute hope" (2007:3).

To be marginalised is to be denied a share of hope by society; to be newly marginalised is to not know how to create new forms of hope and thus to live in a state of denial (ibid.:21). This conceptualisation provides an apt analytical lens through which to understand the importance of the communities' sociological differences in children's lives. Children's status is often intrinsically related to particular statist projects and narratives of desired futures where children become the investment for a better country, or as symbol of a different life (Cheney 2007; Hoffman 2012; Kuehr 2015; Meinert 2009). Kaganza and Mwiza's incorporation of the 'future', through hope, within their present discourses and priorities may thus significantly influence the ways in which children and young people are perceived within their communities. The power relationship between the two communities and the government "determine how competing collective hopes play out in action" (Courville and Piper 2004:39). Following Hage, the nature of the current government and state-building initiatives unequally distributes hope for a peaceful and developed future Rwanda amongst the communities' inhabitants. This is happening along significantly political-ethnic and micro-geopolitical lines (Jackson 1999). The Rwandan government distribute considerably more hope to

communities like Kaganza through instruments such as the villagisation policy. Hope has become an important 'technology of governance' (Shearing and Kempa 2004), and has in the words of Courville and Piper been 'hijacked' (2004:39) by the current Tutsi elite government.

Kiefer sees hope as a psychological skill and trait but also something that communities share. According to Kiefer, one of the functions of a community is to ensure everyone has what they need to survive, which in addition to basic needs must provide meaning and hope (Kiefer 2007:180; see also Jackson 2011). When people lose hope they lose their humanity and it is the responsibility and task of people's communities to give hope back to them:

> "There are situations where many people within a human community seem to lose hope. These communities can often be recognised by a sense of anger, mistrust, and shame that is widely shared, and expressed in the inability of neighbours to work effectively together to make the life of the community pleasing and safe. When people lose hope, they seem to lose important skills we think of as basic for collective wellbeing".   (Kiefer 2007:180)

Kiefer writes of anomie and hopelessness. I do not wish to portray Mwiza as in a state of anomie or communal, generic hopelessness. It is not. However, by including Kiefer's description and explication of hopelessness I do wish to bring attention to the process of losing hope at an individual and communal level and what this signifies and implies in terms of community dynamics. Mwiza is not experiencing a severe social breakdown but it does epitomise a large number of Rwandan communities that are struggling to recreate meaning, hope and a sense of community in the aftermath of genocide and war and thus feel increasingly disenfranchised. This is not far removed from what Kiefer calls a hopeless society and Jahoda an exhausted community (1991, quoted in Gingrich 1997).

Development is necessarily future-oriented. Consequently, the communities' differential access to the post-genocide developmentalist state project affect their orientations in time and history. The villages' immediate histories are the catalyst for this divergence. More specifically each of their different 'critical events' (Das 1994) has substantively altered the socio-political conditions for life within the communities. In Kaganza, people derive prestigious social capital from their genocide-induced suffering and experiences. Kaganza's classification as vulnerable and deserving of external support has channelled a host of resources into the village and has given people significant hope for better lives, individually, communally and nationally. Their disadvantages (widowhood, genocide survivorhood, past exile) have empowered them to become "responsible citizens" advocated by the government and to become "agents of their own change" (Agaciro Development Fund 2012). People in Kaganza experienced the lack of land and family as regretful and often spoke with nostalgia of

their better access to property and family networks in exile Yet it was their lack of such support that gave them a second chance with Kaganza's construction to address such shortcomings.

As Kaganzans became ever more hopeful, many, albeit not all, Mwiza residents experienced the opposite. As disenfranchisement grew, so hope declined. People continue to depend on their land and their families for survival; as neither is presently sufficient, many people expressed a sense of insurmountable problems and few avenues for improvement or hope. In Mwiza, the infiltration war is hereby experienced as an event that fully consecrated a new national hierarchy from which they feel excluded. When people wanted to express such frustrations they immediately pointed to Kaganza, saying "it is not like there". In other words, they felt they were perceived as less deserving and thus less worthy of inclusion as citizens in the nation-state. The lack of female leaders, the poor status of widows in Mwiza and the high level of land conflicts and consequential breakdown of family relationships are of direct importance for children's lives. As many widows look after orphans the low status of this large group of women is likely to have significant influence on children's lives. Finally, literature from Rwanda, Uganda and elsewhere on the continent show how land conflicts and land grabbing affect orphans extensively (Rose 2005; Roys 1995). It will become clear throughout this thesis that hopes for the future, and people's share in these hopes – or the lack thereof – affect the communities' approaches to and discourses on orphan care. Such hopes, by implication, affect children's experiences of life within the community.

Chapter 2

Researching the Politics of Childhood Adversity

Methodological and Ethical Challenges

My knowledge of Rwandan children's lives is a result of ethnographic research undertaken in Kaganza and Mwiza from September 2010 to December 2011. I conducted participant observation with children, young people and their families as well as community members and key figures in children and their families' lives. I interviewed local authorities, religious leaders, NGO staff and community elders from relevant local and national organisations. In the northwest, I participated in two local projects. The first is the Child and Youth Project (CYP), run by a local business man, Joseph, for youth-headed households. The second project is an international religious charity that runs several centres for street children as well as orphanages. In Kigali, I also participated as a career mentor for eight mentees in a project run by AERG, the student body of FARG, for genocide orphans transitioning from third level education to employment. These youth became close friends and key informants on the experiences of genocide orphanhood. Hundreds of Rwandans have therefore contributed to this research, as have several European and American NGO staff.

Finding One Hill among Many

I was lucky to gain access to Kaganza shortly after I arrived in Rwanda. Through a contact in the NGO supporting HIV-infected women, I was introduced to the NGO's chairperson, Samira, Kaganza's village leader. Due to my interest in living in a rural village, she immediately invited me to live in Kaganza, suggesting this would be a good place to understand the lives of children living in difficult circumstances. As she explained, her village was one of many 'orphans and widows' (*imfubyi n'umupfukazi)*. I moved to Kaganza in early October and soon became enmeshed in an extensive network of fictive kin relations, reciprocal relations of exchange and close friendships with many of the village's children and young people. I had, however, not lived in the village for long when I realised the uniqueness of its foundation and dynamics. To fully appreciate the significance of this uniqueness, I had to include a more 'traditional' or ordinary village in the region. This proved much more difficult than my first easy access to and integration within Kaganza. The local authorities were reluctant to let me conduct research in the more rural villages, which they told me would not be

safe. This decision was undoubtedly politically motivated. In contrast to Kaganza, a model village, Mwiza remained a scar on the national pride, extremely poor and inhabited by disenfranchised and dissatisfied Hutu who remained critical of the government. After some negotiation, the local authorities finally agreed to let me visit the rural villages, but only in daylight and if I had a local escort with me. It took another while before I gained any point of contact. It was harder to get in touch with the NGOs that worked there and it took longer before they agreed to bring me to some of their beneficiaries. Thus, it was not until December that I first visited Mwiza.

In Kaganza, I spent the first couple of months in the guesthouse at the edge of the village until Samira felt that residents understood and respected my presence (so she could vouch for my safety). I then moved into an empty house in the middle of the village. To live with a family was inappropriate; no family had a spare room and would have to move their children into the parents' bedroom in order to allow room for me, which went against new government guidelines of parents and children not sharing a room. When it was considered that I could live with one of the village's many widows, sentiments of jealousy immediately arose and I decided in agreement with Samira that it would be better to live in my own house. Yet living alone is highly undesired by Rwandans who fear solitude and loneliness (due to its association with weakness – de Lame 2005:128) and my neighbours worried for me, living alone so far away from my family. They therefore sought to include me as far as possible in their households. We shared meals and visited each other, exchanged crops from our gardens and walked to places together. All my neighbours had children whom they frequently sent to visit me in the evenings, which was of great benefit to us all. As I had electricity, the children could do their homework after dark without their families having to spend their little income on expensive electricity and I had a lot of time with the children. These evenings were my greatest source of learning Kinyarwanda and becoming familiar and intimate with many of the village's children. At other times, I visited children in their homes. I joined them as they swept their houses, prepared dinner or simply stayed home to look after a sick relative or young siblings. The sharing of such tasks is a fundamental feature of children's friendships and, thus, spending time with children in this way helped me to consecrate meaningful and trustful relationships.

In Mwiza, the nature of my engagement differed because I could not live in the village and thus had no locally valid and meaningful role within village dynamics and structures. My participation in daily life thereby became more artificial and challenged my ability to shed my 'foreignness'. Initially, this had its obvious disadvantages. It was difficult to establish trust and to observe what life involved for people in their daily lives. To overcome this, I visited Mwiza once or twice most weeks

and during each visit always informed people when they could expect to see me again. As I could not visit everyone in one day, I either spent two days in the village or alternated each week who I visited. Some people were much more likely to be at home than others. It was rare to find at home children and young people who either attended school or were good at securing short term employment. I therefore came to know best the experience of the most disadvantaged children and young people, those who neither attended school, NGO training programs nor were successful in securing work. Once this became evident to me, I sought to overcome this inherent bias by increasing my visits to the village and seeking out as many members of a family as possible and visiting the same household at different times of the day and different days of the week. Each visit to Mwiza usually involved visiting two to three families, lasting for anything from thirty minutes to half the day, depending on people's commitments. Sometimes I met people in the street on their way to somewhere and I walked with them for as long as appropriate and possible. Similarly, after a visit, most participants would often walk me out and these 'walks' often took up as much time as the actual visit because people felt more at ease and therefore opened up to me in ways they did not in their own homes. A lot of time in Mwiza was therefore spent walking the meandering paths up and down the mountain with people from the village and a lot less sharing tasks and meals.

Introducing the Research

When introducing my research, despite my interest in the lives of orphans, I did not want to present my research in such terms. As a westerner, I risked being associated with the many NGOs working to support 'vulnerable children' in Rwanda. I did not want people to accept to participate in my research in the hope of gaining access to resources that I had no power over. I also did not want to cause any undue attention to children in situations that are known to be associated with great stigma. There were also epistemological reasons for not promoting my research as focusing on orphanhood, but rather on children's experiences in general. If I wanted to understand what orphanhood meant for children it was important for me to see how orphanhood surfaced impromptu in different social situations, such as when it might come up in conversations, when it would be used to explain something in a child's life, by the child him- or herself or by adults, and how its use as an explanation for children's experiences compared to other difficult situations. To understand the significance of orphanhood, I had to first of all understand what experiences children defined as difficult, and what constituted good childhoods. At the same time, I also did not want to deceive people and pretend to be researching something other than what I was. I therefore explained to adults

and children that I wanted to understand children's experiences in present-day Rwanda. Nonetheless, my research became interpreted in the exact terms I was trying to avoid. In the first weeks in Kaganza, parents came to my house with their children to 'present' them to me as orphans. Some parents hoped that I was opening a nursery for free while others thought I worked for an NGO. Mothers brought their young children and explained that they were orphans because their fathers had died or had left the household. A couple of widowed fathers did the same. Initial concerns about my status in the village proved unwarranted. Except for Elise, a 15-year old Hutu boy, none of the children came to 'present' themselves as orphans but instead enthusiastically told me about their houses, their family, and where they went to school and church. These initial experiences illuminated particular linguistic and social understandings of orphanhood and childhood adversity: adults seemed to associate me with an NGO, which meant being interested in orphans, and they were willing to present their biological children as such in the hope of accessing resources. Children, on the other hand, were less interested in me as an NGO worker and instead associated me with a resourceful person able to help them achieve one of their biggest ambitions, education. As I did not only spend time with orphans, I did not live up to the image of an orphan-focused NGO worker.

Sample

In villages with over 200 households it was not possible to include all children in the research. In Kaganza, I decided only to work with children who voluntarily came to my house or whom I met when visiting some of the children's families. Some children came often and those who did numbered around 20, yet I knew many more as other children also came occasionally I also spent time with some of the village's youth whom I met in the street or met through their younger siblings. My interaction with the young people happened primarily through visits to younger siblings frequenting my house, and when I joined them hanging out on street corners in the village. The young people whom I worked with numbered around ten but again I knew many more. In Mwiza, I worked with a more focused group due to my different relationship to the village. In total, I knew 18 children and young people well, aged 12-24, along with some of their family members. I occasionally met other children, young people and adults. In addition, I often talked to and spent time with the *nkundabana* enrolled in CYP. Through various contacts, I also became friendly with several families in town and villages similar to Mwiza, whom I visited whenever time and circumstances allowed. Celebrations such as baptisms and weddings also became regular events in my research and introduced me to a multiplicity of families in different circumstances and from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds.

Consent

Getting consent that is informed and meaningful can be challenging, especially when working with children (Cowell 2011; Gallagher et al 2010: Mayne et al 2016; Parsons et al 2016; Ruiz-Casares and Thompson 2016) and populations vulnerable from illiteracy, poverty or trauma (Foster et al 2013). I did not bring along written consent forms, as these are not always appropriate with populations with widespread illiteracy (Foster et al 2013), or written explanations of my research as this gave it an air of officialdom with which I did not want it to be associated. People had to feel that they participated completely voluntarily and should not feel pressured to do so by my research appearing as something official and potentially required by the local authorities. Instead, Francois gave a detailed introduction of my research to every villager we met and visited. The majority of people were happy to participate but a few did decline. Consent, however, needs to be an ongoing process and negotiation. In Mwiza, a foster mother initially declined to take part but allowed me to visit her foster daughter, 20-year old Evelyne, as Evelyne herself was very keen to participate and was instrumental in introducing me to all the other orphans I got to know in Mwiza. When well-into my research I had become very intimate with Evelyne, the foster mother invited me to church. I arrived with a big bag of cabbage from my garden to thank her for the invitation and after having spent eight hours at an outdoor mass in the burning sun, she said that we were now friends and she would like to be part of my research. An orphaned girl who had initially consented to take part appeared so uncomfortable during my first few visits that I instead focused my research on her brother who like Evelyne was a very keen participant. If only the sister was home when I came to visit, I engaged in the normal greetings and exchanges but did not stay and instead said I would return when her brother was home, with which she always seemed relieved.

Depending on their age, children may have difficulties understanding what consent means or they may not feel empowered to say no to participation (Mayne et al 2016). The question also arises of who needs to give consent in the case of children. As legal minors, parents' consent is important (ibid.:676). A girl in Kaganza, Marie, frequently asked me if I would come to visit her family. When I came to visit her, only she and a domestic helper, a girl of her own age, were at home. I had brought colouring pens and paper and the two girls drew whatever they wanted as we talked about the family and household. She explained that she had come to live with the elderly couple to help Marie's mother when her father had died. Marie was obviously proud to have me visit her and we had an enjoyable afternoon together. Her 'mother' then came home and the girls went into the kitchen hut to prepare dinner. Once my research assistant had ensured that the mother understood my presence, she told us

the story of why Marie was staying with them and seemed happy to do so. Yet when we left the house, the mother asked us not to come back to visit because she did not want Marie discovering her father's death. Marie had just told us of his death yet the 'mother' did not know that she held this information and did not want her finding out, therefore barring her participation in the research. In this case, I had to negotiate the generational politics of knowledge (Barnes 1979, quoted in Caplan 2003:7) and "strike a balance between respecting the rights of parents and protecting the interests of youngsters" (Stanley and Sieber 1991:3), by respecting their divergent, secret and concealed knowledge (Barber 2003; Bluebond-Langer 1978; Nordstrom 1997:80). Marie's was not an uncommon occurrence as several carers wanted to hide orphanhood from children. Usually it did not lead carers to exclude their children from the research; they simply asked that I did not share the 'secret' with the children. Yet as with Marie, children sometimes knew anyway and told me their story when I asked simple questions about who they lived with or who was in their family, common subjects for drawing. In such situations, I respected the carers' demand for secrecy by not asking children specific questions about their families unless they volunteered this information. In turn, I respected children's access to 'secret knowledge' by never discussing my conversations or drawings with the children's carers or anyone else. Bound by the prevailing silences (Cheney 2015:39), I approached such divergent knowledge through an understanding of silence "as a presence rather than an absence" (Rogers 1999:80, quoted in Cheney 2015:39), as 'meta-data' (Fujii 2010), by attending to the kinds of meanings they contained. Listening speaks (Barthes 1985, quoted in Nordstrom 1997:87) and by attending to such silences as contained in the facilitation of informed and meaningful consent, I turned potential data problems into data points (King 2009).

Conducting Safe Research in Post-Genocide Rwanda

Undertaking research in a post-conflict society that remains highly politicised and controlled by the government is challenging and involves ethical dilemmas and security concerns (Begley 2009; Jessee 2012; Thomson 2010). Researchers and research participants alike face the lack of freedom of speech, the intolerance of the government towards criticism of its approach and policies, everyday forms of violence and repression as well as a general sense of fear amongst the population towards the government and its associates (Begley 2009; Thomson 2009:2). It is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that participants are not put at an increased risk. Researchers working in Rwanda have experienced being followed or shadowed by government agents and have had to take considerable measures to ensure the safety of their research participants (ibid.). In light of this, I took

precautions to ensure the safety of anyone I met or spoke to. I never took notes during conversations. In the evenings, I wrote up notes from the day while it was still fresh in my mind but never used people's names or descriptors that would make them easily identifiable to others. These notes I password-secured and I always kept my computer locked in a safe place or on me when that was safer. I was also extremely cognisant of not discussing political aspects of my findings.

The paranoia of government intelligence experienced by other researchers and many Rwandans was dominant amongst many of the northwestern Hutu whom I met and knew. However, my own research elicited little political interest. I encountered no limitations to my research and within a month of arriving in Kigali received my research permission and a letter of access to any child-related institution in my proposed locality. Staff from the local and regional authorities, rather than trying to steer my research, wanted to receive updates so they could improve social projects in their area. This may of course have been a cover for wanting to keep control of me and I never discussed sensitive topics with them, yet their interest seemed genuine. The Sector Chief Executive provided me with documents on local populations, except for a 'list of people who behaved badly', and invited me to meetings to advise on projects they were currently planning or implementing, including assisting the area's many street children or helping out-of-school children to return to school. While it could jeopardise my trust with the local population to be seen to work too closely with the authorities, it would have been ethically wrong not to assist the authorities in projects that sought to alleviate some of the difficulties experienced by children and their families. I remained careful, however, in restricting my engagement with local authorities. At the same time, several researchers note that Rwandans have been grateful to get the opportunity to tell their opinions on politically sensitive topics (Thomsen; Begley 2009:5). My role in advising various authorities was often received positively by my informants. Many felt they could not have their concerns heard by the authorities and while they knew I could not speak for each of them or get them resources, many voiced hope that I could at least highlight some of the problems I found through my research.

When preparing for fieldwork I had hoped to become sufficiently conversant in Kinyarwanda that I could undertake research without a translator. Nonetheless, I quickly came to rely on a research assistant who also acted as interpreter. In the initial period of creating the necessary contacts and ties to undertake research, I relied on a Rwandan NGO staff member, François, a psychologist who had extensive experience in working with vulnerable children in the area. With his extensive network of contacts, acquaintances and friendships, he became an invaluable source of assistance. Required by the authorities to have an escort and cognisant of the potential risks to participants of engaging in the

research, it was to my advantage that I established a productive relationship with a research assistant, whom I had myself chosen and who understood the political implications of his own presence. I could thereby make the local authorities' 'safety measures' ethnographically and analytically productive. It soon became apparent that not only would parts of my research have been impossible without a local assistant, the preliminary findings and thus emerging questions took my research in unexpected directions for which I would have been ill-placed without an interpreter.

Political questions proved integral to the experience of childhood for many children and young people. I therefore soon faced the question of how to address such political questions in my work with children. I approached this topic extremely carefully. I joined children in their social studies class in school and read their textbooks in order to know what they learned about Rwandan history and politics. I participated in village meetings, took note of which children showed up (they were not expected to participate) and whose family members contributed to discussions. I never asked children about the genocide or the government, but several village events gave me the opportunity to explore such topics. Finally, children's personal experiences of political questions were indirectly approached through methods such as time lines (Appendix 2.6). In these exercises, children sometimes drew, wrote or described a particular memory of fleeing to Congo, hiding in the forest or losing a family member in a particular war or other such memories associated with Rwanda's history. Thus, without ever bringing up the topic of politics I gained many important insights into children's understanding of this topic. I made sure never to pursue these conversations if they took place in an environment that was not entirely safe (i.e. where no one else could listen in), or where my research assistant was not present and could ensure that children did not voice opinions, which could pose a risk. In Mwiza, François, several times interrupted a conversation he felt was getting unsafe, such as completely stopping a conversation when he saw two soldiers passing and had noticed a young guy he had not met before staying close to us. The girls we were visiting said he was a good friend and 'safe' but François was not assured and changed the topic of conversation. It was exactly for dealing with such situations that I was particularly grateful to have a research assistant.

Communicating Across Barriers

In anthropology, interpreters are commonly perceived as brokers through which information, knowledge and learning becomes screened and interpreted in ways that reduce the significance of what is learned because it is no longer 'raw' or unfiltered (Bradby 2002: Evans-Pritchard 1951). Translators are "co-creators" of meaning (Walton et al 2015). However, the benefits of using an

interpreter can be extensive if done appropriately and with sufficient reflection (Borchgrevink 2003), where the translator becomes a co-researcher (Walton et al 2015) – at least to some extent. It can, in such cases, provide a deeper insight into the specificities and dynamics of language and its relation to socio-cultural categories, terms, relationships and ideas. Yet using an interpreter in ethnographic research has to be part of a highly reflective methodology where the quality, accuracy and social implications of the interpreter and his/her interpretations have to be constantly monitored (Brady 2002; Invarsdotter et al 2012). In this regard, it is useful to distinguish between reliance and use of an interpreter. The unease of using interpreters in ethnographic research forced me to critically engage with the process of interpretation and translation and worked hard to learn Kinyarwanda. In Kigali, I had a private teacher whom I met with for hours daily for the first month and continued to meet for lessons when returning to Kigali throughout my research and I acquired a significant level of comprehension. While I could not hold complicated conversations without the assistance of François, I could normally follow a conversation quite closely and communicate with people in everyday situations. I could talk to children about their everyday lives and do simpler focused work with them, such as thematic drawing and worksheets. But for more detailed discussions with children and young people François was invaluable. Thus, while I used an interpreter, I did not uncritically rely on him.

The political underpinnings and implications of my data would not have fully emerged without François' presence. Rwanda has become a complicated and dynamic linguistic space where not only multilingualism, but diglossia, dominate the communicative landscape (Walton et al 2015), where language and political economy are intricately linked (cf. Gal 1989). Rwanda has three official languages, Kinyarwanda, which is spoken by all Rwandans, as well as English and French[38]. People's second language depends on their histories. People who lived in Rwanda during the genocide or in exile in Congo or Burundi are Francophone while the new elites who grew up in Uganda are Anglophone. These exile backgrounds and associated languages have become important in Rwanda's post-genocide social stratification. In Kaganza, social relationships often mapped onto exile experiences and networks and, thus, language preference was both context- and relationship-dependent. As linguistic codes have historically been used to keep outsiders at a distance (de Lame 2005:14), so language choice is to multilingual Rwandans a useful tool in negotiating complex social relationships and an important marker of status and personal history (Brady 2002). Within a single

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[38] The official second language changed from French to English in 2008.

day of my fieldwork I could therefore encounter a multitude of different languages and language uses[39]: Kinyarwanda, Kiswahili, Lingala, Luganda, Kirundi, French and English. Failing to respect and understand the implications of such code switching would have entirely prevented some conversations and significantly obscured others. Lingala and Swahili for example became useful tools when discussing sensitive political topics as these were considered 'safer' languages because fewer people understood them.

To provide an example, 6-year old Widu frequently visited me at my house where we played with dolls or coloured. Reflecting her marginal status amongst children in Kaganza, unlike other children, Widu preferred to come to my house when there were no other children. Upon her request, I started to visit her home where I brought along François to ensure her family understood my research. When there was a lull in the conversation and I was distracted by Widu who had just excitedly come through the door, François initiated a conversation of his own with Widu's father about his time before coming to Kaganza. From this conversation it emerged that the two men had been in Congo at the same time and both spoke Lingala and Kiswahili. For the rest of the conversation, they switched to Lingala, upon which Widu's father became more at ease and spoke to François at length of his time working as a soldier in Congo and the process of re-integration into Rwanda, something which he had never discussed in Kinyarwanda. From then on an intimacy had been established between the father and François, and me by extension, and several conversations followed later in Lingala which also explored political topics that the father otherwise did not discuss. This switch to a different language greatly benefitted not just the initial meeting and thus consent to participate but what I later learned of his perceptions of life in the village, which in turn helped me to understand Widu's marginal position. The accumulation of these disparate political, but silenced, views over time offered a crucial contextualisation of the politicisation of orphanhood.

Talking Ethnicity

The use of only one interpreter in a politically mixed population where political ethnicity has been the cause and object of violence is not without its complications. François is from the northwest but spent considerable time in Congo, studying or in exile from war and conflict. Some Tutsi may have been uncomfortable opening up to a Hutu. Indeed, some of my closest informants confided at

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[39] That is, code switching between the different languages (Brady 2002:847; Rubel and Rosman 2003).

the end of my research that they had been somewhat uncomfortable at the beginning with François's Hutu identity but had soon realised that it was unproblematic. Concerns that François' status as a northwestern Hutu might negatively influence my status within Kaganza's predominantly Tutsi population were unwarranted. The process of being accepted locally and learning about the role and nature of ethnicity, political and cultural, was largely attributable to his presence. Indeed, many people in Kaganza came to see him as 'one of ours' or as '*umuzungu*' (western) because of his lifestyle choices and opinions. Again reflecting the 'logic of contagion' (Fujii 2009), people often commented that François and I had changed 'identities': I had become Rwandan and he had become *umuzungu*, which in itself provided important insights into local perceptions of how identities are formed. Finally, many comments such as describing Hutu as on the side of the killers or speaking negatively of Hutu more generally, suggest that people may not necessarily have altered what they expressed due to the presence of a Hutu.

I had made it a point of principle that I would not enquire about people's past experiences or ethnic categories. I did not want to risk making people uncomfortable or bringing up difficult memories. As it turned out, people often volunteered such information, suggesting that the post-genocide political-ethnic constructs was a hugely important marker of status and social relationships. Nonetheless, broader questions of ethnicity were difficult to discuss due to government legislation (and harsh punishments). In a legislative context where the terms Hutu, Tutsi and Twa are difficult and dangerous to use, people have found their own ways around it. In her thesis on popular music and culture in Kigali, Grant (2014) describes a number of terms used for Hutu and Tutsi as well as for people's exiled backgrounds. Different terms were used in northwestern Rwanda, often inconsistently. With François' assistance, it became easier to navigate through these terms. For example, when someone said that they were "not on the side of the killers", he had to enquire whether they situated that comment within the genocide or the later insurgency war, both of which were often simply referred to as 'the war' (*intambara*[40]). Due to the tension and hurt inherent in these conversations, François's delicate navigation through such conversations made them significantly more ethical and socio-culturally appropriate than I could have mastered myself, even with a proficient use of Kinyarwanda. His comments and opinions after conversations with people often also contributed insights into the influence of ethnicity on the particular issues I was exploring. Cognisant

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[40] For a full discussion of terms normally used to refer to genocide and war, see Fujii (2009) and Hilker (2007).

of the potential difficulties of his and the villagers' different histories, François and I spent a lot of time discussing how such histories might influence my research. Being from the local area, François had a detailed understanding of local socio-political dynamics and appropriateness of conversation and as such also acted as a key informant (Walton et al 2015:50).

Participant Observation and 'Child-Friendly' Research

Seeing children as important contributors to culture and family dynamics (James, Jenks and Prout 1998) requires a particular methodological approach. It no longer suffices to study children's play, although these are important, but requires studying children within the full variety of their daily interactions, including but not limited to the home, family contexts, school, play spaces and other places where children like to hang out (Barker and Weller 2003; Olwig and Gulløv 2003:10). In particular approaching the life-worlds of orphans, some of whom have had experiences of war, genocide, forced migration, prostitution and sexual abuse, presents particular methodogical and ethical challenges that requires a particularly adept research design with careful attention to emotive issues and children's specific psychological and social needs (Montgomery 2007). This consideration starts right from the point of introducing research to children and their families and continues through informed consent to the methodology and analysis.

Ethnography, and its grounding in participant observation, gives the opportunity to include different perspectives and allows for exploring the multiplicity of contexts, relationships, interactions and knowledge that shape children's everyday lives and allows for a thorough consideration of the ethical issues that pertain to the variety of children's experiences and contexts (Greigg and Taylor 1999:83-88), and facilitates the exposition of potential victimcy strategies as identified by Utas (2004:210) and widely found in this research. Careful ethnography facilitates the development of an ethically appropriate and beneficial relationship between the researcher, children and their families. Ethnography is based on observing and participating in everyday situations and relationships, thereby prioritising learning through culture as it is expressed and enacted rather than as it is described and explained. This lessens the reliance on 'talk', which does not always present the best means of accessing people's inner worlds (Das 1997, Nordstrom 1997: Wikan 1990). Due to unequal power relations, communication through verbal dialogue can be difficult with children who may struggle with formal question/answer interactions with unfamiliar adults, or who may feel that there is a right or a wrong answer (Harkness and Super 2008; Punch 2002:325-329; Robson 2001:136-7). Child-focused researchers therefore normally emphasise the need to downplay talk-focused methods in

favour of activity-based ones (Punch 2002:325). Some child-focused researchers have debated whether topics should be pursued if it makes children cry. Albeit recognising the potential of tears as therapeutic or a form of voice, the emphasis has been on the need for methods that lessen the risk of tears (Robson 2001:137). One way to do so is by approaching topics in the third person, such as through role plays or theatre performances. Ethnography, starting from the basis of observation, allows for locally appropriate modes of communication for different contexts. Yet ethnography also lends itself well to 'listening', not merely as an auditory act but as creating and recreating meaning (Nordstrom 1997:80). In particular with the rise of an anthropology of experience, with its focus on 'feeling-thoughts' (Wikan 1990:xxiv), ethnography holds within it the capacity to "bear witness through empathetic listening" (Cheney 2015:40), what Parsons terms "to sit with affect" (2005:77, quoted in Cheney 2015:40). Part of such 'empathetic listening' is being attuned to the kinds of experiences that people seek to remember or to forget, and in turn how they transmit this to children. Observation of intimate conversations in people's homes, at communal events and social interactions allows for such attuning. Thus, the ethnographic approach can help to elicit the topographies of remembering and forgetting, talk and silence, by attending to the tensions between "overt talk and covert emotion" in research interactions (Lillrank 2002:112).

As I moved into Kaganza, I was faced with the question of what to do with fifty or more children hovering around me, waiting for me to suggest something we could do together. This was obviously a good start; I would not have any problems finding children willing to participate in my research. But how to initiate any kind of meaningful relationship, surrounded by so many children every day? How was I going to get a sense of their everyday life without my presence so obviously determining our interaction? I soon realised that it was the children's end-of-year school holidays; they were bored and looking for entertainment. I tried to fit in with this desire, hoping that once the school started again children would return to their normal routine and I could enter a different phase where my presence had less influence. In the meantime, I decided to use the holiday designing a 'child-friendly' and 'child-led' research methodology. I wanted to explore with children how they wanted to engage with me, what they wanted to do, what topics were of interest to them and what kinds of relationships they wanted with me. My house providing a 'children's place' (Olwig and Gulløv 2003) with freedom from all-too-curious and demanding adults, lots of space, creative aids and entertaining toys familiar to the children, I decided to let them guide me on how we could work together. Children's questions, their suggestions for activities, the dynamics of who tried to take charge of the group, of who disciplined each other, and who fought or stuck together provided me

with important insights into what children defined as a "good childhood". This included ideas of friendship, morality, kinship (siblings), and appropriate ways for children to spend their time. Children's favoured activities could then be developed into effective "playful" methods adaptable to a variety of situations and topics – used as a means of communication as much as sources of data in and of themselves (Atkinson 2006). When the schools started back in January it was clear that our accidental 'afterschool club' had facilitated a relatively child-led, participatory design process of a 'child-friendly' methodology (see Punch 2002).

Performing Childhood

When theatre performances emerged as such a loved activity, I worked with the children to develop this into a productive method. Henderson (2006) beneficially used theatre performances in her work with orphans in South Africa. In particular, I used theatre to explore children's understandings of issues that emerged as important through dominant media such as TV, radio, newspapers and billboard campaigns. I also used this method to understand what children perceived as important in their lives. I often asked the children to do a play on whatever they wanted themselves. These plays often focused on experiences that children had with different authorities, including church pastors, parents, the police and sugarparents and often had strong moral undertones, condemning alcoholic fathers for squandering money on alcohol, relying on the police as upholders of children's rights, the importance of developing skills in staying strong in the face of the lure of sugarparents amongst others. Thus, theatre became an integral part of learning about children's views on important topics such as family life, parenthood and orphanhood amongst others. Finally, the discussions evolving amongst children in planning the play often illuminated as much about children's experiences, understandings and peer dynamics as did the plays themselves.

Drawing, Creating and Learning

In addition to theatre, the method I relied most upon was different drawing sessions that over time developed into more structured drawing, story writing and work/activity sheet sessions. While I did not expect to rely on the drawings as such, they provided a good starting point for conversations with children (Punch 2002:331). Such leisurely form of research could also easily incorporate the extra children who always showed up at my house and wanted to participate. These sessions, whether held in small or big groups at my house or one-on-one sessions in children's homes, developed over

time as children grew bored of simple drawings and wanted bigger challenges. Older children quickly tired of drawing and asked for 'school assignments'. I had been wary of presenting myself in a light that could mistake me for a teacher, due to its association with right and wrong answers. It did not take long for children to understand this and I soon realised that their requests for school assignments were not because they associated me with a teacher but because many of the children loved anything to do with school due to its association with the opportunity to become "developed" and "someone important" (Cheney 2007; Meinert 2009). On the children's request I therefore tried to come up with 'assignments', often termed activity/worksheets (Robson 2001:139) that related to my research, were interesting and could challenge children of different ages. Over time, these assignments became increasingly complicated as boys and girls of all ages became familiar with the different types of assignments and as they progressed through the school year (Appendices 2.1-2.8). Throughout my research, children however also enjoyed free drawings or thematic drawings where I simply gave them a theme they could then draw, such as my family, feelings, good/bad experience, most important experience, future career, amongst others (Appendix 2.9).

In order to ensure that the children were comfortable with the assignments, I put them all in a folder, which I gave to children when they wanted to do an 'assignment'. I explained each of the assignments to them and then let them choose which one they wanted to do. This meant that I did not have much control over which activity sheets children filled in, and therefore the knowledge produced, yet this was less of a priority compared to the children's comfort in doing them. Children's choices in themselves illuminated their experiences. Ten-year old Husina lost both her parents to AIDS and most of her extended family during the genocide. At the beginning of my research she had not explicitly been told about her orphanhood. Yet as my research progressed and Husina matured, she slowly began to realise the nature of her family situation. When one day we were sitting on my lawn trying to plan a theatre play about the experience of orphanhood, the eldest girl present suggested doing two plays, one in which non-orphans depicted their lives and one in which orphans depicted theirs, pointing to Husina as an example of who could lead the orphan play. Husina was hurt by this suggestion, although it is more than likely that the eldest girl chose her because of her well-known skills in acting and directing a play. Husina was visibly upset for the rest of the afternoon and was nowhere to be seen later when I looked for her to apologise for what had happened. The next day she came to visit me again as if nothing had ever happened. Then, a while later, when she went through the assignments, she suddenly exclaimed in an exasperated voice that she was sick of focusing on

"sadness" and only wanted to do something fun. I showed her assignments on "good dreams" and "good memories" which she happily set about completing.

Many of the children made it their ambition to complete all the assignments in the folder before my research ended and spent many of their school holidays or days off from school doing one assignment after the other. Some children did not like particular kinds of assignments, such as those that required extensive writing or focused on particular topics, such as 'sad things' or scary dreams, but most children enjoyed most of the assignments. Particularly popular were exercises where I had made a drawing that I then asked the children to describe (e.g. Appendix 2.1). I for example drew a picture of a happy and a sad child next to each other and asked children to describe why one was happy and the other sad – through writing, conversation, or a counter-drawing. Some of the younger children, and children who were either embarrassed about their handwriting or their spelling preferred other assignments, namely ones where I gave them a general topic that they could then draw, such as a house in which to draw a good/bad family, or different life events. These exercises were aimed at learning about children's perceptions of family life, common problems and experiences encountered by children. Exercises such as 'why is this child sad' or 'happy' were intended in an indirect way to see whether and how orphanhood or other adverse situations might figure in children's reasoning about their lives. The exercises were also employed in the hope that they would provide some kind of understanding of children's emotions without explicitly having to discuss or verbalise these with children who may not have been comfortable doing so.

Problem and Feeling Trees

One assignment that some children loved but other children hated was the 'feeling tree', designed in an attempt to understand children's emotional worlds. In a bigger group of children, we discussed which feelings children could have and made a feeling tree for each of these feelings. A feeling was written on the trunk of the tree, on the tree's roots, children were asked to write the causes of such feelings and on its branches how the feelings manifested themselves. Each of these trees became an assignment and if the children wanted to fill in a feeling tree, they could choose which feeling they wanted. Some found this exercise too difficult, while some of the girls loved it as they could draw beautiful and colourful flowers on the branches. Others filled them in because they didn't mind 'difficult' exercises. I also used a 'problem tree' exercise where children were asked to write a problem they had experienced or were currently experiencing on the trunk and like the feeling tree,

write the causes on the roots and consequences on the branches. This assignment seemed a bit easier to children and was filled in by a greater number.

Interviews and Focus Groups

I made a few attempts at discussing difficult life situations and experiences with some of the children whom I knew particularly well and knew were reasonably comfortable conversing with me. Yet these conversations were difficult for children, often made them cry and were generally difficult to carry out as I seldom had sufficient privacy with a child[41]. In respect of children's need for confidentiality (Barker and Weller 2003:213-214), I therefore did not pursue these conversations except for with 12-year old Divine and some of the older youth who wanted them. A more appropriate method was small focus groups. These always ended up being rather chaotic and unfocused, due to the constant coming and going of children and the unpredictability of who did and did not show up. Sometimes the village setting simply provided too many children or too great an inconsistency of who showed up for such organised activities. As the children and young people knew I was always there, they sometimes chose to stay away from a focus group, preferring to visit me when I was alone, or they suddenly showed up unexpectedly while a focus group was taking place. Unless their presence was inappropriate for the other participants, I never turned them away. Such sessions were nonetheless helpful in getting a sense of different topics, such as 'what concerns young people today', 'common memories that children have', definitions of a good and bad child, parent, teacher, friend and so on. Due to the importance for children and young people of 'exchanging ideas' and 'dialogue', many of them really appreciated these at times chaotic sessions and often asked for more of them.

Different Children, Different Methods

Due to the popularity of the methods I developed with children in Kaganza, I wanted to use these with Mwiza children. Yet whenever I used the much-loved assignments, they simply suggested that they could do them after I left and have them ready for me upon my next visit. Few worksheets were returned to me; excuses were made that they had been stolen, were left at a family member's house that was currently locked or that there were no pens with which to do the work. I sensed a deep discomfort in and avoidance of the exercises and stopped pursuing this method. With a sarcastic,

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[41] For the importance of privacy refer to Morrow and Richards (1996) and Melton (1992).

uneasy, or embarrassed laugh, they turned down drawing-based methods without even pretending to want to do them. Due to the dispersal of the children and youths' homes along the mountainside, coming together as a group for focus groups or theatrical performances were not an option.

General conversations were difficult to move beyond the weather or the price of potatoes. Dusabimana eventually became one of my closest informants here, but for many weeks, my strongest memory was of us sitting behind their grandparents' house, perched on the edge of the building, in prolonged silences interspersed with strenuous attempts at conversation. I tried to talk to her about the topics favoured by the young teenagers in Kaganza: school, radio programs, news of pop stars, boys, and plans for the future. Each of the topics led to short yes and no answers, and, again, silence. School yielded the longest conversation; Dusabimana and her sister left after a couple of years of primary school, but Dusabimana spoke of wanting to return if she gathered enough resources to do so. When I asked why she and her sister left school, I heard her grandfather shout an answer from the other side of the house: they were too lazy to study. Dusabimana laughed nervously, looked down, and another conversation fell dead.

Barker and Weller rightly emphasise that child-centred research is often an ideal, rather than reality (2003:222-223), while Punch suggests that research techniques often thought suitable for children can be problematic (2002:322). On Punch's advice, we need to critically reflect on the use of child-centred methods due to children's different social locations (2002:323). Having failed with my "child-friendly" methods in Mwiza, I decided to return to the basics of participant observation, of simply trying to be with the youth. This was difficult when I was not allowed to live in the village and could only visit in daylight. I started to visit Mwiza more often and spent much more time simply being visible in the streets, going for walks with the few contacts I had established. At the time, I accepted the only position I could seem to acquire, that of the prestigious *umuzungu* friend with whom people were proud to be seen but uncomfortable to speak with intimately. Slowly, participant observation became easier. I was invited to a wedding and a dowry-giving ceremony, to join families for mass and to share a drink at the bar. I observed families as they cooked, shared meals with them, listened to gossip, and observed family arguments and local meetings. Nonetheless, while I could participate in rituals, structured performances and tasks of everyday life, and while the children and young people were happy for me to participate in their lives in this way, conversations remained difficult, broken and slow. If family members were nearby when I spoke to children, they came to join the conversation and often took over. Children and young people deferred to them. If no family members were nearby, children and young people seemed simultaneously uncomfortable and proud.

Over time, the external nature of my role in people's lives in Mwiza became an advantage. The predictable regularity of my presence proved my commitment and continuous interest in people's lives but kept me at an advantageous distance from difficult local relationships experienced by my participants.

Various "crises" suddenly made several members of those families open up to me. One afternoon I came to visit Isabelle and her younger sister. The two sisters, their grandfather Mukantagara, and their aunt were all visibly upset. That day the girls' house had been broken into while they were out labouring in the field. When they came home, everything was gone: cooking pots and utensils, benches, and the few other small items they owned. They had nothing left but a few items of clothing. With no furniture (many poor households only have a couple of benches), we congregated in the courtyard, the little patch of hardened mud that lies between the sisters' house and Mukantagara's little hut. The aunt brought over a bench and the grandfather pulled out the only two small chairs he owned. For a while we simply sat looking, every attempt at conversation quietly fading as the girls were too upset and Mukantagara too saddened to speak. Yet suddenly Muktangara perked up, his sadness turned to anger and regret that Rwandans could no longer be trusted. The girls remained quiet and visibly uncomfortable. I felt my visit made things worse, so I suggested we go for a walk so that, at least, if they did not want to spend time with me they could return home and I could continue to other visits in the village. Not long after saying goodbye to the grandfather, Isabelle perked up like Mukantagara had minutes earlier and the words streamed out like I had never heard before. She had not wanted to speak, she said, because she knew exactly who had stolen their things—her father's family who all lived nearby—and did not want to say so in front of her grandfather as he refused to believe her. We walked for over half an hour and the anger towards her family flowed for every minute of the walk; the family's unwillingness to help them with food and materials, the family's obvious attempts to harass and exclude the girls, the sense of being left entirely to their own devices with no familial support, their sense of abandonment when the infiltration war killed their father and their mother left to remarry and when their older brother married a girl who stigmatised them. Isabelle's tone, the stream of words and outpouring of emotions was remarkably controlled and contained. There was energy in her voice, but no tears or sense of emotional disquiet. Isabelle was talking and letting me into her world.

Each time I saw her after that we uncovered more aspects of each of the glimpsed memories; she returned to her mother's leaving, her father's murder, the ambiguity of her grandfather's place in their life as a protector and carer but also as the patron of those maltreating them. When one day I

passed her house and she wasn't home, she saw me in the street and excitedly ran up to me, beaming with hope when telling me that she and her sister had been lent a small field by a neighbour so they could grow more food for only a small token rent. The intense feeling on my part of near-glimpses of conversations that died before I caught them was gone; I had become a friend who was worth involving in news and events of any nature. Through this and similar crises I learned that children and youths' difficulties in relating to me, or me to them, were grounded in tense and problematic family relationships that had been difficult for them to approach. Because their families were always nearby and I had wanted to "protect" them in an attempt to be as "child-friendly" as possible, I had not approached difficult emotional issues to do with their families and therefore had not found a way into their worlds. Yet, like Isabelle's theft, other crises showed children and young people were willing to discuss these tensions openly.

Kinship Diagrams

With the new revelations, I decided to initiate more adult conversations with children and youth in Mwiza on two general topics that were of concern to many adults in Kaganza: religious conversion and a general sense of crisis in "the Rwandan family." These two domains expressed many Rwandans' existential insecurities brought on by post-conflict tensions in sociality. They therefore seemed apt to build on Isabelle's sudden welcome of me into her world. Focusing on these topics became the turning point and turned out to be but different expressions of one particular suffering experienced by children and youth: an ostracism of orphans so intense that children without parents felt that they were left without family at all, despite often having large networks of biological kin that went far beyond those of Kaganza children and youth. Kinship diagrams had not worked well in Kaganza. Many adult family members became suspicious and uncomfortable when I enquired about their family history, even though they often volunteered such information when I didn't ask. Most children and youth felt they were too young for such a task, and it made them feel unconfident.

It was thus to my surprise that this method worked so well with most of the children, youth, and their families in Mwiza. Not only were they able to describe complicated family relations and knew the situations of distant relatives, but during the production of the kinship diagrams children would also describe their personal relationships to many of their family members and give important insights into their experiences as orphans or as children in difficult situations. The exercise in many cases ended up as a form of life story and thus opened up a space for conversations about people's experiences of flight and war in ways that were controlled by the person him or herself (Ochs and

Capps 1996; Peacock and Holland 1993). What these invitations to participate more intimately in the children and young people's lives showed was remarkable: they were not only reluctant to participate in "child-friendly" methods, but were directly asking to be researched or understood as fully participating (but denied) persons in relationships and situations that are commonly defined as "adult" in Rwandan culture and sociality. I had imposed my own somewhat patronising assumptions about their need for child-related protection and 'friendliness' (Punch 2002:330), but I soon realised that children and youth were asking me to participate in their lives in a very particular way: not to approach them as children but by bearing witness to and sharing their pain of conflict and tension within their family by 'listening well'. In contrast, children and young people in Kaganza had actively distanced themselves from notions of suffering, with which they could not identify, and from notions of adulthood, a generational category for which they felt too young and inexperienced.

Ethical Research

"Testimony is a ritual of both healing and condemnation of injustice – the concept of testimony contains both connotations of something subjective and private and something objective, judicial and political."   (Suarez-Orozco 1992:367, quoted in Begley 2009:6)

Research with children in adverse situations and in a context of continuous political tension poses many ethical questions and requires some justification. I have therefore spent a great deal of time explaining how I sought to make this research as ethically safe as possible. When risks are appropriately addressed, gaining knowledge of children's lives in difficult political, economic and social contexts is an important endeavour (Thompson 1991). In the words of several young people, it is important that the world knows about their hardships if they are to have any hope that their situation is to change. Informing policymakers and those in a position to facilitate change is important yet it also raises questions as to the appropriateness of 'action' or politically engaged anthropology. Is it appropriate as a foreign researcher to seek to influence the context studied? There has been a lot of debate in anthropology on this topic and still little consent. Some scholars are firm believers in the contribution of anthropological research to social and political change, while others feel strongly against it (Burr 2002:2; Caplan 2003:16; Yamba 2005). In my own research experience, I would have found it unethical not to seek to help the Mwiza children and young people inform the outside world of their hardships. I would also have found it unethical not to try to assist the local authorities in their goal to alleviate some of the hardships of the people they sought to help. At the same time, I acknowledge that this constitutes taking the side of the 'vulnerable' or the marginalised, which goes

against the principle of neutrality and objectivity in research. Yet by working with villagers as well as various political figures and officials, I believe I sought as far as possible to make my research objective as well as balancing the risks and benefits.

Chapter 3

(In)Complete Childhood

Parents, Respect and Value

"I write to my mother to tell her I love her very much. Maja, I am telling you it has been a long time without meeting my father. He is sick in his liver. Me and my brothers, we have been a long time without him, where we have only talked by phone. Maja I ask you one thing, notebooks, because Monday we will start school. I will ask my grandmother for the pens, they are a 100 Frw. It is a long time since my father bought shoes and clothes for my brothers. They wear only bodaboda (cheap plastic sandals). They have some from you and when our grandmother finds some money, she tries to buy them [my brothers] shoes, clothes and food. Then we feel well."

"I write a letter to the person who loves me very much, who helps me with everything, and helps my brothers. I ask you for clothes for me and my brothers. If you will give us clothes, God will help you and my brothers will thank you. Mammy, when you will give me a notebook, I will thank you very much."

Introduction

12-year old Divine from Kaganza wrote the above letters to her mother as one of the many assignments she loved to complete. Divine's memory of her mother was intrinsically tied to her material expectations and disappointments with life. The memory of her mother and her felt poverty came to constantly reinforce each other. These unfulfilled expectations often led to a feeling of being 'different' from other children and made Divine feel 'incomplete'. Divine's grandmother confided that she had had to remove all photos of Divine's mother whenever Divine came to visit during school holidays; the photos made Divine remember her mother and brought her to tears, and they reminded her of all the things she now missed in life, most especially shoes and notebooks. Whenever Divine felt less well-dressed or equipped than her peers, she missed her mother and thought back to a former life; whenever she missed her mother she started to feel less well-dressed and equipped than her peers. When I conducted a life story interview with her, she told me of her mother's death six years previously, about attending the funeral and crying without understanding what was happening. Divine explained that she often thinks about her mother in heaven but mostly about when her mother gave them all the food, they needed because she had a shop. Divine confided how she worries that her new

parents (her paternal uncle and his wife) might stop her from going to school and how they don't take proper care of her. Her new parents, she said, don't "complete" her (*kutuzura*) like her mother had.

Kutuzura is the negative of *kuzura* (to complete) and in its literal sense means "to not be full of or complete" (e.g. the building of a house may be incomplete). When used to describe people's experiences, it normally means a misunderstanding between people – '*ntitwuzura*': "we don't complete each other". Divine felt stigmatised in her new household where she did not feel she was treated like her cousins, making her constantly 'nostalgic' for her mother. Divine's new household was by no local standards poor, both her new parents working as teachers, yet Divine constantly felt poor and did so due to her orphanhood. At the end of the life story, Divine again returned to her clothes and explained that when she sees other children better dressed than her she becomes unhappy and wants to be like them. Constantly, she was back and forth, between life with her mother and life now, between life with sufficient materials (*ibintu*) and love (*urukundo*) and a life within significantly restraining limits (Jackson 2011). We must therefore attend in more detail to the 'incompletions' and 'misunderstanding' that leave Divine perpetually nostalgic.

One of the central debates on orphanhood has concerned the structural implications - 'vulnerabilities' and risk factors – of parental death. One aspect of this debate has been whether it is the fact of orphan status or poverty that is the primary underlying cause of these consequences (Abebe 2009; Ainsworth and Filmer 2002; Case et al 2004; Foster et al 1997; Oleke et al 2007). Abebe observes: "the map of contemporary orphanhood overlaps with the contours of poverty" (2009:70). Some scholars suggest that poor children's lives may be as difficult as those of orphans (Foster et al 1997). This is the reasoning behind expanding the term orphan to orphans and vulnerable children. Poverty, not orphanhood, is the primary 'risk factor' in children's lives. It seems unlikely, however, that orphanhood can be reduced to the effects of poverty, a view that ignores more experiential and existential aspects of orphanhood. Henderson suggests that, "the condition of orphanhood in an African context embraces existential dimensions, and has more to do with destitution, alienation and a lack of belongingness" (2006:307). Similarly, according to Veale et al, Rwandan children operate with conceptions of orphanhood that are based on the level of adult care, economic and psychosocial support received by the children. This is a much more general perception than the technical definition relied upon by NGOs of a child under the age of 18 who has lost to death or absence at least one parent. Children living in situations where their parents offered them little in terms of such support considered themselves orphans, their orphanhood thus grounded in self-defined vulnerability rather than parental death (Veale et al 2001:xii). These observations suggest that the quality of parental

presence is as important as the fact of parental absence and that poverty plays a role herein. Yet despite the centrality of poverty to the orphan debate, there is little discussion on how poverty and orphanhood intertwine in children's experiences. Similarly, there is little debate on the specificities of the parental role in fulfilling children's lives and ensuring their wellbeing. Through a series of children's worksheets analysed here I seek to address this gap by exploring the relationship between poverty and parental care.

The focus of this chapter is thus children's existential concerns as they revolve around parents, family and kin in the context of children's judgements of their life quality. What emerges is that poverty is a factor in orphanhood insofar as it inhibits children's 'completion', their fulfilment as children. Poverty challenges orphans, as it does other children, because it interferes with the quality of parenting. To be fulfilled, or completed, as a child is to have good behaviour (*umuco mwiza*) and integrity and respect (*agaciro*). It is parents' responsibility to provide this moral support and education but poverty challenges parents' ability to do so. Yet poverty challenges orphans *more so than other children*, because real parental love seems intrinsically related to biology but has an important material expression. Poverty experienced in a new home following parental death often becomes interpreted as hate and a sign that a child's foster parents are less committed to the child's care and wellbeing than their parents had been. The result then is that children feel an existential insecurity that sets them apart from other children, they feel inherently and existentially 'incomplete' and 'lacking' (Berckmoes and White 2014). Secondly, the biological foundation of parental love leaves children 'perennially' nostalgic for their parents and therefore existentially incomplete. In other words, being poor seems to heighten children's sense of being orphans but orphanhood also seems to 'heighten children's sense of being poor' (Hart 2009:19).

Parentage and Structural Incompletion

Central to the parent-child relationship is the mutual (structural) completion of one another's identities. The use of tektonyms whereby adults become known by the name of their eldest child (e.g. the mother of Jacques becomes Mama Jacques), suggests that adulthood is only fully achieved through parenthood. Children's status similarly depends on the availability of their parents. Rwanda is a patrilineal and patriarchal society in which children's status and identity are determined by their father. Although – or perhaps *because* – many Rwandans do not use family names (Ntampaka1997:6), a child is often asked to provide his or her father's name and geographical origin. This is information that children and youth are so used to giving that they include it on any kind of formal or semi-formal

documents such as school assignments. Children who cannot give the names or occupations of both parents immediately face interrogation, as I observed in a social studies class in Primary 1 on family composition. In the textbook, a family is introduced as Mr and Mrs Semana and their children. The book gives suggestions for activities, such as providing siblings' names and birth order or drawing a picture of one's parents. Instead, the teacher decided to get all the children, one at a time, to stand up and tell the class the name of their father. A girl gave her mother's name instead, prompting the teacher to interrogate why. Suddenly shy, the girl explained that she has no father and therefore gave her mother's name. The teacher complimented her for this ("this is very good") and repeated the message to the class. Even shyer, the girl hid her head in her arms until the teacher asked her to repeat her mother's name. As in most classes and schools in the country, there was a significant number of children who also lacked a father but, unlike the girl, had not developed similar strategies for avoiding such direct parentage questions. When they consequently muttered something incomprehensible, the teacher instructed them to immediately say whether their parent had died. Despite the high number of children who lacked a father, it was visible from the class that it presented challenges for children in how they introduced their family.

Even more than in encounters with official institutions or introductory conversations with adults, interactions with peers immediately create in children a sense of being 'incomplete' compared to others if they lack a parent. For Juliette, this was the only aspect of not having a father that really bothered her. Juliette usually insisted that she was not an orphan and that the lack of her father made very little difference to the quality of her family's life. They had been just as poor when he was still around. She insisted that her mother did everything she could to give Juliette and her brother a decent life. Yet there was one situation in which the lack of a father upset her. In school, children sometimes 'shouted' at her for not having a father. This is a complaint that nearly all orphans voiced with considerable sadness and regret, even if they did not think of themselves as orphans. In a worksheet on 'my life story', Jean writes:

> *"I am not happy, I am angry, because someone shouted at me about my parents but my parents*
> *are already dead. My friends from school call me a dog because I refused to steal food from*
> *my family to give to them."*

This was also the strongest memory for adults who had lost a parent early in life. Even though, like Juliette, a child may be esteemed and valued amongst peers, he or she risks becoming exposed in social encounters with peers due to the lack of a parent. Such teasing suggests that the fact of a structural gap in a child's immediate kin network instantly differentiates a child. Juliette did not

complain of being teased for being poor or for living in a shabby house but rather for the lack of her father even though her father's presence would have made very little difference to her family. Absent parents means missing part of one's status, an incomplete social identity, and thus the lack of (proxy) protection in social encounters.

Happy and Sad Children and the Nostalgia for Parents

The 'proxy' protection of parents involves more than the structural completion of one's official status as child of a particular mother and father. The 'proxy' protection is also a protection against underlying existential insecurities that arise in children when they lack a parent through death or social/physical absence. The first worksheet I conducted with children in Kaganza was a sheet with two drawings, a happy and a sad child (Appendix 2.1). Underneath each drawing, the child is asked to describe why one child is sad and the other happy. The majority of responses revolved around the availability of parents in a child's life: happy children have parents, sad children do not.

Bosco:

"This child has both his parents, and they are rich, and they give him all things he needs. In brief, he has a good life. / This child does not have parents, he is an orphan. He has no one who can help him, he has always a bad life since his parents died. In brief, he has many problems."

Charlotte:

"The child is happy because he has parents and siblings, his grandmother and he is friends with other children."

Yvette:

"The child is happy because he has both parents, he succeeded and because they bought him clothes. / The child is sad because he does not have both his parents, because he is beaten by other children, because they stole his notebook and his pen, because his father's car got stolen, because he failed (in school)."

Martin:

"The child is sad because his parents separated and he met a bad life without food, clothes and anyone to help him."

The intrinsic relationship between the availability of parents and the provision of material resources would suggest, like the literature, that poverty is the dominant difficulty associated with orphanhood and thus that with the appropriate material provision, deceased parents can be fully

replaced by other adults. Children's answers, however, also suggest that only parents fully ensure the appropriate and sufficient provision of resources; upon parental death, children expect that no-one else fulfils their needs. Fosterage practices in sub-Saharan African cultures have generally been thought to act as a protective factor in children's lives upon parental death due to the importance of social over biological parenting, which lessens the bond between parents and their (biological) children (Bledsoe 1990; Lloyd 2008; Madhavan 2004:1444). Yet Rwandan children seem to expect that only parents provide appropriate levels of care and thus that 'social' parents (foster parents) cannot fully replace biological parents.

Sociologists of family have started to ask how children define and create family and kinship, for example by examining the kinds of relationships children endorse as constituting families (Rigg and Pryor 2007; Schmeeckle et al 2006) and suggest that children "reckon" kin by calculating, negotiating and making sense of their relatedness to others (Mason and Ripper 2008:443). The argument is thus for a shift in focus from norms to morals, ethics and feelings, particularly guided by children's own understandings of kin relationships that centre on affect and understandings of family as a quality rather than an entity (Neale 2000:9), defined and evaluated through every day practices of sharing resources (especially food), love, (physical) comfort, care, support and respect, rather than structural factors (such as biological ties), as adults often tend to define kinship (Notermans 2008). There has been little focus in Africanist scholarship on parental love (Wamoyi and Wight 2014) due to the focus on a sometimes overestimated prevalence of 'distributed parenting', which disperses responsibility for child rearing (Varnis 2001). However as Varnis suggests, the emphasis on fosterage has often led to a neglect of the immense significance of the parental role in children's lives, especially that of mothers (ibid.). Thus, Wamoy and Wight suggest we attend to the 'connectedness' between parents and children. In one of the rare attempts at taking up this line of enquiry, Notermans suggests that children make such judgements on the basis of the emotional implications of parents' decisions. Her Cameroonian child informants were thus more critical of fosterage practices than adults because they gave greater consideration to how it felt to be fostered by a family other than the child's birth parents, as opposed to the practical or customary aspects of fosterage (ibid.). Thus, contrary to adults who often describe fosterage as an ideal manifestation of African kinship, children emphasise the emotional world of kinship and in doing so provide a more critical view of family, which as suggested for Rwandan children are based on socio-psychological and economic support. Thus, happy children have parents who provide for them, sad children do not.

Let us here return to Divine's nostalgia. Part of Divine's nostalgia seems to derive from her lesser treatment by her new parents compared to her cousins. Divine, unlike her cousins, worried about school materials and appropriate clothes. A study on fostering in Rwanda observed that parents looking after orphans often felt that no matter how much they loved their fostered children, orphans felt differentially treated in their households (Veale et al 2001). Foster parents I knew in northwestern Rwanda, such as Elise's grandmother, suggested that nostalgia (*urukumbuzi*) for biological parents might make children feel less loved – and less well looked after – which made it difficult to care for them. This sentiment is also expressed in Codere's Rwandan 'biography' from the 1960s:

> "If you lose your mama you are thought to be a stranger. Another woman is not used to your ways and will not put up with them. When I had a mother, I had eaten twice a day."
>
> (Codere 1973:74-5)

Not dissimilarly, Foster et al in their research from Zimbabwe suggest that orphans feel different and differentially treated from other children, and that it is common for orphans to compare their situation with that of non-orphans or with that prevailing before their parent's death (Foster et al 1997:395-396; see also Ansell and Young 2004:5). Children seem to feel inherently different from other children upon the loss of a parent. Veale et al observe, "the same child may feel loved by his or her uncle at one moment but when punished feel he or she is 'not a child of the family'" (quoted in Veale and Doná 2002:56). The nature and dynamics of this 'nostalgia' however is not well-known. Howard et al in passing suggests that the loss of parental love, guidance and socialisation are some of the cumulative traumas experienced by AIDS orphans while others link nostalgia to unalleviated grief due to common African practices of excluding children from parents' funerals (Daniel 2005; Howard et al 2006; Singhal and Howard 2003; Heijden and Swartz 2010). Grief is certainly seen as causing children debilitating grief, which prevents them from being able to play with other children, as suggested in different worksheets:

> *"The child is alone because he lost his parents and has no one to help him. He has grief (agahinda) in the heart. He thinks about why he doesn't have friends. Because he is an orphan, he has problems, he is thinking about his parents. Often a child without parents thinks about his life because he sees his friends are playing but he is in solitude. The children who have parents play together in happiness."*

> *"The child is sad because his mother and father are dead and he thought to kill himself. But God helped him and he didn't. He is sad because they don't buy him clothes and he has no siblings. I was sad because my parents left me and chased me out of the house."*

From these two worksheets, it appears that other people are not considered able – very easily at least – to bring a child out of this grief that appears as intrinsic to parental death. Yet I here suggest that rather than *a priori* understanding continued 'grief' as arising from a failure by communities to alleviate it, we first need to explore what it is that children are nostalgic for and thus what it is that they feel they are missing in the present moment. Until we understand for what children grieve, and miss, we cannot understand whether such grief is unalleviated and hence what role it plays in children's lives. Divine's nostalgia was rather complex and could not be explained with unaddressed grief. She had attended her mother's funeral and when she is on holidays at her grandparents' house during school breaks, her grandparents actively pursue the local strategy of helping children to mourn diseased parents, a strategy of 'distraction' (*guhuzenza*: to distract, keep someone busy), which I in Chapter 7 show to be a highly effective 'un-orphaning' strategy. Instead, I suggest that we tend to the intricate relation between poverty and parental care as expressed in children's experiences. From children's worksheets, theatre plays and conversations it appears that they have high expectations of parental love (*urukundo*), which is composite and complex and increasingly influenced by neoliberal ideals and global values. Without this composite love, children cannot feel 'complete' and start to feel hated and different. In other words, they feel existentially incomplete and insecure.

Poverty and Existential Incompletion

In a worksheet on worries, children's most common fears included wild animals, Satan, becoming a *mayibobo* (street child) and being poor. Poverty was feared for a number of reasons. In a worksheet on love and hate, Charlotte wrote:

> *"I hate hunger because when you are hungry you cannot go to school or think well."*

When I held a focus group with a group of street boys in a residential centre, one of their friends had just returned to his family after several years in the centre, which prompted a conversation about the boys' motivations for leaving home, and their thoughts about returning to their families[42]. Rodrique said that he could not continue to live in a house where he was not loved, and elaborated:

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[42] Kayiranga and Mukashema (2014:525) suggest that poverty (especially the lack of food and education) is the primary motivator for children leaving for the street, while Veale and Dona point to the effects of conflict and violence (2003).

"My father is normally okay but my stepmother hates me. She does not give me enough food. She makes me work hard, above my years. My father says nothing. There is no love."

For Rodrique, the fact that he did not eat often and was made to work too hard suggested that his parents did not love him but hated him. His mother had died some years previously and Rodrique blamed the 'hate' on his new stepmother. Rodrique said he began to notice that this hate caused him to behave badly and he decided to leave for the street. Rodrique is from a community very similar to Mwiza where poverty is endemic due to high unemployment and unstable access to crops and day labour. Many of his local peers would likely have experienced similar levels of poverty with all its implications. It is important to consider, then, why poverty upon the loss of his mother becomes interpreted in personal terms of hate specifically of Rodrique.

An important aspect of the link between poverty and children's "completion" appears to arise from a material expression of love. Rodrique felt hated due to the poverty in his house but more specifically due to the way in which his parents dealt with that poverty *as parents* by not seeking to protect them from it. Cole has observed that "there is ample evidence of many practices […] in which love and material support are complexly imbricated in one another and it seems particularly logical that when money is scarce it can become an expression of love" (quoted in Bhana 2013:102). Miller defines poverty as "the critical limit to our ability to realise ourselves as persons, consequent upon a lack of commodities" (2005:2). Similarly, Michael Jackson observes that personal fulfillment, which may approach children's conception of 'completion', consists in our capacity to realise ourselves in relation to others. Drawing on Amartya Sen's view that impoverishment is never simply a lack of income but a deprivation of opportunities to exercise one's ability "to achieve various valuable functionings as a part of living", Jackson argues that impoverishment is the absence of social harmony, the failure of a person to do his or her duty" (Jackson 2011:60). Jackson writes of hunger:

> "Hunger is also a metaphor. First, it is a metaphor for what is most difficult in life, and for the tenacity and strength of suffering. Second, the hungry time signifies any situation in which generosity goes by the board. It suggests an ethically compromised situation, characterised by self-interestedness and regressive behaviour, when adults behave like children."
>
> (Jackson 2011:59)

Notermans in turn suggests that children use the metaphor of food to express kinship ties, reflecting Carsten's (1991) argument of kinship as relatedness consecrated through the sharing of substance. Like Notermans' findings on Cameroonian children's perspectives on fosterage, Rwandan children consider families in which there is no food as dominated by hostility, rivalry and insecurity (Notermans 2008:370). Poverty came up as the most common problem identified by Kaganzan

children when asked to define a bad family: "There is misunderstanding between the couple because they are poor, they fight, the man drinks", a scenario that was frequently played out in different versions when children spontaneously staged a theatre play. The first of these involved a poor family where the father refused to buy food for his family and instead spent the money in the cabaret, his wife and children suffering from hunger at home until the police came to imprison the man and forced him to buy food for his family. Without food, it seems, there can be no kinship. Poverty thus ethically challenges people and potentiates strenuous family and community relationships. Poverty may therefore not be a risk factor in orphanhood due to the longterm negative implications alone but due to the existential insecurities it involves: less than harmonious family relations that makes children hated despite carers' love and good intentions.

In light of the lack of literature on parental love, there are relevant insights to gain from debates on companionate marriage and 'modern love' in Africa. This debate suggests that the relationship between love and materiality is deeply complex but that material provision is central to even 'pure' romantic relationships. Jackson writes, "These days, girls want to marry men of wealth, not poor farmers" (2011:35) because "You can't expect love when you have nothing to give but love [...] Love without money counts for nothing here. You have to have money. Only with children is this different" (2011:10). Love is thereby "about doing something for someone and doing something usually refers to spending money" (Cornwall 2002:964). According to Whitehouse, the diffusion of global norms, which influence new ideals of romantic love, "has not been matched by the diffusion of local economic opportunity and prospects for self-realisation", leading to an acute matrimonial crisis with an extreme shortage of eligible man (Whitehouse 2016:32-4; Cornwall 2002). One implication of the intricate relationship between money and resources is that new ideals of "soap opera love" (Sølbeck 2010) often make girls and women appear as spoilt and seeking commoditised relationships in which the provision of 'luxury goods' such as lotion and clothes is actively sought. Accusations of 'spoilt girls' were also prevalent in Rwanda (see also Sommers 2012). Many older teenage boys in Kaganza spoke of the difficulty in having girlfriends because, as one boy rhetorically asked, "as soon as you love a girl, she expects clothes and lotion, but how can I buy that when I am still in school?" However, rather than seeking to be spoiled, girls and women's desire for relationships that materially provide for them arises from hopes for better lives and local strategies for and standards of status and agency (Sølbeck 2010: Cornwall 2002:977;), an attempt to be better positioned to navigate local contexts of precarious welfare and destabilised gender relationships (Whitehouse 2016). In children's relationships to and expectations of their parents, a similar complexity of love and material

expectations can be found, which on the one hand involves having a variety of material needs satisfied but on the other hand are interpreted in very emotional terms: poverty is an expression of hate; the provision of food, school materials and clothes an expression of love.

The intrinsic relationship between love and materiality is believed by many children to have a very real effect on their lives. Without material love children cannot be or become the kinds of children they desire to be. Like women desiring material love to better navigate a treacherous social terrain, children desire material love to better navigate a sometimes difficult moral landscape. Writing on Rwandan orphans, Ward and Eyber observe that despite social isolation, children desire to "live wisely…coveted people in their lives who could guide, support, comfort and advise them." Thus, children are made happy by people who talk to them, give them advice and tell them how to live. Children confided: "we do unwise things when we have no one to care, no one to guide us" (2009:27). Likewise, Mwizan and Kaganzan children want to have good behaviour and integrity and it is the paramount role of parents to provide this 'basic education' on how to live properly. Without this moral aspect of parenting, children cannot be 'complete' because they cannot develop 'integrity'.

Parents' fulfilment of children's needs is seen as paramount for a child to be able to behave appropriately as a child and instill in the child *umuco mwiza* (to have good 'culture', a broader concept of the English notion of 'behaviour'). *Umuco mwiza* in turn facilitates *agaciro* (dignity/integrity), children's ultimate objective. The concept of *agaciro* is an important value in children's definitions of good people, including good children. Although *agaciro* has been related specifically to girls' perceptions of their lives and place in society (Restless Development and Bell and Payne Consulting 2011), *kugira agaciro* is central to how children more generally perceive themselves as children and evaluate their childhoods. In its literal sense, *kugira agaciro* means to have dignity and self-respect or to have a (small) price or value. It comes from the word *igiciro* (cost, price or value). The prefix – *aka/aga* can either act as a diminutive or add a nuance of exceptional value (Kagame 1955:58). Here it is the latter meaning of exceptional value. In interesting ways, *agaciro* thereby combines personal integrity with economic value. The link between social respect, self-dignity and economic value was so strong that people conversant in English often used value and respect interchangeably. It thus involves the same combination of economic, social and moral aspects as parental love. The term has active connotations: *agaciro* has to be gained and kept on a continuous, ongoing basis.

In a focus group on good and bad behaviour with some of the boys from the local street boy centre – a topic they had chosen themselves – I asked what constitutes good behaviour. 12-year old Rodrique, who was normally slow to answer, was the first to suggest that good behaviour is to respect

other children, especially younger ones. The other boys immediately contributed with "respecting parents" and "the one who obeys everyone". When asked about bad behaviour, Pascari suggested "not to respect parents" and the others added in: "to steal form others", "to give parents problems", "when children steal because parents don't give them food", "when parents ask you to fetch water and you don't go immediately", "to disobey parents when parents give orders to the child", "children who do not respect others", and "if your parents take care of you, you cannot disobey them". In a focus group with a group of young children in Kaganza, five seven-year old boys agreed that good behaviour is also to be a good friend and share whatever bread, sweets, clothes or toys you get from your parents, while a good child is someone who is always ready and willing to help parents and siblings with chores at home[43]. When I asked the boys to describe their behaviour before they left for the street they all immediately laughingly agreed that it had been bad, in fact really bad. They were no longer children with integrity (*agaciro*). When I asked why, the answer was just as quick and to the boys seemed obvious. With a snort I was told that they had developed bad behaviour because they could not find food and therefore had to steal and they were forced to work "above their years" by their parents who sometimes also beat them if they did not want to work. In such a situation, the boys seemed to ask silently, how could they *not* develop bad behaviour and thus become children without *agaciro*? Poverty is considered existentially debilitating by Rwandan children and is perceived to have substantial negative impact on children's psychological wellbeing. According to Betancourt et al this state of mind is expressed in the term *guhangayika*, which they define as

> "to worry or stress by thinking too much without being able to arrive at a solution to problems. Children with *guhangayika* are never at ease, do not talk or play with others, cry without reason and isolate themselves. If untreated, it leads to *agahinda kenshi*." (2012:404, italics added)

Parents have a very specific role in preventing both *guhangayika* and *agahinda kenshi* from developing. Despite its material expression, love is composite and cannot be reduced to material provision. Without material love, children cannot develop good culture, but more is needed for children's moral development. Mothers in particular have a very specific role herein.

A Mother's Protective Love

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[43] To be good students and study hard, as well as to be a good Christian, pray to God and to not commit sins such as stealing and prostitution was also mentioned.

Children's feelings of orphanhood seem to arise, specifically, when new parents fail to protect them from worrying about poverty or to advise them how to live and behave. In order to develop good behaviour and thus to have *agaciro*, what children especially emphasised was the need to be listened to, respected and talked to through dialogue rather than shouting, in the words of a young child good people are "those who give time to talk to children", a view also reflected in several worksheets describing an orphan's life:

> *"His family is very good, they feed the children well and the parents share dialogue with children about the future and development. But the child lost his brother. The parents do everything possible so the child can forget the brother so he can avoid emotional consequences."*

> *"The child is sad because he does not talk with his parents."*

> *"The child is sad because he is an orphan and has no one to support him. He cannot find anyone to answer his questions."*

> *"He is sad because he has no parents who can make him happy and talk to him."*

Significant memories were when children's mothers, in particular, had shouted at or beaten them, rather than sat down to advise them. One of Husina's best memories for example was when she got the chance to sit down and talk to her father. The fact that she had lost her father when she was a very young child, six years prior to filling in the worksheet, and that her aunt had actively sought to make Husina forget her parents in order to reduce her feelings of orphanhood (see Chapter 7), suggests that the experience is rather significant in her life. *Kuvugana* (to talk to each other) was so important to Elise that in his definition of hate in a worksheet where children were asked to describe love (*gukunda*) and hate (*kubanga*), he wrote "Hate is to hate others, to not wish to meet your friends or talk to each other…".

For adults, "time to talk" is the opportunity for "basic education" (*kurera*), such as discipline, but for children it is what expresses a strong relationship where they feel respected and loved and know they can "tell all problems" to their parents. For Cindy being loved (*gukundwa*) meant moments of affection that nonetheless contained gentle guidance through advice and 'basic education'. Love (*urukundo*) between Cindy and Shangaze allowed for respectful 'exchange of ideas' and the provision of advice. Coming up to Christmas I gave Cindy a framed picture of herself, which she excitedly and immediately put up on the wall next to a poster of President Kagame. Her grandmother laughed affectionately at Cindy's delight and admired the photo with her. But when Cindy sat down again she asked why she had only received one photo when one of her friends had received two. Her

grandmother repeated the affectionate laugh but reminded Cindy that it was not nice to seem unappreciative and greedy. Cindy responded to her grandmother's reminder with an embarrassed laugh and returned to admiring the photo. Many of the children agreed that this guidance, which taught them both discipline and the difference between right and wrong, was a crucial element of love and was needed to become a good child with appropriate behaviour.

For Cindy, as well as most other children, love meant a relationship in which it was possible to exchange ideas in a reciprocal manner where adults also listened to children. During one of my visits, Cindy was cooking in the back while Shangaze looked after her toddler grandchild, Therese, who was playing happily around her grandmother. Over the course of the morning, Therese got increasingly bored and started to annoy the grandmother who had until then been very patient with Therese's teasing, playful interaction. The grandmother told her to stop but Therese continued and after a couple of gentle but firm no's the grandmother slapped her hand, which made Therese cry loudly and throw herself to the floor as if she had been pushed. Cindy immediately ran in from the back. In a sudden role reversal, Cindy asked her grandmother what had happened in the slight reprimanding tone that mothers often use when their children fight or cry. The grandmother immediately explained in an apologetic tone. Cindy picked up Therese and brought her into the kitchen while in a kind, warm tone reminding her not to behave as she had – with a side comment to her grandmother of staying calm. Shangaze thanked Cindy in obvious appreciation. This 'exchange of ideas' was visibly facilitated through the loving relationship between Cindy and Shangaze, which involves and allows for occasional disagreements. When love exists, such disagreements can be handled without strong words or beating, something which many children spoke strongly against.

Exchanging 'ideas' and 'advice' was important in building resilience in the face of poverty. When I talked to Vestine about how her life might have been better with her mother, she suggested:

> *"Even if we were poor with my mother, she could not let us go to bed hungry. But even, maybe, if we had to go to bed without eating she could tell us, don't worry child, tomorrow we will find food, we will find a path."*

Thus, the love that exists between children and parents, in particular mothers, protects children from worry and helps them to deal with life's hardships by teaching them how to act appropriately in different situations. When Vestine and her sister had an argument with their older brother over the family land, Vestine spoke of how she missed her mother to ask for advice on how to solve the problem. When Baptiste's neighbour constantly came to his house to tell him that he lived badly, he

wanted to ask his mother how he should react when such people did not treat him well. A mother's protective love can thereby reduce the negative effects of poverty. By implication, a mother or stepmother's failure to protect a child from poverty through love becomes interpreted as hate.

Let us thus return to the issue of nostalgia. When Gisele's mother died, her father's new wife, her mother's cousin, gladly took in Gisele, yet Gisele was never properly happy in the new household and decided to move in with her maternal grandmother a few rows down in Kaganza. In a long conversation with Gisele's father, he spoke with sadness of Gisele's decision to move. He confided that his new wife had tried as much as she could to take Gisele "like her own" but that this was not really possible for a new mother because she was not the 'real' mother, understood here in biological terms. It is not theoretically impossible for foster parents to replace the love of a parent but it appears as practically impossible. Neither Gisele nor Divine's new mothers could provide the same level of love through material provision, advice and protection against worry, as had their biological mothers.

Yet Cindy and Gisele suggest that maternal grandmothers can fully replace a mother's love. Cindy lives with her maternal grandmother and is very happy. Unlike Divine, she does not feel like a poor orphan. Since Gisele moved to her maternal grandmother's house she has also become much happier, despite significant poverty similar to that in her father's house. Yet while her grandmother continuously spoke of such poverty, Gisele spoke very little hereof. In a long conversation with another girl orphan's grandmother, the grandmother provided an explanation:

> *"As their mother's mother, I knew to feed from my breast and I pretended to do the same for them [her daughter's orphans]. Children are their father's responsibility but it is their mother they really love, and who loves them, and it is the mother's family that they really love."*

When I asked other mothers, grandmothers and aunts whether they agreed, the confirmation was univocal. A father's family provides care as part of their responsibility, a mother's family out of love. Children seem to easily distinguish between these motivations. A loving mother, and maternal grandmother by extension, can prevent the feeling of existential orphanhood. However, as the sections above also suggest, even a mother's love is starting to be challenged in the face of increasing poverty and, I suggest below, by a heavy moralising of parental responsibility in government campaigns that neglects the significant economic challenges of parenting in post-genocide Rwanda.

Symbolic Death of the Father

Fathers were often portrayed in strikingly different terms to mothers' protective love. A dominant theme in children's theatre performances was the drunken father who spends all his money

on drinking, perhaps has several families, is lazy and refuses to work, and consequently, fails to live up to his responsibilities as the designated breadwinner. In one performance, the father was symbolically escorted off the stage with excessive force by the police, removed from his family and locked up behind bars, until "he becomes sober and remembers his responsibilities". In another play, a child ends up on the streets as an orphan because her father has remarried and has "forgotten" his children from his first marriage. These portrayals also often figured in children's personal descriptions of, and relationships to, their own fathers.

Sebastian, my close friend who introduced me to Kaganza, its people and its history, frequently reflected on his disillusionment with his father. When I asked him if he had any friends who were orphans and if their orphanhood was something they sometimes discussed[44], both of which he confirmed, with his usual gesture of frustration – a heavy sigh and a longer than normal search for the right words covered by a nervous laugh – Sebastian explained that many of the problems faced by orphans were not unique to them; he suffered many of them himself, he too was like an orphan (*nki imfubyi*). I was surprised by this assertion. I knew Sebastian's elaborate kin network (for Kaganza), their access to herds of cows larger than those of neighbours as well as their access to paid employment. I knew how close they all felt to each other. I had often joined each of his family members' homes for meals and milk drinking at sunset and had observed how intimate and engaged they were with each other – discussing the latest music, work, cows, the children's progress in school and their current fancies and misdeeds, all of which Sebastian followed intensely as the obvious favourite uncle. He was visibly proud, yet unsurprised, when I told him that his father seemed the favourite teacher of most of the village's young children. His father, as the rest of the family, was respected for his love of children.

With these positive impressions in mind I asked what he meant by facing the same problems as an orphan. He described it as follows: Sebastian's father had remarried during exile in Congo where he lived far from his original family. Sebastian saw his father's second marriage as a manifestation of selfishness and lack of responsibility; he had not thought of the future. Polygamy has been practiced for centuries in Rwanda but was outlawed in recent years[45]. In Sebastian's portrayal of his life it is a practice condemned as irresponsible and as potentially creating an "orphan-

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[44] I asked him this question because many orphans said it was difficult to become friends with children who had their parents. By asking Sebastian, I was looking for a non-orphan perspective on this assertion.
[45] Although this rule was 'loosened' during the time of my research.

like" situation. Sebastian was in his final year of secondary school and as he was preparing for his exams with no prospect of progressing any further, his disillusionment with his father grew. When he worried about finding a job, he spoke of his father's demotion at work due to insufficient mastering of English to continue to teach the older classes. When he was fed up with his worn clothes (even if fashionable), he grew tired of his father's frequent trips to the other end of the country to visit his other family who had since relocated to Eastern Rwanda. Despite Sebastian's normally acute and nuanced understanding of the structural conditions constraining their lives, such as the village resettlement scheme, the overly ambitious push for development, the sudden change from French to English as the official language, as his weariness with life as a young man grew so did the use of his father as a scapegoat for his problems even though the father was neither a drunk nor lazy.

Children and young people's portrayals of the father figure reflect rhetoric often used in public meetings, radio plays and other national communication and indicate a shifting balance of responsibilities between the state and family. About halfway through my research I had a meeting with the Sector Chief Executive, JM, who had recently conducted 'research' with secondary school students and young people out of school. Concerned with the high drop-out rate in upper secondary school, particularly amongst girls, he sought the young people's opinions and advice on potential solutions. What he learned, he told me, was that parents did not respect their children's right and obligation to be in school. The young people had told him – and he had himself observed – that many parents tended to spend their household budget on things for themselves, primarily alcohol, instead of investing in school materials, or using available cash on hiring labour to free their children from time-consuming cultivation, reducing time for study. Another common problem he identified was parents who allowed their children to go hungry all day[46], constraining children's ability to concentrate in school. He wanted to know whether I had learned anything about the challenges of education. I emphasised that the issue of resources seemed significant as many young people had to work to survive or to support their struggling families. JM strongly disagreed, believing that most parents have enough cash to pay for the few materials needed for school and to supply at least two meals for their children. A much more significant issue, he suggested, was parents' "ignorance" about

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[46] At the time of research there was considerable focus on encouraging parents to stretch their resources to cook at least two, but preferably three, meals for their children (and themselves) every day. In particular, it was encouraged to provide children with porridge prior to school.

children's rights, which he considered reflective of a much larger issue of parents' failure to realise the importance of taking responsibility for their children, and thus the country's future.

In response to JM's 'research', he launched a small campaign through a series of public meetings in each of his sector's cells "to educate parents on how to raise their children". These meetings fitted in with a broader initiative by the Ministry for Local Government to "get people to participate in their own problems and their solutions, as they know best what the problems are." JM told people of his research findings that "parents forget their responsibilities towards children", giving the example of a family with only one child where the parents paid health insurance (*mutuelle*[47]) for themselves but not for the child because the child was 15 years old and could pay herself. Rhetorically, JM asked how this is possible. In a commanding voice, he explained that as long as children live at home, regardless of their age, they need to be cared for by their parents: providing school materials, food and clothes and supervising schoolwork. With clear condemnation, yet in his usual charismatic tone, he urged parents to stop drinking, not to allow their children to work for money and instead to "sit down and talk to [their] children to know what their problems are".

Here it is obvious that parents are reproached, even condemned, for the lack of proper raising of their children. This attitude is not dissimilar to early western responses to destitute families whose children were often cast as 'orphan' and put in 'children's houses' (Abrams 1998; Dewar 1968; Rockhill 2010), representative of a more general approach of governing rural and poor sectors of the population through a penetrating tendency to blame people for their own problems. In Rwanda people are blamed for failing to live up to certain 'goals' set out in village-level 'performance contracts' under the *imihigo* programme[48] (Ansoms 2009:305; Hasselskog and Schierenbeck 2015:959; The Rwandan Research Group 2009:292-293). Witter and Bukokhe found a similar reproach of parents' ability to care for their children in an area of Uganda culturally similar to Rwanda (2004:650). However, while they identify differential perceptions in officials and children (ibid.), in Rwanda, children and youths' tendency to blame their fathers shows obvious elements of the Sector Chief's reproach of parents, characterised by suspicion and doubt regarding parental intentions.

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[47] *Mutuelle* is mandatory and lack thereof can lead to denial of health services or health care costs impossible to meet for most families. Village leaders differ in their reaction to people who have not paid *mutuelle.* In Kaganza, Sawia forced all inhabitants to pay by constantly coming to their house and threatening with fines until *mutuelle* was paid, while other village leaders did nothing about unpaid *mutuelle.*

[48] The *imihigo* programme aims for all government entities and households to achieve defined targets within a set timeframe. These are often referred to as performance contracts and people's 'performance' is closely monitored (Hasselskog and Schierenbeck 2015:964).

Drawing on classic anthropological studies of the relationships between kinship and political structures Borneman sees paternal authority as linked to national political dynamics, especially the nature of a particular regime. He writes of the state as a proxy for the domestic father and thus as having the responsibility to maintain order within families. Quoting Simin, he argues that "authority must be made omnipotent in the family so that it becomes less necessary in the state" (2004:11). The aim of liberal states is to bolster the authority of the domestic father to lessen the need of state intervention but in totalising regimes such as Rwanda's the father's authority is undermined and replaced by the state acting in the name of a national father (the state leader, President Kagame). Rockhill (2010) similarly links the symbolic death of parents, or the expulsion of parents from 'the moral parental community' to political motives of delineating politically and socially appropriate norms. The state, according to Rockhill, becomes a surrogate parent for children whose parents are deemed irresponsible. Such children become 'social orphans' cared for by the state through 'children's houses'/orphanages. Borneman and Rockhill's arguments are evident in JM's approach although JM does not place children in orphanages but rather seeks to 'correct' the parents. While he commands people to take more responsibility, it is a particular state-endorsed responsibility he advocates, which defines fatherhood as involving sending children to school, listening to their opinions, abstaining from drinking alcohol and working harder in order to free children from work. While JM wants fathers to become more authoritarian, he simultaneously wants them to respect and listen to their children's needs, defined by a particular nationalistic project of education and development. According to Borneman, this is in order to facilitate the state to continuously reassert – and strengthen – its power. The child-focused government campaigns thus do not simply represent an ideal of the child as an individual with rights who is to be protected and respected but serve to cast Rwanda as a benevolent paternalistic state that intervenes to correct absent or neglectful parents. There is no recognition here of the fact that many parents simply do not have the material or social resources to facilitate such a life for their children. Rather than casting it as the economic problem it is, less-than-perfect parenting is cast in moral terms. Children are in some situations adopting this language, leading some children and youth such as Sebastian and Paul (described in the introduction) to cast themselves as 'like orphans'. Their state-endorsed expectations of parenthood, especially fatherhood, cannot be met by an increasingly impoverished parental generation. Thus, rather than protecting children from less-than-ideal parenting, the state is inadvertently creating orphans out of well-integrated and kin-resourceful children by casting impoverished parents as intentionally bad parents who do not want to provide adequately for their children.

Conclusion

Children's perspectives suggest that it is not poverty itself but how parents handle poverty that makes children feel incomplete. Orphanhood goes over and above poverty. It appears that Jackson's statement "only with children is it different" does not hold true from children's perspectives and that a 'parental' crisis is developing in tandem with the widespread matrimonial crisis, rather than an 'orphan crisis' as predicted by the literature. There is not so much a surplus of parentless orphans but a shortage of eligible parents. Increasing difficulties for parents in fulfilling their children's needs due to worsening poverty and influences of neoliberal political rhetoric influenced a strong undertone of poverty as an individual moral problem and personal responsibility (Fanning et al 2004; Katz 1989). This is making it harder for children to feel complete through *agaciro*. As an acute denotation of the relationship between social and economic valuation, the notion of *agaciro* is central to the concerns children have about orphanhood.

The state's strong advocating of father's economic responsibilities in a context, where many fathers' economic power is continuously declining, is creating a new category of social orphans such as Paul. Poverty can make orphans of children. Yet while Sebastian suggested he was 'like' an orphan, he nonetheless did not consider himself in such terms. Paul also used the phrase 'like' an orphan but unlike Sebastian did in many instances think of himself as an orphan. The reason for this was the far distance of his mother and the fact that he had not seen her for over eight years, he longed for her desperately. Thus, when Paul 'felt like an orphan' he could not simply go to his mother and ask her advice or talk to her as Sebastian could – and did. *Maternal absence* and failure to replace it renders children incomplete and it is this incompletion that makes orphans feel inherently different from other children. Children's experiences of orphanhood thus appear to revolve more around existential insecurities brought about by parental loss – the feeling of always being different and never quite complete – than the structural incompletion suggested by the orphan literature (the structural vulnerabilities inherent in orphanhood or poverty or both) and that one would necessarily expect in a patrilineal, kinship based society. Nevertheless, poverty is making it increasingly difficult for parents to parent and thus for children to develop *agaciro*. With *agaciro* becoming more difficult, claims to orphanhood are becoming more frequent and of more existential quality.

Chapter 4

Write Me on The Orphan List

(Un)Desiring Orphanhood and the Search for Support

The Search for Completion

Children who feel incomplete employ a variety of strategies to "complete" themselves. When 17-year old Fideri's older sister, Ndayisenga, fell sick with trauma[49], a frequent recurrence, Fideri's first reaction was to leave Ndayisenga in bed and full of worry go to the house of the village leader to register on the bureaucratic "list of orphans" (*urukurikane ry'imfubyi*). Reflecting children's views on the role and importance of parents as advisors and protectors against worry, Fideri and Ndayisenga believed that Ndayisenga's "trauma" was caused by her constant worries as the head of their household, in particular worrying about her ability to maintain Fideri in secondary school and source enough food. Heading to the village leader, Fideri hoped the local authorities would put their names on the list of orphans to receive support. When Fideri felt that the village leader did not take her request seriously, she instead made the 45-minute descent from Mwiza to the Sector Office, hoping for more luck here. This was not her first attempt, nor would it be her last. When they still did not get included in an NGO project as hoped, Fideri assumed that she had "failed" (*gutsindwa*) to convince the local authorities of their need to be written on the list. Instead, she and her sister prayed (*gusenga*) and waited with patience (*kwihangana*) for better times. But when on a later occasion the girls again felt that life got too difficult and Fideri faced having to leave school, they repeated their request of registration. On my last visit, they were still waiting for a response; with more intensity and optimism than usual, hoping for the near-future inclusion in an NGO project or other forms of support.

It is novel that children and young people actively aspire to acquire a label of orphanhood, which normally evokes notions of destitution and stigma. In their everyday lives and social encounters, orphans such as Fideri work hard to conceal their orphanhood by attempting to gloss over its common indicators: meticulously washing their bodies, clothes and homes and actively reshaping their social identities. It must then be asked why young people seek to register as orphans and thus

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[49] François used the term *guhahamuka* (trauma), while the sisters used *gutwara mu mutwe* (sick in the head).

officially be labelled as the very category they seek to conceal. Seeking registration on the list was not the only strategy for completion in such moments of desperation and hopelessness. In the words of Zigon's Russian informants: "You can put your hopes in God but you still have to act" (2009:259). You can wait with patience for the orphan list producing the desired support or you can continue your search elsewhere. Youth strived in equal measure to find a benefactor (*umugiraneza*[50]) or sponsor (*umuterankunga*[51]) and conducted considerably ethical work on themselves to appear as worthy beneficiaries by casting themselves on the one hand as needy orphans and on the other as capable and ambitious youth worth an investment.

Dahl (2014) highlights the economic benefits of appropriating the orphan label when she writes of "fat orphans", the outcome of an "orphan enterprise" emerging from the vast amounts of development money currently targeted at AIDS orphans. Similarly, Cheney suggests that, in Uganda

> "Guardians and orphans alike are aware that OVC have become commoditised as NGO targets. In the face of well-meaning humanitarian interventions, caring for orphans becomes ever more closely linked to provision of resources earmarked for orphans within traditional family care systems…. rather than demand their rights, then, OVC and their guardians tend to appropriate – and even embrace – the tropes of vulnerability placed upon them by discourses of benevolent humanitarianism." (Cheney 2012:95)

Using the orphan label appears as an economically beneficial but disempowering, passive response by families that is potentially harmful to children (Cheney 2012). In this view, Fideri seeks to officially register as an orphan because its promise of resources outweighs its negative social implications. Yet orphans and their families' motivations for seeking registration suggests that the significance of the list goes beyond material hopes and is rarely a simple appropriation of the 'trope of vulnerability'. Utas proposes the term 'victimcy' to describe the "agency of self-staging as victim" (2005). Victimcy, Utas suggests, is "deployed as one tactic amongst others in [the] social navigation of war zones" and constitutes "a form of self-representation by which a certain form of tactic agency is effectively exercised under the trying, uncertain, and disempowering circumstances that confront actors in warscapes" (ibid.:403). Fideri's actions are more productively described as such "victimcy".

The close association with the concurrent search for a benefactor renders the orphan list powerful. As a label that attracts state and NGO resources, bureaucratic claims to orphanhood

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[50] From *kugira* (to have) and *neza* (well), meaning someone who has a lot (relative to the beneficiary).
[51] From *gutera and inkunga. Gutera* has many meanings, including to arrange, project at, spread, affix, to cause. *Inkunga* means support or aid (noun).

constitute socially and culturally esteemed "declarations of dependence" that are made on people as well as handouts and charity (Ferguson 2013) in order to insert oneself in relations of dependence and the overarching ethics of interdependence of which it is a part (Sherz 2014). It thus revolves around a desire for social membership and to have one's situation of need recognised. This necessarily requires recognition that is both technical (approval for support by local authorities) and political (the act of approving by the local authorities) (Ferguson 2013:236; see also Guglielmo 2015). Casting oneself as orphan is not an act of disempowerment but a socio-culturally valid 'declaration of dependence', which slowly builds up a capacity to aspire (Appadurai 2004) by allowing orphans to participate in defining their own needs and thus to have them recognised, what Fraser terms the politics of needs (1990). In other words, orphans re-appropriate the stigmatising orphan label in order to re-establish control over their lives (Galinsky et al 2013).

In her study of Congolese child refugees in Tanzania, Mann (2011) suggests that children normally do not think of themselves in terms of 'refugeeness', and actively seek NOT to 'be refugees' by acting as much as possible in accordance with the norms of their host society. However, during times of particular hopelessness, lack of agency and choice, children "become" refugees. Feeling at a loss for ways out of their situation, they blame their misery on their status *as refugees* while the rest of the time denying this status (Mann 2011:19-21). This contextual and fleeting, momentary nature of refugeeness offers analytical utility for understanding children's underlying motivations for claiming orphanhood by seeking registration on the orphan list. Contexts and moments of particular hopelessness and felt inability to cope, make children and young people feel like orphans. In such moments, young peole in particular actively seek to officially "become" orphans because it offers them what they lack in that situation: hope, agency and choice. Through a closer examination it also appears that youth seek to "become" orphans in order to overcome the situation of orphanhood, to *unbecome* an orphan, by no longer feeling obstacled in life – through approaching one of few approachable agents who can instigate material support: bureaucracy. Thus, I show how registration on the orphan list, ironically, is the first step taken by youth and orphan carers in 'completing' children and thus overcoming orphanhood.

The List of Orphans

The list of orphans is a bureaucratic list compiled by each village leader for their *umudugudu* and collated by the Sector Office with the aim of providing support, where available, to the most

needy children. Each Sector submits their list to the District Office, which transfers the District-wide information to the government and relevant charitable organisations, such as the Global Fund. The list is not simply a "list of orphans" but of "children who meet more problems than others", or "The List of OVCs" in everyday parlance. The Kinyarwanda description translates as "the list of choosing from the group of children who are met by more problems than others in the village[52]". The National Policy for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children (RoR 2003) lists fifteen categories of such children that should form the basis for 'choosing' (Appendix 4). Nonetheless, the list is referred to by people as one of orphans, reflecting children's views that orphanhood is an inherently difficult experience. The list includes children's names, ages, parentage and vulnerabilities/problems. If the information is known, it is indicated whether children live with or without their parents, whom they may be living with if not living with their parents, and whether they have problems of food (*imirire*), education (*uburezi*), health (*ubuzima*), health of household members (*ubuzima mvamutima* – e.g. HIV/Aids), lack of materials (*icumbi n'ububasha mu bukungu*) and/or severe poverty (*kurengerwa:* 'being submerged', living in "complete" poverty, destitution/misery). If support becomes available in any of these areas, it should be directed to the children identified with that need.

When a new NGO project is set up, the intention is to refer to the local OVC list to identify the most relevant beneficiaries, a process that happens in negotiation between the NGO, the local village leader and the Sector authorities who have the final say (see also Hilhorst and van Leeuwen 1999:22). In reality, the lists often do not play a central role in such negotiations. When a new NGO supporting children in post-conflict areas came to Kaganza to recruit beneficiaries to a new project, rather than consulting the local list they set up a platform in the village centre where they briefly explained the project and then asked children and their families to line up for photos and registration. When another NGO looked to recruit beneficiaries in Mwiza, the Director wrote a letter to the village leaders to nominate the most appropriate children who were then approved by the Sector authorities. The children who were eventually included in the project were not those registered on the Mwiza orphan list although the Sector authority said he had used it to assess the appropriateness of the nominated children. In both Kaganza and Mwiza, most children and young people who were beneficiaries of support from NGOs were not written on the list.

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[52] *Ifishi yo gutoranya abana bugarijwe n'ibibazo kurusha abandi mu mudugudu*.

People's active, repetitive efforts in getting registered on the orphan list suggests that the act of registration has become much more than a matter of having one's name noted on a bureaucratic list. Continuously, older children in Mwiza and adult carers in Kaganza spoke of their attempts to be registered on this list, making numerous visits to the Sector Office, befriending village leaders and NGO workers, talking to priests and teachers and at times publicly denying the existence of parents – especially when engaging with NGO representatives. In Mwiza, nearly every youth I knew living in a youth-headed household, had at one time or another attempted registration on the list, including the youngest head of household, 14-year old Dusabimana. In Kaganza only adults spoke of attempting to register their children on the list. The majority of grandmothers caring for young orphans had made such attempts. This desire for registration is remarkable when it neither guarantees support nor is required to access it. The desire is also significant as it exists in tension with the fear of being written on another 'bureaucratic' list, which records people's 'bad behaviour' (*umuco mbi*), ranging from substance-induced social disruption to being named a 'dissenter' showing 'genocide ideology', for which the punishment is severe (Begley 2009:7; Zorbas 2004). It furthermore surprises when it is considered that most believe they never have nor probably never will be registered. Despite this admission, many children and youth, or their families, continue to pursue their desire to be registered on the list and believe in its efficacy "as if it were a form of magic" (Allard 2012:235).

Motivations for Registration

A few years after Jeneti's mother died during exile in Congo, upon return to Mwiza, her father remarried because he felt his children needed a mother's love and did not feel able to raise them alone. He started a new family with his second wife but from the many hours, I spent conversing with the father, it was obvious that he continued to feel very close to Jeneti and her younger brothers. Yet his children started to feel "marginalised"; they felt they were given insufficient food, they struggled to get their father to support them in school and they often felt badly treated by their stepmother. The sibling group eventually felt that the situation in their father's house grew so intolerable that they decided to separate and set up their own household on a corner of the father's plot. Although they blamed the stepmother for the poor treatment, they allocated full responsibility with their father. They did not feel he had strived to protect them and respect them "like his own children" (*nkabana we*). The sibling group continued to receive occasional contributions towards school, a bag of beans or sorghum and 'advice' (*inama*). Yet as Jeneti frequently reflected, his contribution never amounted to

more than ad hoc and unreliable neighbourly support, which meant that she, as the eldest sister, had the main responsibility for her siblings and became the head of household and mother to her brothers. It was she, not her father, who worried about the everyday challenges of food, schooling and clothes. In an intimate and tearful conversation, she confided having felt burdened by this responsibility.

On several occasions, Jeneti and her brothers felt so frustrated with what they perceived as their father's failure to care for them, in particular to give them advice and listen to their problems, that they went to the local authorities and to a variety of NGOs in town, to claim that they were orphans so that they might get external help. This was also how they introduced themselves to me and it was many months into my research before I realised that their father lived next door. On one of my many visits to the sibling group, we were suddenly met by a friendly catechist who offered us roasted maize. Jeneti and her brothers seemed detached and distant as he approached. When he left and we tucked into the maize, Jeneti's middle brother, Mate, quietly commented that the man was their father. The complete lack of emotion detectable in the siblings as he approached was illuminating. They were, at best, sceptical, commenting that he only offered maize to impress me. As I came to know the siblings intimately over the coming year this impression became more nuanced. They began to acknowledge some of their father's contributions yet the emotional detachment persisted. Their interactions remained ad hoc and ebbed and flowed with the rhythms of the season. When crops were scarce so were interactions with their father. Denunciation of him *as their father* immediately threatened – so much so, in fact, that the father was aware that they sometimes went to town to deny his existence in order to register as orphans as he several times lamented to me when speaking of the difficulties in raising 'his orphans'.

Jeneti's actions suggest that public identifications of orphanhood not only provide a strategy for resource acquisition, but a significant critical evaluation of, and distancing from, family and kin that in many instances move youth closer to the local authorities or NGOs. Implicit, and at times explicit, in Jeneti's denunciations of her father is the observation made by Thurman et al that Rwandan youth heads of households have greater faith in NGOs than kin when it comes to seeking advice or material resources (2006, 2008). During my many conversations with Jeneti and her brothers, it was obvious that they struggled to see their father as a proper parent. Their constant battle to keep their fields[53], to stay in school, to eat and for Jeneti to marry, often made them comment that

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[53] They had ongoing disputes with the father and in particular his new wife as to whom the fields belonged.

they might as well not have had a father. Once, Jeneti wondered if perhaps she might have been better off had she not had him. She felt that at least if she had been a 'complete (double) orphan' she would have received more assistance from the local authorities to raise her brothers. As her father made her feel like an orphan, it is logical that her father's inaction led her to cast herself officially as such in order to receive the support he failed to provide.

Jeneti was unsuccessful in registering on the list, but became included in Care International's orphan project, COSMO, through which she received goats for manure, a radio and a *nkundabana* (orphan mentor), as well as vocational training. Her subsequent relationships to her father and *nkundabana* speak to the ambiguities inherent in desires for support. During the project, she had developed a strong relationship to her *nkundabana* to whom she continued to turn whenever she was faced with a problem even though the project officially ended in early 2010. In our many conversations leading up to her wedding in 2011, the difference in tone when she spoke of her father and *nkundabana*, respectively, was stark. As the wedding preparations took over, the critical evaluation of her father intensified as did the esteem and affection towards her *nkundabana*. On numerous occasions, she went to him for advice when she felt a conflict emerging with her father. At the wedding, her father tried to contribute as much as possible and hosted the wedding, an act recognised and acknowledged by Jeneti's groom. Yet what stood out for Jeneti was her *nkundabana*. When it came to the part of the ceremony where the two families present the couple with gifts, the *nkundabana* had organised the entire Mwiza network of COSMO's *nkundabana*s to give her a sowing machine with which to start a tailoring business. In her memory of the wedding in the months to follow, that moment stood out as particularly special. In contrast, her mood with the father dipped to its worst. His contributions had been as a 'loan' and she worried about the repayment.

In one sense, Jeneti 'appropriated vulnerability' and 'became an orphan' in order to receive support, as Cheney and Dahl suggest. However, in another sense, Jeneti had already felt like an orphan and simply sought to gain its official recognition in order to receive the support with which it is associated. In the face of her father's insufficient care, Jeneti actively sought to replace such care through NGOs due to the greater trust they elicit (Thurman et al 2006) and thus sought out NGOs as a 'co-caregiver', a role increasingly taken on by NGOs (Christiansen 2005:174). By doing so, Jeneti came closer to 'overcome' (*kwirenga*) orphanhood by achieving a more normal life. Her *nkundabana* actively helped her to become a respected *umugore,* a married woman, who at the end of my research was pregnant with her first child, had moved into her husband's self-built house and was ready to start building her own business once her morning sickness had passed.

The support Jeneti received, however, also further distanced her from her father. By doing so, it consecrated her orphanhood in a more existential sense, by lessening the connection with her father. Relevant here is Nieuwenhuys' observation on rights-based approaches as "a double-edged sword that feeds children's desire for independence and a better life but substitutes, in the end, dependence on a charitable agency for their dependence on parents" (2001:551). Children and youth, however, may judge that their new dependence is more valuable in both its economic and social sense. According to Sherz, scholars writing about charity are reluctant to recognise the productive potential of charity because of its association with inequality, dependence, and the co-existence of care and power, which sits uneasily with scholars' own ideas of equality and independence (2014:15). However, in the context of feeling let down by her father and with few other means of support, Jeneti's claims to official orphanhood were highly productive.

Producing Hopeful Agency

Despite Jeneti's inclusion in a prestigious orphan project, attempts at registration are not often successful. In Kaganza, Elise's grandmother looked after Elise and two of his cousins. Elise's younger brother had left for the street. In addition, she looked after an imprisoned son. The grandmother only had a very small plot of land and was getting old so she struggled to make ends meet. She found cultivating hard and began to tire from all her care work, especially as Elise started to show difficult behaviour in school and she was called in for several meetings. She had gone to the Sector Office several times to register her orphans but when faced with the new problems arising from Elise's school, she made another trip. Once again, she said, she had been met with complete indifference and the message that there was not enough support for everyone and she would have to be patient.

Similarly, many of the Mwiza youth often expressed frustration after continuous attempts at registration. Such personal failures in dealings with bureaucracy are commonly turned into accusations against corrupt bureaucrats (Herzfeld 1992:46). According to Herzfeld "every disgruntled client (of bureaucracy) must deal with the larger social ramifications of failure", that "citizens who fail to get what they want may seriously lose standing in their home communities unless they are able to produce a convincing, or at least socially unimpeachable, defence of their actions" (Herzfeld 1992:46). Rwandans blamed their failure to register on the corruption or unwillingness of the authorities to write them on the list. Isabelle complained that she was unable to register because she had no money to offer the local authorities who therefore refused to help her. Dusabimana

believed her cousins' parents had "corrupted" the local authorities not to register her and instead register their own non-orphaned children[54]. In Kaganza, Claire's grandmother believed she failed to get Claire registered on the list due to political corruption: the village leader's favouring of genocide orphans. The youth and grandmothers seemed resigned to the fact of this corruption and rhetorically asked what they could do about it. What they did do was to repeatedly attempt registration, each time hoping for a different outcome. The list simultaneously symbolises hope and acts as an instrument of despair (Herzfeld 1992) and thus begs the question of how people sustain hope in the face of continuously thwarted hope and its unlikely production of different outcomes in the future (cf. Miyazaki 2006).

According to Zigon, (2009) hope is what we might find when we expect to find hopelessness, life a precarious balancing act between hopelessness and hope. Attempts at orphan registration were made for a variety of unique and personal reasons yet the repetitive attempts represent a series of similar moments of exceptional hopelessness that require new attempts at action to regain hope. Zigon has termed such moments moral breakdowns out of which hope can grow and produce "intentional and ethical action", to live through a breakdown and return to the existential structure of persistent hope as "the background attitude for unreflective being-in-the-world" (2009:266). Hope, thus, reflects Asad's conceptualisation of agency as an aim toward continuity, stability and to live sanely (2003). Hope is "in its most ontologically basic form, a kind of obstinacy, patience, or perseverance, warranted by the sense that one's subjectivity is ongoing rather than about to come to an end" (Badiou quoted in Jackson 2011:79). The repetitive attempts are thus like a moral discipline, an impetus without which life becomes meaningless, a stubborn insistence to "keep going despite everything" (Pells 2011). The desire to be registered on the list may thereby not be the actualisation of support but the sustaining of the capacity to desire a different kind of life (de Vries 2007:27).

The 'promise' of orphan support becomes the energy that sustains meaning during desperate times (Zigon 2009) and facilitates "the capacity to face the uncertainties of the future" (Hage 2007:26). Rwandans describe 'desperation' as a noisy, hot head and a heart without peace, which leads to madness (*gusara*: to be mad, crazy). In situations of breakdown the physical energy expended on the trek to the Sector Office or the mental energy expended on ethical self-work is crucial for the ability to go on with life, to prevent the head from becoming noisy with thoughts. While Fideri never

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[54] A rather attuned observation when an analysis of the orphan statistics emerging from the list, present in Chapter 5 of this thesis, suggests that children are indeed more likely to be written on the list if they have their parents.

believed she would succeed in registering, the hopeful expectations after each trip to the authorities restored her ability to get up for school every morning and to tell her sister to stay in bed until her trauma passed. The walk to the Sector Office thus provides the 'imaginative stimulus', not as Crapanzano (2003) suggests to transform hope into effective desire, but to allow hope to emerge in the first place. Attempts at registration are perhaps then best described as the production of hopeful agency to achieve a normal life without too many worries, to live 'sanely' (Zigon 2009:263; Asad 2003), and as such, "challenges the logic of victimisation that is correlative with a passive subject, a subject who is satisfied with the right to narrate her suffering" (de Vries 2007:41), which inheres in Cheney's tropes of vulnerability. Contained in this hopeful agency is a socio-culturally significant ambition and political struggle for recognition.

Relations of Dependence: Orphan Mentors and Sugar Parents

The significance of Jeneti's *nkunabana*, while drawing her away from her family, is neither novel nor as damaging as suggested by Cheney or Nieuwenhuys, although it is not risk-free either. Like elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa, there is in Rwanda a history of personhood defined through relations of dependence and reciprocity (deLame 2005:36; Lemarchand and Legg 1972), broadly defined as "the submission of low-status actors to higher authority" (Kaufman 1974:286). According to Ferguson, in such social contexts, being somebody means belonging to somebody (2013:228), and is a means of acquiring membership into a community. Sherz (2014) terms this form of social recognition an ethics of interdependence. In Rwanda, several forms of clientship existed, land and cattle contracts being the most pervasive and socially important (Newbury 2001:306; Prunier 1997:13). These have been described as an integrative but unequal (Maquet 1961) and often exploitative (Newbury 2001:305) clientage system nonetheless affording opportunities for social mobility (Prunier 2001; Thompson 2009), even if to limited extent (Newbury 2001; Pottier 2002:117). Clientage is associated with a social structure in which a person is defined by his status as someone who is either supported by others or supports others himself, or indeed, as both – a patron to clients and a client himself to men higher up in the system (Ferguson 2013; Sherz 2014:19). Although less institutionalised post-genocide, clientage as a productive and valued socio-economic and political relationship continues to create a firm base for power and upward mobility.

There is some evidence of patronage relations being instrumental in the care of orphans in situations where extended families were either unwilling or unable to do so. In her Rwandan

biography from the 1960s, Codere quotes the story of Sezibera, a Tutsi who upon the loss of his father is brought by his mother to the father's patron (*shebuja*) where he lives a comfortable life and later receives a herd of a hundred cattle. He is provided with education and becomes sous-chef before he takes up a life of cultivation and cattle herding because he had "fertile lands and fine cows" (1973:46). In the aftermath of the genocide, 'big men' such as religious leaders and important businessmen similarly took in some of the many children left orphaned by the genocide. Thus my close friend Pascal was raised by a rich businessman after his entire family except an older sister and aunt – debilitated by trauma – perished in the genocide.

Several types of patrons have developed specific to the sphere of childhood. Kaufman suggests that patron-client models are often seen as filling important gaps in conventional categories used in political science and are thus central to transitional states (1974:306). Here I suggest that patron-client relationships, modified to a specific intergenerational type, fill gaps in the current transition from genocide to a developed state, in which Rwandan children and young people struggle with a variety of 'lacks' (Berckmoes and White 2014) to which patron-client relationships seem a meaningful and strategic response. As suggested by Jeneti, orphans feel they live much more independent lives than their peers; worrying how they will find food, stay in school or pay school-related costs. They feel excluded from important relations of exchange within their families and wider communities. Many orphans, in particular those in Mwiza, thus struggle not just with a lack of access to resources but also with a lack of social support. Following Ferguson (2013), relations of social dependence, instigated through 'declarations of dependence' such as attempts at orphan registration or requests for benefactors, is a contemporary response to the historically novel emergence of a social world where people, long understood as scarce and valuable, are now in surplus and lack in value. Children, like employable but unemployed adults (ibid.), have become 'surplus' as the parental generation shrinks faster than communities can absorb, leaving more children with fewer available 'children's protectors': parents, grandparents and uncles.

The first, *nkundabana,* is a specifically post-genocide construction and deliberate invention by NGOs. *Nkundabana* literally means 'I love children' and refers to a community mentor for children and young people. According to Care International, "The Nkundabana model is a community-based approach that strengthens the capacity of communities and households to fulfil their obligations in the protection, promotion and achievement of child rights and psychosocial support" (Care International nda:11). The concept was first developed in 2000 by Food for the Hungry International in southern Rwanda but was expanded by Care International (ibid.10) and later extended

to northern Rwanda through their COSMO Project. The approach is promoted as best practice in the Policy for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children (2003) and included in most orphan projects. In people's usage of the term, *nkundabana* have by many people, especially adults but also many children, become known as "orphan mentors" (*umurezi m'imfubyi*) rather than as protectors of vulnerable children more generally. As *nkundabanas* are mandated and believed to offer the moral and social support that is otherwise the task of parents, it follows that children with parents or close kin relationships should not need a *nkundabana* who thus become primarily "orphan mentors". However, as Jeneti's case suggests the allocation of orphan mentors to children who have a parent may actually consecrate feelings of existential orphanhood by intensifying the critical evaluation, and judgement, of parents. *Nkundabana* relationships are formally established through NGOs, such as Jeneti's, but they represent a generalised and monetised (or otherwise material) relationship of being supported (*gufanwa*) by a benefactor that attracts many older children and youth and which they seek separate to orphan registration and formal NGO support.

Although benefactors are denoted by a variety of different terms – advisor, sponsor, supporter, patron, *nkundabana* – they all refer to a combination of social and material support. Martin was separated from his family during the war and lived in the centre for street boys. After searching for three years with the help of the Red Cross Reunification Centre, he had not located any family and was giving up hope of ever doing so. Talking about his hopes and ambition for the future (his 'vision' - *icyerekeze*), Martin said he hoped to find a benefactor who could support him through school and help him become an "educated person" (*umumenyi*) and a "good citizen" (*umwenegihugu mwiza*). He hoped to become an "important man", a wealthy businessman or politician (the two are often conflated), so he could help street boys and orphans. To attract such a benefactor, he tried to be a good student by working hard so his teachers would notice him. Amongst the street boys, Martin was also notable for his respectful attitude and calm, quiet manner, and his obvious achievement of *agaciro* (integrity). At 16, he was slightly older than the other boys and often became an older brother to whom younger boys turned for advice and conflict-mediation. This focused ethical work on improving his *agaciro* seemed to be noted by the centre staff who often relied on Martin for communication with the other boys. Yet when talking about his relationship to the centre staff, Martin felt that they often did not seem to care much about the boys and only saw it as a job and did not feel he gained much from his relation to them. Thus, when it had been a while since the boys had received new clothes and school materials and as he missed the first week of school after the holidays due to such lack, he desperately wanted a "benefactor" who could support him in a more personal manner.

"Benefactors" were more desired than "sponsors", a term commonly used to refer to the particular form of support provided through child sponsorships run by international organisations such as Plan International amongst others. Having a sponsor was valued because they were often wealthy Americans, but they were not as prestigious as having a benefactor because geographical distance and lack of any means of control in the sponsor relationship made them an ambiguous aspect of people's lives. Families of sponsored children wondered why they were not allowed to know the exact details of their sponsors or why they could not communicate with them directly. One Kaganzan family with a sponsored child also felt the sponsorship came at some cost. Their sponsored child had to walk for over an hour each way every Saturday to attend school at the church administering the sponsorship. In return, they were given clothes and occasionally some other materials but they never knew what they would receive or when. What they did receive often did not correspond to their needs. Compared to such sponsorships, local benefactors constituted not only more consistent and stable relations of dependence and support but also offered the dependent, or beneficiary, some degree of control over the support they received.

In neighbouring, culturally similar Uganda, Sherz has observed that people desire unconditional support due to an emphasis on the opportunity to define their own needs and channel appropriate resources to address the needs they themselves prioritise (2014:50-2). Pells (2012) makes a similar argument in her research with children in Kigali who appreciate the support they receive but feel a need to understand and influence the allocation of resources. Sherz importantly points out that clients historically had a significant level of control over their patrons as they had the possibility of seeking other patrons if let down by their current one (2014:24). Similarly, Ferguson suggests that people in southern Africa sought 'freedom' through a plurality of opportunities for dependence. The scarcity of people meant that patrons desired clients who were thereby afforded significant control in choosing their patron (2013:226). As such, a "sense of agency was predicated on their choice of whom they would be dependent on" (Scherz 2014:22). By submitting themselves to relations of dependence, children and youth assert agency in choosing how to alleviate a difficult situation and create important feelings of control by trying to access the combination of social and economic support they desire.

The search for benefactors, however, is risky business and leaves children and youth vulnerable to exploitation if they find the wrong benefactor, namely the ambiguous 'shoga dadi'. The concept of sugarparents is widespread across sub-Saharan Africa and is considered a new social ill, a sign of a culture in decline, bound up with the forces of globalisation, modernity and cultural-economic development that were at play even prior to the genocide (Taylor 1992). Sugarparents are

found in a variety of forms throughout sub-Saharan Africa (Bhana and Pattman 2011; Cole 2009; Luke 2005; Selikow and Mbulaheni 2013; Yamba 2005). In Rwanda, they are strongly condemned through national campaigns such as *Singurisha!*[55] (Gerver 2015) due to the exploitative relationship they represent, often revolving around sexual services by children and youth to older, wealthier adults. While promising children better material lives through 'conspicuous consumption' (Selikow and Mbulaheni 2013), relations with sugarparents involve considerable risk in the form of pregnancies, HIV/Aids and stigmatised reputations (Luke 2005; Yamba 2005).

Evelyne and Delphine were both strong advocates for staying away from sugardaddies, even if these wealthy men could provide them with much desired resources. Delphine could not understand why her 15-year old sister had wanted to 'marry[56]' a man she barely knew and with whom she soon after became pregnant. Delphine did not believe a relationship to a wealthier man would benefit her situation because she could not be sure that he would treat her well or that he would stay with her. If he decided to leave her and she had become pregnant, it would only worsen her situation. Evelyne shared Delphine's concerns but, unlike Delphine, struggled to stay away from sugardaddies. Evelyne who experienced severe difficulties with her foster mother grew tired of always struggling to access necessary and desired resources in her home, of the ever-occurring arguments and at times physical fights. She was attracted to the promise of a future life in Kigali by her boyfriend, a professional soldier. He provided her with presents and spoke of a better life for both of them. Shortly after yet another physical row with her foster mother over access to resources, Evelyne moved with him first to Kigali, then Musanze, until he suddenly disappeared. Waiting alone in the house for weeks for his return, she eventually learned that not only had he been arrested for "genocide ideology", he also had a wife and children in another village. At that moment, she realised he had been nothing but an opportunistic sugardaddy. Devastated and embarrassed, Evelyne returned to her foster mother, aware that her reputation had deteriorated. The intense desire for benefactors is an ambiguous experience and a journey full of dangers and broken hopes but like the orphan list, the potential held in such relations was for many greater than the associated risks.

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[55] I am not for sale!

[56] Cf. Henderson (2006:315) for a discussion of orphans' use of informal marriages "to broaden network of family on which to draw, an important safety net in a time of widespread deaths" and to provide an acceptable social context for pregnancy.

Figure 3 12-year old boy from Kaganza depicting a child caught between his family and a 'shoga dadi' and ending up in a HIV-testing clinic (child and nurse in the centre).

An Orphan Industry?

Turning to some of the many "important" people in the local town and the villages, it appears that orphan care projects have become a highly desired career choice and path for personal accumulation, not only in terms of economic status but also social prestige. Here I want to explore this link between 'business', entrepreneurship, NGO involvement and leadership evident in the lives of several *nkundabanas* and political authorities and consider within the Rwandan context Bianca Dahl's notion of an orphan industry or enterprise. In a workshop on children's rights in the Global South, Cheney (2014b) gave a fascinating if frightening presentation on an American girl's fundraising initiative to support vulnerable and victimised orphans in sub-Saharan Africa through the campaign slogan "Addicted to Orphans". This became Cheney's catchphrase for the continuously expanding orphan 'industry' (Dahl 2014) surrounding vulnerable children's lives in Africa. In a similar vein to Dahl's "fat orphans", "addicted to orphans" emphasises the self-perpetuating 'desiring machine' that orphanhood has become in sub-Saharan Africa. In both cases, the orphan enterprise or industry is emerging from a wider trend of 'orphan tourism', a reference to the popularity of

development programmes, evangelical missions and charity volunteer programs focussed on orphans, and primarily AIDS orphans. This link is of significance to how global NGO categories get adopted and adapted locally by the society in which children live their lives.

Associated with the focus on self-sufficiency and sustainability is a government emphasis on the 'responsible' citizen who adopts or fosters orphans and generally assist those more vulnerable within their community. The combination of these two qualities of citizenship are merging in a very interesting way: the possibility of adults to become 'important people', socially, politically and economically powerful patrons through orphan support. Of local patrons are a number of adults in their forties and fifties, men as well as women, who have effectively become an intricate combination of well-to-do businessmen and women and NGO directors and chairpersons, as "development brokers" who are

> "supposed to present *the* local populations, express its [sic] 'needs' to the structures in charge of aid and to [the] external financiers. In fact, far from being passive operators of logic[s] of dependence, development brokers are *the* key actors in the irresistible hun for projects carried out in and around African villages". (Bierschenk 2002:4, quoted in Lewis and Mosse 2006:12)

Since Vincent was chosen as *nkundabana* in Mwiza, he has dutifully attended all the monthly meetings at CYP and taken on the role as representative of the *nkundabanas* in his Sector. He often steps in for the *nkundabana* president, a busy businessman who often misses meetings. Vincent is consequently taking on increasing responsibility in CYP's work with orphans. Vincent is also heavily engaged in church and *umuganda* activities. On several occasions, I passed through the village as able men and women were working on improving the weather-damaged roads or cleaning up wild growth in the village streets; Vincent often directed the work. On other occasions, I met him as he hastily cycled to a meeting at the Sector Office or returned from one in a hurry home to open his shop. On yet other occasions, I met him on the way to a meeting at his church. He was, in many ways, a visible man on the rise. Another example is Samira, Kaganza's village leaders. The extent of her influence and power was far from limited to Kaganza but extended to the local town where most western and Rwandan NGOs and politicians knew of her and had had dealings with her.

Two other figures were the male directors of the two NGOs supporting orphans in Mwiza. Both were known as successful businessmen, lived in the wealthier quarters of the local town and drove around in big white jeeps associated with international NGOs. In the case of CYP's director, Joseph, was involved with a variety of projects. In addition to running a private primary school, nursery and pre-school, a school for children with intellectual disabilities, a soon-to-open secondary

school, and running the project for youth-headed households (supporting 90 such youth), Joseph was also a member of the local security council and several state boards and bodies. Joseph was a widely respected and liked man whom youth always spoke of with obvious affection. However, during the course of research, Joseph decided to wind down the orphan project instead to focus on running the two private schools. As with Joseph, the director of the other orphan-focused NGO in Mwiza seemed pulled further towards the business side of the NGO. While at the outset of my research, their *nkundabana* project was the primary support offered by the NGO, at the end the NGO had no more involvement with orphans but had instead started a cooperative for HIV-infected adults. The concurrent extensive expansion of the office premises suggested that the cooperative was a more profitable operation for the NGO, which had restricted access to international and government funding and instead relied on locally sustainable funding mechanisms. In both cases, it appeared that the orphan care projects had helped the men to gain social capital and important aid money but that other more "sustainable" and profitmaking projects had with time become more desirable.

Regardless of the businessmen's intentions and motivations behind the orphan care projects, the abundance of people claiming to support orphans and desiring to become *nkundabana* either as wealthy patrons or local community mentors suggests that orphan care provides a means of accumulating social and cultural capital. *Nkundabanas* have become widely perceived as morally good people whose respect is as automatic as the perceived efficacy of the orphan list. Moreover, *nkundabana* have to be approved by their NGO, which in turn needs official approval to operate in an area. Hence, to gain respect from an NGO is inadvertently to gain some level of respect with local authorities. By being selected as *nkundabana*, people such as Vincent, have access to social capital previously unavailable to them, through which they can negotiate new positions within their community as well as new access to resourceful agents and resource-creating activities. Albeit not as powerful as village leaders who have an official status within government structures, *nkundabana* provide a new figure and different kind of authority within the communities where they operate. There were a number of children and young people who not only desired to have a *nkundabana* but also aspired to becoming one themselves, as did Martin. Indeed, his search for a benefactor was to facilitate his own eventual transition into that role. As such, some youth desired not just a personal status as orphans but aspired to a career as "important people" who work for NGOs, become village leaders and "help orphans" as orphan mentors or well-resourced, privileged patrons. In a sense they worked to become "employable subjects" (Scherz 2014:101) through their negotiation of the entire orphan experience. This suggests that the relations of dependence surrounding orphanhood are not

just valued by the dependents but by people seeking to turn their "wealth in goods" into "wealth in followers" (Vansina 1990; see also Guyer 1995). Orphanhood indeed appears as both a 'desiring machine' and 'industry'.

Ambiguities of Support: Unbecoming Orphans

Orphanhood encompasses an inherently ambiguous desire for simultaneously publicising and concealing it, instrumentalising and overcoming it. The orphan 'desiring machine' or 'industry' co-exists with an emphasis on silence regarding the actual receipt of support. Receiving support is often not admitted to or is mentioned as a side-comment, brushed away in haste. It is significant, for example, that people would rather narrate their genocide survival story (known as 'testimonies') than talk about support they received. When Husina's house was refurbished during the annual Genocide Commemoration Week, her aunt was secretive and uncomfortable when it came to discussing the source of support. When François passed her house and saw several of the village boys mixing cement outside, busily working on her kitchen and carrying bricks, he congratulated the aunt on extending her house. Not an unusual question, he enquired how she had accomplished to extend the house. She vaguely brushed off the question with a reference to hard work and a sponsor, but it had been obvious to François that she had not wanted to discuss the source of funding. When Mama Christian on the other hand had extended their house a couple of months previously, doubling it in size to accommodate their large family, she had proudly spoken of her husband's hard work as a police officer and her own effort in saving up money and sometimes contributing with her own income from hairdressing services to friends and neighbours. It was obvious that the presence of a sponsor made a significant difference as to how the two women felt and spoke about their house extensions.
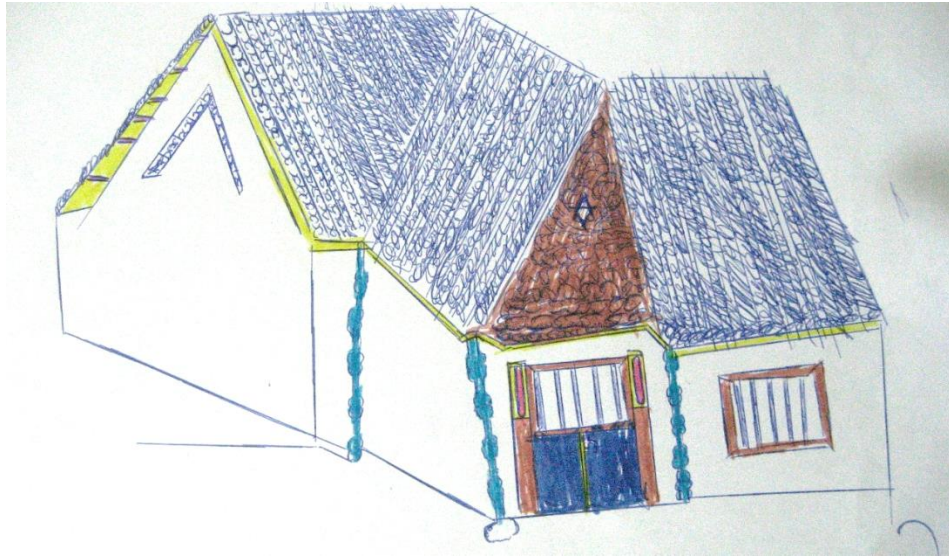
Figure 4 Mama Chadarake's refurbished house, drawn by her youngest son.

Husina's aunt's reluctance to speak of support she received was shared by many others and was ambiguously grounded in a reluctance to be publically known as someone in need of support – as a poor person with a limited social network. This reluctance may be grounded in fear that as beneficiaries people may be called upon to support others in their community or family or may be perceived to have corrupted local authorities to receive support (cf. Guglielmo 2015). Yet these were neither the only nor the most prevalent fears expressed by people in Kaganza. Cindy's grandmother, Shangaze, was more reflective regarding her own and Cindy's support by FARG and a variety of other organisations. Cindy loved to show me her bankcard, telling me of their trips to town to get money payments from FARG and her mother in Europe. Her fascination was such that she dreamed of becoming a banker and work for Western Union. Although Shangaze laughed affectionately at Cindy's proud display of her bank card, the grandmother was also visibly uncomfortable and soon tried to change the topic. Support may be desirable but it is not unproblematically so: the desire for charity exists in tension with a 'stigma of charity' (Fothergill 2003). It is deeply ambiguous.
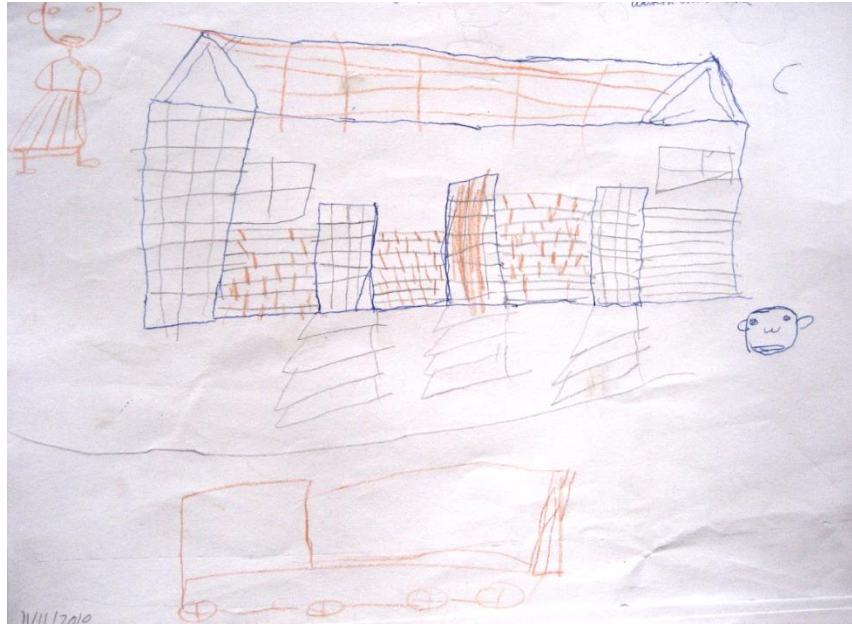
Figure 5 Cindy's depiction of the theme 'Future Career'. The house is a Western Union bank where she hopes to work.

When I came to know Cindy's grandmother much better, she explained in detail why she was so uncomfortable with the support. The grandmother knew she would not be able to get by without the support given by FARG and the extensive communal support that her status as a particularly suffering genocide widow (cf. Chapter 6) entailed. This dependence, so desired by those who did not experience it, was a difficult experience for her. It presented a constant reminder of the extent of her loss during the genocide where most of her family had been killed or fled, making her reliant on state, charitable and communal support. Cindy's grandmother was also uncomfortable with the public status that came with support. She felt that many people were jealous of her and felt they could not appreciate that her life would be impossible without it. Her ambivalence was further compounded by the fact that her nephew who had lived with her since the death of his parents was incredibly skilled in finding benefactors and had established a myriad of beneficial and highly resourceful relationships with well-meaning European NGO workers in the local town. His elaborate network of such relationships meant that he had greatly improved the availability of goods in his aunt's household but it also intensified (some) people's jealousy towards the family. It is not a coincidence that he is behind the 'shoga dadi' drawing above – it is the most recent addition to his life story. Thus, to Cindy's grandmother, her official registration as a vulnerable household and consequent material support represented not the hope for a better life but an impossible obstacle in ever properly recovering from the trauma and destruction of the genocide because her very survival depended on it.

127

How does this ambiguity concur with the desire for official registration and support as an orphan? A similar ambiguity existed in the kinds of projects and supports youth desired. Many youth spoke of a desire to "find projects" (*gushaka umushinga*) that could teach them essential skills to become "self-sufficient" (*kwigira*). Children and youth are categories of persons defined by their dependence on others (Veale 1999), thus to aim for "self-sufficiency" is a contradiction in terms and at best undesirable. It also seems a contradiction in terms when children and youth simultaneously desire relations of dependence on patrons and NGO-provided resources. Youths' such ambitions suggest that while it is desirable to become immersed in relations of dependence and to be supported by virtue of officially becoming an orphan, being a dependable orphan lacking the ability to reciprocate support or to survive without it, is undesirable. Martin's desire for a benefactor, suggested above, was partly in order to make himself an important person who could develop to support others. Similarly Isabelle from Mwiza, along with several of her peers, often spoke of the difficulty in approaching kin and neighbours for support or to visit them because they never had anything to offer. According to Isabelle, she could not continue to ask a neighbour for advice, or a loan, or simply to keep visiting without bringing a gift. She would have to wait for the neighbours instead to initiate the contact, to come to visit or greet her in the street and invite her home. Rarely did this happen. Hence the significance of the sowing machine for Jeneti; it provided her the much needed opportunity to become a person to whom people turn.

Similarly, Shangaze's felt ambiguity arises from the central tenant of patronage, reciprocity, even if unequal. Through Shangaze's complete dependence on charity to survive and care for her orphans, and her inability to retain her benefactor-searching orphaned nephew at home, she was unable to reciprocate the support she received. As an ageing grandmother, Shangaze could not partake in the long-term reciprocity desired by youth – at least not in her own perception. Despite her ambivalence towards her full dependence, she had in fact become an important person within her community, a cherished community elder to whom people came for moral support and to whose house children came in numbers simply to spend the day at leisure. Not recognising her own status of importance, Shangaze felt deeply ambivalent about her extensive material support.

Projects that teach self-sufficiency skills are the core offer of 'post-charity', sustainable development programs (Scherz 2014). In Rwanda, such "projects" can refer to anything from vocational training run by local, national or international NGOs, such as car mechanics, seamstresses or basket makers, microfinance projects, back-to-school or literacy training amongst others. Unlike their Ugandan counterparts described earlier, Rwandan youth pointed to a desire to be given the tools

128

to improve their own lives in order to be independent of others. This double stance of desiring important relations of dependence while also desiring independence reflects Allard's observation of the ambivalence toward paternalistic relationships which are desired as a source of protection, care and wealth but which people also "want to be able to avoid in other instances, such as when they act as autonomous people" (Allard 2012) – as citizens of a modern state. The focus on self-sufficiency reflects new trends in the kinds of social and economic relationships that are desired and espoused by the government and the entire state apparatus (ibid).

The fact that youth desire "self-sufficiency" through means other than marriage, family- and home making suggests that processes of status acquisition and identity-making are changing and that individuality (necessarily implicit in "self-sufficiency") is an important social value herein. While Taylor (1992) traces the origins of individuality and private/personal capital accumulation to the incorporation of capitalist modes of accumulation in pre-genocide Rwanda, self-sufficiency as a desired socio-economic objective has been particularly strongly promoted by the post-genocide government. Kinzer highlights Kagame's "doctrine of security, guided reconciliation, honest governance and, above all, self-reliance" (quoted in Sommers 2012:23) while several policy documents emphasise the need to enable the population to assist in developing themselves. Some people, like Samira and Vincent, and impoverished yet aspiring youth have bought into this call for self-initiated development and independence. However, as Jeneti and Martin's ambitions suggest, and as the orphan industry 'entrepreneurs' suggest, the desire for self-sufficiency and independence is not in fact so much about independence and self-reliance but rather revolves around a desire to transition from the status of beneficiary to benefactor. It is esteemed to be a client but it is prestigious to be a patron. What Shangaze did not realise was that she was both; thus her ambiguity. As Sherz emphasises ideally a person is both – no one wants to be at the very bottom of a hierarchy.

Shangaze's ambiguity, and indeed that of others, may also reflect deVries' suggestion that it is the ability to sustain the capacity to desire rather than the actualisation of support that is central to the desire for development (de Vries 2007:27). What was somewhat unique for Shangaze – and many of her peer survivors – was that she had not had to fight for her extensive and diverse support; most of it had more or less landed in her lap. For others, the struggle for support entailed an important quest for recognition that was essential to their sense of integration within a new Rwanda.

The Moral-Political Claims of Orphanhood

deVries suggests that acting upon the desire for development (here orphan programmes) is a means of holding particular agents or agencies responsible for creating this desire (and thus causing the 'lack'). By continuously desiring inclusion on the orphan list and access to support from state bodies and NGOs, people are holding these very agencies and agents responsible for their lacks and desires, and thus, for fulfilling them. While Elise's grandmother did return home to "be patient" as advised by the Sector officials, she did not hesitate to return to the Sector when her grandson living in the streets was imprisoned and Francois and I failed to get him released. Nor did she hesitate to citicise both the village leaders and sector authorities in our many conversations over late night dinners as her concurrent disillusions with the community and her difficulties in raising Elise grew. The fact that Elise's grandmother went to the local authorities every time she felt life became harder than normal, suggests that she has certain expectations of the state in alleviating hardships – and that she continuously holds the state responsible for such alleviation by making particular 'needs claims' on the local authorities responsible for the list. Hope here is not simply a stubborn refusal to succumb to hopelessness but is an act of resistance against passive, reluctant or event corrupt leaders.

Allard suggests that "'writing acts' are often as important as the written documents they generate" (2012:236). Even marginalised people can play the bureaucratic game – albeit with various levels of success. Declarations of dependence thus have inherent in them a nature of equality (Englund 2011:3-4; Haynes 2015:283), described as "a condition of the very claim dependents can place on their masters, benefactors and leaders" (Englund 2011:14). Similarly, according to Allard, the introduction of an administrative logic has changed the way Argentinian Warao manage asymmetrical relations with outsiders. They have learned how to act as bureaucratic agents and use documents in their attempts to obtain wealth without being confined to a subordinate position; by writing documents, they can cause others to act with regard for them. In a similar vein, Rwandans who experience hardships due to orphanhood have learned how to use the bureaucratic act of counting orphans to negotiate the hardships and challenges they meet in their everyday lives. Like the Warao, "having to elicit compassion or to work strenuously are [no longer] their only options when they desire money and commodities, since they can now be assertive and claim their rights" (Allard 2012:251). By making claims to the local authorities and insisting on creating relations of dependence where they can make claims to a more dignified life, orphans aspire to greater equality with their peers from whom they feel inherently different. By claiming the entitlements the orphan lists promotes, they seek to reduce the power gap that separates them from such a life.

The list, as a declaration of dependence, becomes an instrument of 'moral performance' (ibid.:244) through which youth and carers actively seek to negotiate responsibility for the improvement of their lives – by casting themselves as needy to the local authorities, they are using their 'needs talk' (Fraser 1989) to make claims on the state. By simultaneously searching for benefactors, they increase their social recognition as in need of support, and thereby feel they increase their chances of being registered as an orphan and receive formal NGO support. By doing so, they actively engage in the politics of needs by exercising their 'imagination for participation' (Appadurai 2007). According to Nancy Fraser (1987) the definition of a state of poverty – or in the language of international development, vulnerability – is never a straightforward issue but deeply political. A politics of need exists through which various actors from different positions talk about need. In this line of thinking democracy is based on the participation of various interested parties – including the state – in the politics of need interpretation (Muakami 2014:181-2). By giving citizens rights, the state also gives them the tools to claim such rights, and thus to protect them from a failing or neglectful state (Gordillo 2006). Thus, similarly to deVries, Nixon refocuses attention on the process by which needs are recognised and addressed, rather than the outcomes of need satisfaction (2010:165).

Part of the hopeful agency generated through orphan registration, I contend, arises from the list's instrumentality, as an instance of bureaucracy, in triggering the release of a due from the state (Allard 2012:246). The state is giving orphans certain rights to resources through the orphan list. Thus, when orphans or their carers feel that life is unusually difficult they claim these rights from the state. 'Declarations of dependence' through official, public orphanhood may thus beneficially be framed as an example of Appadurai's notion of the capacity to aspire:

> "…in strengthening the capacity to aspire, conceived as a cultural capacity, especially among the poor, the future-oriented logic of development could find a natural ally, and the poor could find the resources required to contest and alter the conditions of their own poverty."
>
> (Appadurai 2004:59)

Of significance here is Müller's research on AIDS mitigation interventions with Mozambican orphans (2010). Through such interventions, Müller suggests, children gain cultural resources and thereby enhance the capacity to aspire. Making declarations of dependence on bureaucracy and on people higher up in the hierarchy is a novel mode of participation through which young people like Fideri and Jeneti are slowly developing their capacity to improve the conditions of their own lives by seeking to establish new relations and networks that can benefit them. Appadurai refers to this slow building up of knowledge of participation and navigation as a politics of patience (2007), an apt term

for Rwandans whose primary mode of expressing hope is learning to be patient and wait for better times while continuously, slowly, remaining focused on seeking new ways to improve their lives.

With its future-orientation, the capacity to aspire entails hope. The orphan list has become an important means in the "politics of needs" (Fraser 1989) through which "needs talk" (when seeking registration) can act as a mode of participation for the poor (here poor orphans) in defining their own needs (Murakami 2014). According to Appadurai "to exercise imaginations for participation" is a constitutive element of democratic politics through which hope can emerge through scaled exercises in building a cultural capacity to aspire (Appadurai 2007:33). This line of analysis departs from many studies on development categories, which see the labelling of people implied in targeted support as inhibitive and stigmatising and as counteracting the aims and objectives of development and human rights agendas (Cheney 2012; Moncrieffe and Eyben 2007; Panter-Brick 2002).

Becoming and Unbecoming Orphans

Development categories such as 'orphan' constitute 'living categories' because they become forever perpetuated not simply through their creation on paper but because they have the potential to influence outcomes; they have 'agency' (Green 2011:33). People who seek registration on the orphan list see the list as a continuously 'live' document that implies an ongoing assessment of their everyday struggles and consequent demands for recognition of needs. The declarations of dependence that people make on the list, and on potential benefactors, thus become key instruments in their "symbolic struggle for recognition" (Bourdieu 2000, quoted in Das and Randeria 2015:S4). Thus, although the list is compiled once a year before a set deadline, a temporally confined activity, those who sought to be registered on the list considered it an ongoing process of registration that could never be fully completed because people's circumstances were always changing. This is in contrast to other campaigns of registration (Allard 2012), such as the process of registering land claims, where claims had to be made before a given date and were finalised shortly after once and for all (you either own land or you don't). The perceived infinite nature of the list contributes to its force, its 'social life'. de Vries argues that development necessarily defines subjects by their lack, that which is to be developed. By defining subjects in this way, development "creates 'desiring subjects' which the (development) apparatus cannot gentrify" (2007:38), what Jackson's terms perennially dissatisfied (2011:99). Whenever a lack is experienced it becomes interpreted according to the new 'standard' of development (de Vries 2007), it becomes a new mode of interpreting the world.

The orphan list, projects and mentors are, in the words of de Vries, creating a "desiring machine" that has turned orphanhood into a privileged status that children in difficulties aspire to when trying to make ends meet or to make sense of their place in the world. Yet the desire inheres ambiguity. Registering or being perceived as being an orphan simultaneously places a child within a category and acts as concealment; it makes children and youth visible as certain subjects while simultaneously allowing for concealment as other types of subjects. People wanted to be publically known as orphans in order to be supported but they do not want the status of being supported. This is a status they want to quickly move through in order instead to become the supporter. Those who spoke of seeking registration on the list were youth and adults who felt socially or economically marginalised and it was in situations of particular hopelessness that attempts at registration were carried out. In this sense, to contact the local authorities to be written on the list is children, youth and their carers' way of telling the authorities they have been forgotten in the local count of orphans. As such, registration on the list – officially becoming an orphan – is the first of many strategies to overcome the challenges of orphanhood. In other words, to borrow Mann's terminology (2011), children "become" orphans in order to "unbecome" orphans. The 'desire' of orphanhood is its instrumental role in *un-orphaning* a child.

Chapter 5

Differentiating Orphans

The Politics of Orphan Statistics

Counting Orphans

Despite the burgeoning orphan industry conceptually facilitated through the orphan list, the list is cast and perceived by local authorities as a straightforward statistical endeavour of registering orphans for the purpose of appropriate resource allocation. The list is part of a wider official trend of counting people. Local populations get counted, registered and statistically analysed every year; a list is drawn up by each sector in which numbers of men and women are counted in twelve different age groups. Every village leader has names, ages and parentage of all his or her citizens (including 'guests' such as me). This information is drawn up into a generalised statistical chart for the sector. This process of counting and surveying is often a very physical one. One of my strongest memories from the poor hinterlands is not that of the NGOs' big four-wheel drives that dominate the streets of Kigali and other urban centres but rather the shiny, white jeeps of the National Institute of Statistics Rwanda (NISR) with the telling slogan "It doesn't count unless it's counted" written on the side. Under this same slogan, NISR launched a Statistics Week during the time of my research in order to encourage the population to help collect statistical information (New Times 2011).

This act of 'counting' is far from simple. Foucault (2008) affords tremendous significance to statistics as a powerful tool in tightly governing a population in indirect ways by delineating, through numbers, what is 'normal' and what is 'abnormal' (see also Hacking's (1990) work on 'chance'). This 'normalising' effect is one of the most fundamental tools of strengthening an ever-stronger state. Development scholars have convincingly argued that in order to make the delivery of services (including NGO projects) possible, a problem has to be "rendered technical", intelligible, by defining it and establishing its nature and boundaries (Rose quoted in Li 2011:57; Ferguson 1990). The orphan list, with its association with statistics gathering, is one such instrument. But through this process even inherently 'technical' problems become politicised because NGO projects, following Ferguson, bring the state closer to people through the provision of infrastructure.

I conducted a detailed analysis of the statistics available for orphans and vulnerable children in Mwiza and Kaganza through a comparison of the data available on the orphan list and my own research sample. The local trends in counting orphans that emerge from this comparison suggest that Mwiza and Kaganza operate with very different orphan categories and definitions of "children who meet more problems than others". In Mwiza, orphans appear as bureaucratically invisible despite the world's highest concentration of child- and youth-headed households. In Kaganza, in contrast, bureaucratically sanctioned orphanhood supersedes that of any other cell in the sector despite a perception amongst most Kaganzan children that they are not orphans. I have alluded to the ambiguous existence of a twin-discourse on orphanhood: the deviant versus the pitied orphan. It is this twin-discourse, I suggest, that is making orphans bureaucratically invisible in one community but turning children healthily and happily nested in secure families into bureaucratic orphans in the other.

The comparison of available statistics as well as a children's rights exercise I conducted with children and young people in the two communities suggest that this twin-discourse is profoundly ethnic in nature and originate in the two critical events that respectively structure social life and dynamics in the two communities, genocide and infiltration war. The literature on orphanhood suggests an exceptionality of AIDS orphanhood (Green 2011:43). In Rwanda, AIDS exceptionality is somewhat less pronounced. The statistical comparison presented here suggests that another kind of orphan is prioritised: the genocide orphan. This category has, in Green's terminology (2011), assumed an agency that drives, not formal policy as Green argues, but implicit political and local trends. Thus, the comparison tells the story of a politicisation of orphanhood that is grounded in a differentiation of orphans according to their socio-political histories.

Technical Orphans

In order to deliver services, as Ferguson and others have argued, a problem has to be rendered technical. Statistics is an important tool in such rendering technical of a problem. Problems are easier to handle when one has an idea of their scale and measure. Thus the historical focus in orphan literature on orphans' numbers and the kinds of problems that can easily be 'rendered technical' through quantifiable figures, such as access to school. In the local office of the powerful organisation the Global Fund, they held rows upon rows of folders with 'OVC statistics' on the spine. Due to the sheer bulk of them, it was evident that they had gathered additional statistics to the OVC list, which they also received from the local authorities. The obvious bureaucracy as I stood in the doorway to

the office when I first approached them intrigued me. Yet due to previous experiences of working with researchers that got them in trouble with the government, I was denied access to this crucial organisation, as also happened with Care International. I therefore did not learn of how they gathered these statistics, what they used them for and in what ways. Yet it was evident that statistics played a key role in helping organisations working locally in defining the problems they were trying to solve. In a small local NGO that ran a *nkundabana* project in Mwiza and surrounding villages, when I requested a meeting with the NGO staff, their way of describing their projects and the nature of the problem they were trying to address was a narration of the very specific numbers of various 'kinds' of orphans such as AIDS orphans, maternal, paternal and double orphans, child and youth heads of households. Such statistics are a normal part of measuring the outcomes of NGO projects and they seemed a normal feature of how local NGO staff in particular conceptualised the problems with which they were dealing. In the process of measuring a problem and the outcomes of trying to alleviate it, people have to be rendered as certain kinds of subjects to be made countable and possible to support. In Rwanda, this counting is public and physical in nature, bodies – especially those of children – are often counted in public space.

The orphan list is part of a wider official trend of counting orphans. The communal collection of statistics of OVC is matched in schools by a visible, physical counting of orphans. When I first approached one of the local schools in Kaganza with the view to examine the educational experiences of orphans, I had not expected the administration of the school to know who the orphans were. The headmaster however instantly told me that it was easy to identify the most appropriate classes to attend as they held detailed accounts of the orphans in each class. Thus, when I asked about the numbers of orphans in the school, he showed me a spreadsheet of all the numbers (paternal, maternal, double, female and male orphans, for all the classes in the school) – a sheet they had to fill out for the Ministry for Education. Each school I later visited showed me an identical spreadsheet as I described my research to them. Schools are also supposed to collect statistics on children with intellectual disabilities, amongst others, but the only statistics that were consistently filled out in the files were the statistics on orphans. The other pages were mostly empty, except for a couple of random classes with children with a disability[57]. I later sat in on one of the classes and was suddenly met by the bishop who had founded the school He told me about his motivations for building 25 homes for

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[57] These did not correspond to the classes where I knew of children with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities that saw the children repeating the same lower primary classes over and over again.

orphaned students of the school in Kaganza. I discreetly asked him whether he knew roughly how many of the children in the class were orphans. Without further prompt, he asked the children to line up and split into two lines according to whether they were orphans or not. Completely unprepared for this reaction and worried about children publically identifying as orphans, potentially against their will, I tried to stop it by saying I didn't need to know any precise numbers or names. The bishop insisted. In a matter of seconds, the children had lined up in two relatively equal lines of orphans and non-orphans. When it came to collecting the numbers for the ministry, most teachers did not know their students well enough to identity orphans and thus commonly used the same method as the bishop.

Contrary to the Sector list of orphans, no one ever mentioned a quest or desire to be included on the schools' spreadsheet of orphans. In comparison to the negotiations involved in registration on the sector list, this collection of statistics seemed a more straightforward 'counting' exercise of writing down the names of children who did not live with one or both of their parents for reasons of death, disappearance or destitution. The collection of children's orphan status, however, meant that children were used to having to publically identify with particular categories for the purposes of collecting statistics, although they did not always know for what purposes. Some NGOs used similar ways of gathering information on orphans, in addition to receiving the local OVC list. When the new NGO supporting children in post-conflict areas came to Kaganza, they similarly lined children up to record their details. Interestingly, the man who led the whole operation called himself a 'technician' who had come to help with the registration of children. They set up a big platform by a run down, abandoned house that was often used by different pastors to gather a new congregation in the village. Over a loudspeaker they announced the arrival of the NGO, shortly introduced what it was about and then asked children to line up for photos and to have their details recorded. A lot of children did so and their parents and guardians stood around in the streets, watching the activity with intrigued interest. Francois recognised people from town and as we walked through the streets of the village, we saw women with children sitting down for picnics, obviously having come from afar to register their children. People from Kaganza itself were not particularly impressed. The photos were a requirement for registration, yet people had to pay for the photos. When I enquired about this to the 'technician', he said that he too did not agree with this aspect but that the churches, through which the organisation works, required this payment. Kaganzans were suspicious of this because they did not fully understand what they would gain in return. The technician explained that they would get clothes and "other things" and that they would be given trees to plant, which could later be sold back

to the NGO as firewood, as an income-generating initiative. According to the technician "the system of taking photos", as he described it, was to make it easier for benefactors to locate the children to whom they wanted to send things. Thus, each child was given a number that denoted their region and more precise locality so that "children cannot be confused with each other". Despite some adults' apprehension, there was no shortage of children being lined up for counting and documentation.

As with the local NGO recounting all the numbers of orphans, it was never quite obvious how these 'statistics' translated into actual support. Since the day in Kaganza where children were lined up for support, we never heard nor saw anything else of the NGO. With regards to the other NGO that worked with orphans, while they could clearly tell me how many orphans they worked with where, when I asked them to bring me to visit some of their beneficiaries, they had to contact a local 'orphan representative', Evelyne, who knew the orphans they supported. Yet as Evelyne brought me around to the different families, not a single of these were supported through the NGO. Evelyne herself had received a goat but did not have a *nkundabana* or received anything else. She also confided that she did not know what it meant to be an 'orphan representative' and had simply brought us to the children and young people she knew who lived in similar circumstances to herself. Yet, again, the focus on 'counting' orphans in the villages and registering them as particular kinds of children have an immense influence on how children start to perceive themselves, as became evident in the previous chapter. In the remainder of this chapter, I take a detailed look at the kinds of numbers that are gathered and the story they tell.

Statistical Differences

I have highlighted Kaganza's unique reputation as a "village of orphans and widows". The demographic data available for Kaganza and Mwiza challenges this reputation. The statistics may confirm that in Kaganza a higher percentage of older women are looking after younger children, but it does not seem apparent that these older women are widows, nor that the younger children are orphans. As evident from Appendix 5.1, corresponding to the publically held view, Kaganza has a slightly higher percentage of children, young and elderly people compared to Mwiza (60% children/youth and 13% elderly against 50% and 11%). However, of the population above 56 years, Mwiza has a larger percentage of women compared to men, suggesting that Mwiza might have a higher number of widows, likely due to the infiltration war.

The statistics similarly do not imply that Kaganza necessarily has more orphans. The biggest difference between the two villages in numbers for children and young people is for infants where Kaganza has six times more infants of both sexes than Mwiza, despite a smaller population number and fewer women in their reproductive years. As this age category only covers one year, it does not imply that each woman has more children than in Mwiza. It may instead suggest different trends regarding childbirth and rearing. My observations suggest that children are more likely to be left with grandmothers in Kaganza than in Mwiza. Often the children may be registered to be residing in the village because they are born here while the children's mothers themselves may remain registered as inhabitants of their husband's village where they officially live. I never encountered or heard of this situation in Mwiza but saw at least five such cases within a few minutes' walk of my house in Kaganza. While the statistics can also suggest a higher percentage of young mothers below the age of 25, no such difference was apparent to me with an equal number represented in the two villages.

The demographic data may dispel Kaganza's reputation but "the village of orphans and widows" is an accurate descriptor of the significantly different story told by the statistics that can be extracted from the orphan list, and which tells the story of a political shaping of statistics collection. Based on the village descriptions, one would expect Mwiza rather than Kaganza to have more orphans and vulnerable children. The orphan list I had access to (summarised in Appendix 5.2) was published for the authorities as up-to-date in 2011, although the information was in fact collected in September 2009, thus excluding children who were born or moved to the village since. A new list was in the process of being drawn up but had not been completed at the time of my research. Of Kaganza's 2800 children, 9,5% are registered on the list, while of Mwiza's 2500 children, 6,5% are registered on the list. As a cell, Kaganza on average has over twice the number of children registered per village. The two *imidugudu* I concentrated on had 52 and 60 children registered respectively, significantly higher than the average for the cell (43) and nearly triple the average for Mwiza cell (20). In Kaganza children are registered to be vulnerable due to lack of financial means, school- and health-related issues. In Mwiza, the village leaders have not, in most cases, identified the child's vulnerabilities so that either no box, or only one or two boxes (education and food) are ticked for most of the children. The box *kurengerwa* (severe poverty), is here only used once while it is extensively used in Kaganza (nearly all registered children). Within Kaganza, the list of problems is considerably longer for the unit governed by Samira than for the other new unit. In Samira's unit there are also considerably more children ticking *all* the problem boxes despite the identical constitution of the two villages.

While there is nearly the same percentage of all types of orphans (double, maternal, paternal) registered in Kaganza and Mwiza, a much higher percentage of registered children in Mwiza are identified to live with both their parents (25,3%), compared to Kaganza where hardly any children are registered if they live with both parents (4,5%)[58]. These trends mirror complaints by children and youth in Mwiza that orphans struggle to get registered on the list because they lack parents to protect them. Compared to Kaganza, in Mwiza extended kin beyond the nuclear family of children and parents are less likely to look after orphans so that if a child is registered as a double orphan he/she is more likely to have no alternative carer registered. This case is not observed in Kaganza. Thus the statistics indicate that there are more orphans and vulnerable children in Kaganza than in Mwiza, and that these orphans have more problems that are more severe. This interpretation is unlikely to be realistic in light of the villages' characteristics.

None of the orphans who participated in my research in Mwiza were registered on the list while 13 of my Kaganza informants were registered (refer to Appendix 6.3). In addition to the orphans I worked with in Mwiza, through the two local NGOs, I was aware of at least 15 other such children (who were from 15 different families, thus representing 2-3 children) whose profiles are not apparent on the list either. Of the 158 children registered, only five older boys are recorded not to live with anyone (3.2%) while I worked with 18 such children, mainly girls, and as mentioned knew of another 15 sibling groups. Simply through the limited number of people I knew in the cell I could therefore have added another 45-60 children to the list. Furthermore, bearing in mind the difference in socio-economic status and the more recent conflict, it is extremely unlikely that only 158 children could be classified as vulnerable across the entire cell of 5000 inhabitants.

Delphine, Mutesi and their sister are among 100,000 children in Rwanda who live in a household where there is no adult carer (UNICEF and The African Child Policy Forum 2006:15). Mutesi and Delphine are now 18 and are thus technically adult carers but the girls have lived alone for several years and therefore constitute what in the literature has become known as child- and youth-headed households. Children growing up in these households were not evident in the orphan statistics. According to CYP's director, Care International identified 3,000 such households in Gitarama (southern Rwanda) while in the District encompassing Mwiza and Kaganza, over 15,000 such households were identified. How only a handful of such households made it onto the 'orphan list' is

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[58] As the total number of orphans and children who live with both parents does not add up to the total number registered for each of the cells, there are missing data on children's family circumstances.

thus rather astounding. In Kaganza, only one such household existed, three male genocide orphans who had grown up in an orphanage but were relocated to Kaganza when the orphanage closed. This household can no longer technically be defined as a child-headed household as the head of the household was a 30-year old policeman and the youngest 'boy' was a twenty year old secondary school student. It is clear from the numbers extracted from the list that children and youth from Mwiza face significant structural difficulties in registering their vulnerabilities. This lack of access to the orphan list is reflected in children's sense of having status and recognition.

The Hidden Influence of Ethnicity

One important factor in registration on the orphan list may be ethnic, understood in its political sense. Mwiza is predominantly Hutu while Kaganza is predominantly Tutsi. With regards to the orphans and vulnerable children who I knew in Kaganza, only those "from the area" were not registered on the list, namely Elise, his brother and cousins and my neighbour's foster child. An analysis of the birth dates of those registered also suggests a significant political structuring of registration. In Mwiza, the events that caused large numbers of orphans, happened throughout the 1990s: the civil war that led to the genocide, the genocide itself (which also caused deaths of Hutu), revenge killings and, importantly, the infiltration war that led to a massive loss of civilians. Yet for one village in Mwiza Cell, no orphans are recorded as born before 2000 and 60% of those recorded were born within the last four years (2005-2009). In another village, only six children are recorded of whom only one has lost a parent. Four of these children are also born considerably later than the wars. By contrast, Kaganza's registered children are all mainly born in the 1994-1997 period and around 2000, the periods of extreme instability in Rwanda and Congo from where most of Kaganza's repatriated Tutsi came. These numbers clearly indicate that no orphans of the infiltration war have been registered while a large number of genocide orphans and repatriated Tutsi children have.

The political-ethnic interpretation of the orphan list corresponded to several Kaganzan adults' frustration in attempting to register. Mama Joseph complained that her granddaughter Claire could not get any support from FARG and similarly resourceful organisations even though she and her family needed it as much as the children in the village who were registered. Claire's grandmother attributed the lack of support to being "considered like Hutu" (*nkaBahutu*) who "have blood on their hands" and because of this could not have their difficult situation recognised. Yet despite Claire's grandmother's complaint that she could not be registered due to being *nkaBahutu*, families of repatriated Tutsi backgrounds such as Claire's enjoyed considerably better lives than Kaganza's

families "from the area" and surrounding villages. In fact, while Mama Joseph did not believe she had been registered on the orphan list, she had succeeded in doing so and Claire was identified as entitled to free health insurance. Mama Joseph was also able to refurbish her house halfway through my research due to access to land for cultivation. Elise's grandmother did not succeeded in registering although she had many more reasons for being included. Considering the ease with which Samira registered vulnerable children on the list in her village unit, the fact that Elise's grandmother made so many attempts at registration and never succeeded points to her structurally more disadvantaged position as Hutu. Her greater poverty compared to Claire's grandmother further gives credence to this. Of the post-genocide political identity constructs, those of Hutu background were much more dependent on their own entrepreneurial skills in progressing socio-economically, disfavouring people like Elise's grandmother whose responsibility for several orphans and ageing, aching body made entrepreneurship an unavailable strategy for progression.

The strong ethnic politicisation of the registration of orphans warrants an examination of the public discourses that exist around vulnerable childhoods in Mwiza and Kaganza. Village leaders are people from their local communities, elected into power by their village's population, and must therefore be assumed to operate within their communities' discursive landscapes. Village leaders cannot necessarily know all the details of their residents. While they can include any child they may personally know on the list, vulnerable children and orphaned individuals and/or their families have to actively make their situation known to the village leaders. As Claire and her grandmother's story suggests, such active attempts hold considerable scope for negotiation as to who can get written on the list and endows the village leader with immense power over whose vulnerability gets deemed appropriate or sufficient for official registration[59]. The Sector Chief Executive, JM, told me that the office sought to overcome the risk of village leaders' subjective bias by going out to each of the villages to validate the lists received, yet how they did so was not clear.

The significant difference in orphan statistics in the two villages reflect the two populations' perception of their village leaders: one as overly intrusive, the other as disengaged. In Kaganza, the village leader knows the details and conditions of all her households, and through her extensive engagement with NGOs is used to operating in the language of vulnerability in which the orphan list is framed. In Mwiza, the village leader, whom I failed to get a meeting with, is believed to be "too

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[59] This will be explored further in Chapter 6.

busy" to concern himself with the plight of children and others struggling in their daily lives. Instead, he is caught up mediating land and family conflicts. His language of problems is thus not one of orphanhood or vulnerability but one of traditional kin and land struggles, considered by most Rwandans as an inherent aspect of intimate family life.

More significant, however, a comparison of orphan discourses in the two communities, suggest that local perceptions of orphans are strongly indicative of the ethnic structuring that emerged from the orphan statistics above. The desire to get registered on the list was shared by people in both Mwiza and Kaganza but trends in who spoke of the list and why showed some stark structural differences between the two villages. This partly reflects the different experiences and slightly different ages of my research informants but it also reflects wider trends in the differences between the two villages. In Mwiza it was youth who spoke of registering. In Kaganza, on the other hand, it was adult carers of orphans who did so. This reflects not just a higher prevalence of cared-for orphans in my research sample in Kaganza[60], but a stronger presence of a discourse emphasising children's needs to be protected and cared for within their families.

Kaganza: Strong Women, Protected Children

One day when I came to visit Claire and her grandmother in Kaganza, they had a visitor "from town", a man in his forties or fifties of obvious means, dressed in good quality khaki clothes and with the symbolic wide waist of those who can afford to eat well. They invited me to join them; they were passionately engaged in a conversation about the many street children (*mayibobo)* in town. The visitor had noticed several of them on his way, as one has to pass a popular hangout for *mayibobo* on the way to the village. The tone was one of worry; how could children be prevented from ending up on the streets, how could those already on the street be helped, perhaps reunited with their families? They spoke of children they knew who had become *mayibobo*, including Elise's younger brother. But how? The long discussion ended in a common conclusion, "it is difficult to know" (*aragoye ko kumenya*), expressed with a heavy sigh of sadness and despair at their inability to solve the problem.

In Kaganza, a powerful imagery of the child as an individual with rights and as the symbol of a developed state is visible in many families who actively strive towards ensuring that their children

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[60] While my easier acceptance in Kaganza could lead the reader to suspect a more intimate and trustful relationship to adults in Kaganza compared to Mwiza this was not the case. Although it took a while longer in Mwiza I did succeed in building very trustful relationships with adult family members of my young research informants.

have a life in line with the childhood promoted by the government. Claire's grandmother, Mama Joseph, is looking after Claire because Claire's mother died during childbirth and her father lives and works elsewhere. Mama Joseph works hard to pay for the care of her eldest son's daughter in his absence and for her own son to be able to go to a prestigious boarding school. She takes jobs wherever she can find them, but often relies on physically hard and poorly paid work in other people's fields. Such work goes against old cultural Tutsi ideals of status and respectability (Taylor 2005), but like Mama Joseph, many parents and grandparents take on low-status jobs in order to ensure that their children can concentrate on school and do not have to work to contribute to the survival of the household. Mama Joseph once heartily joked that her granddaughter found it too embarrassing to cultivate, which required extra work on the part of Mama Joseph. While Mama Joseph was outspoken about many injustices in the community, she never once complained of the hard work.

Such familial strategies are mirrored at community level. The active participation of children and young people in community life is an important aspect of Kaganza. The youth club that was launched during my research became very popular amongst children and youth. The club met several times a week to practise drama and music, watch films and "get educated on important issues" (*guha inama bw'ibintu bikuru*) such as avoiding family conflicts (*ibibazo m'umuryango*), "bad behaviour" (*umuco mubi*), and most importantly, preventing genocide-ideology (*ingengabitekerezo ya jenoside*). Several survivors participated in the youth club as "advisors" (*umujyanama*) or taught the younger children karate, song writing and guitar playing. According to child and adult villagers these activities meant that "no one has to be alone", including orphans. The youth club's activities were enjoyed by people of all ages. Younger children aspired to become members when they got older. Ngabonziza, a 12-year old boy who loved writing and performing his own songs, worked hard to improve a selection of his songs so he might get the chance to include them in the club's repertoire. Adult villagers, in turn, considered the club an important improvement in the prospects of the village; by focusing young people on social activities, they were kept away from undesirable behaviours. In addition, adults also found the club entertaining and often spoke of their delight at the chance to experience their children's talents. While not everyone strove to promote and ensure a good childhood for the community's children, the dominant cultural trend in the village was an emphasis on development through the new ideals of a good childhood.

Mwiza: A Problem of Orphans

One day when François and I walked down the street after having visited Dusabimana, an older man caught up with us and asked us to stop. He wanted to ask me if I was doing a project for orphans in the village. Without waiting for a reply, he complimented me for my hard work in advising the young people before his voice then turned angry. He explained that they had a big problem of badly behaved youth (*abasore abaha uburara*[61]) that he associated primarily with orphans. Children no longer respected adults so when children did not have parents to raise them it was impossible for community members to educate them. According to the old man, this had resulted in youth now disrupting "peace" (*amahoro*) in the community. As an example, he pointed to an area where he claimed a male orphan lived who stays out drinking in the cabaret until late in the night and makes noise and spectacle on his way home. He then pointed in the direction of Dusabimana's house, where we had come from, and with great frustration said the community really needed someone like me who could help advise the youth. When they would not listen to community members, he reckoned they might listen to me and change their behaviour accordingly.

As suggested by the old man, this discursive framework reflects historical notions of duty and obedience to parents (Maquet 1961:42-3; Veale 1999:108). Historically, children and young people were expected to show respect towards adults and were considered both able and obliged to contribute to the domestic economy. This is still the case in many families. In Mwiza, older children were often seen hard at work cultivating or bringing heavy bags of produce to big markets an hour's walk away. Children and youth generally took pride in helping yet many also found much of their work hard and exhausting. In Mwiza, the discourse emphasises the community's "problem of orphans" and thus casts orphanhood as a significantly "undervalued social category" (Schwartz 2002:431). This discourse mirrors arguments in early academic literature of orphanhood as a "burden" to families and communities[62]. The blaming of Mwiza children and youth is significant in its contrast to the discourse of children and youths' participation in Kaganza.

The high proportion of child- and youth-headed households in northwestern rural villages like Mwiza may be a testament to the framing of orphans as a burden and problem. Such households are commonly understood to be a result of the devastating impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic on sub-

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[61] See Betancourt et al (2011:409) for a list of 'indicators' normally associated with *uburara*, including roaming, moving without purpose, is unruly and does not want to be ruled.
[62] See for example Urassa et al 1997:142.

Saharan African communities (Boris et al 2006), and in Rwanda as the legacy of genocide and mass flight (IPEP/OAU 2000:171). Kin networks and communal support structures are argued to have collapsed under the weight of human and material loss (Bray 2003; Meintjes and Giese 2006; Meintjes et al 2010). In this literature, children growing up in such households have been shown to experience stigmatisation, neglect and maltreatment by their families and communities (Roalkvam 2005), evidence also strongly emerging from Rwanda (IPEP/OAU 2002:171-2; Thurman et al 2006, 2008; Veale et al 2001:110). Scholars have argued that it is the ahistorical nature of these households that prevent their integration in local communities, Veale et al suggesting that such households have "barely been acknowledged by Rwandese society" (2001:110). In contrast, recently, some scholars have begun to see child and youth headed households as a new coping mechanism in communities fragmented by war or HIV/AIDS (Francis-Chizororo 2007; Varnis 2001), as an opportunity for resistance and for determination by children of their own lives and identities, and thus as a strategy for empowerment (Francis-Chizororo 2007). While Mwiza children and youth may also have left their household as a 'strategy for empowerment' and resistance, like Veale et al's informants they feel like a burden (2001:110; see also Skovdal 2010). The association between orphans, delinquent youth and the question of responsibility suggests that the children's age has some influence on the discourse. Yet the fact that in Kaganza, the community responded to 'disengaged' youth by initiating a well-supported and esteemed youth club and never asked children to leave and set up their own household, invalidates arguments that Mwiza orphans' slightly older age may affect a different communal discourse. A children's rights exercise I conducted with children and young people in both communities instead gives credence to an ethnic structuring of orphan discourses and access to the orphan list.

Children's Rights

Inspired by the prominence of a children's rights rhetoric in government campaigns and by some children's unprompted evocations of parental responsibilities and a rights language, I designed an exercise asking children and youth to list the rights they knew and which of these they felt were not realised in their own lives (Appendix 5.5-5.6). In the exercise, Mwiza and Kaganza children and youth differed significantly in the number of rights they identified as well as in the number and severity of unrealised rights. Mwiza youth only identified a limited number of rights (on average less than four). In contrast, children in Kaganza stood out in the number of rights they identified. Six

children wrote out long lists of rights that they knew of, some children identifying as many as nine and ten. Interestingly, the only child in Kaganza "from the area" who completed the exercise (a paternal orphan of the infiltration war) identified only two rights, bringing the overall average down to six, while the average of rights identified by all other Kaganza children was seven[63] (nearly twice that of children in Mwiza). Furthermore, while Mwiza children and youth in general noted fewer rights, they noted more rights that were not respected in their lives than did their peers in Kaganza. Most importantly, they saw their right to parents, food, clothes, to sleep well[64], not to be violated and to be cared for as not respected. One boy wrote: "of all the things I have told I have not found anyone". Contrarily, except for two orphans who identified a breach of their right to parents, children in Kaganza responded that most of their rights were satisfied, including the two children whose rights to parents were unrealised. The remainder of the few identified unrealised rights were much less severe than for Mwiza children and youth, such as the lack of shoes (they had *bodaboda*) and the opportunity to eat eggs. Indeed, this latter right was identified by Cindy whose family in fact have several chickens and eat eggs regularly.

A similar trend was mirrored in children's unprompted evocation of a rights language. The language of rights was widespread amongst Rwandan children and youth, appropriated through NGO campaigns, state rhetoric and local village meetings, children's radio programmes and posters portraying children's rights in schools. Yet, such a language was used in profoundly different ways in the two communities. In Mwiza, I heard very few references to children's rights. The only direct references I heard were from the *nkundabanas* working for CYP, which included raising awareness of children's rights. Children and youth in Mwiza primarily evoked "rights" to explain tense family situations and why they had decided to live as child-headed households. Isabelle several times stated that "we have no voice" and that her grandfather "does not know to listen to us". Particularly interesting here, are adults' use of a rights language. Dusabimana's grandmother spoke of children not wanting their families' support because they wanted "to be free", a language commonly associated with the rights framework (Englund 2006). She also complained that children had lost their "culture"

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[63] While access to education may have explained the difference in children's answers in that children in education may feel more competent in filling out worksheets and thus "perform better", statistical analysis pointed to no association between school and number of rights. For example, the Hutu orphan who only identified two rights attended primary school and performed well in school, while one of the few street children to make a list of ten rights had had only poor access to school. Likewise, there was no association between orphan status and number of rights identified.
[64] To sleep well often refers to good mental and physical health; poor sleep is associated with factors of hunger and a constant state of worry.

(*umuco*) of respecting elders. Like this grandmother, other adults had adopted a language of failure on behalf of children to comply with cultural norms, denoting a general attitude of dissatisfaction with children who were framed as becoming too independent, assertive and demanding through the youths' employment of a language of rights. In contrast, adults and children in Kaganza frequently commented that children in present-day Rwanda have been given rights by President who was considered to "love people" (*akunda abantu*) because he has "given voice" to women and children. Children and youth in Kaganza thus predominantly mentioned rights when speaking of their reverence for Kagame who was seen as personally responsible for the considerably improved welfare of children, through economic development and favourable child policies. Mwiza children and youth's conversations about rights never led to a mention of or discussion on the state as ensuring their rights; rather, rights seemed to be something that existed in theory but which was defined by and set within the context of their families.

The rights language and its divergence in the two communities may play a significant role in the bureaucratic differentiation of orphans. Pells argues that inherent in the provision of NGO support from a rights-based approach is a categorisation of people according to how vulnerable and thus deserving they are (2012:428). While this inherent categorisation may not only be an effect of a rights-based approach but an inevitable outcome of development, policy (Gupte and Mehta 2007:66; Wedel et al 2005:37) and state legality, which "has the propensity to essentialise social practices" (Wilson and Mitchell 2003:4) and rigidify social categories, it speaks to the quality of a rights regime in creating certain types of subjectivities (ibid.) that intertwine with official and lay cultures in specific ways. In light of Rwanda's troubled history and with 15 defined categories of vulnerable children, nearly every child can in one way or another be classified under one of these categories. Consequently, resources are insufficient and some children have to be prioritised (Pells 2012:428-9). This prioritisation happens through the politics of needs interpretation (Fraser 1990) as a process of balancing what is possible with what is desirable (quoted in Green 2011:36; see also Katz 1989:9). In the developing world, such processes of labelling people for support are controlled by international development agendas that work to globalise certain policy and development categories (ibid.). Through this process, targeting those deemed most vulnerable politicises notions of vulnerability (Moncrieffe 2007a:8). Acts of labelling hold immense power as they effectively serve to regulate social behaviour (ibid.:7), such as the recognition and non-recognition by local authorities of different children's difficulties.

Rabinow (2003) suggests that human rights have become an idiomatic language and 'moral vernacular'. Several scholars have shown how, under the 'new humanitarianism' that encompasses rights-based approaches like the CRC, notions of deserving and undeserving have become intrinsically tied to global and national politics (Duffield et al 2001; Fox 2001; Wilson and Mitchell 2003). According to Fox, the new humanitarianism is a product of a late 20th century crisis in third world development, blamed for fuelling conflicts, prolonging wars and standing in the face of genocide (Fox 2001:275), as Uvin (1998) has also convincingly argued regarding Rwanda. As a result, apolitical, neutral humanitarian relief is seen as naive and morally questionable. Instead, politically conscious aid is promoted to ensure that aid is linked to military and diplomatic tools in a coherent conflict resolution strategy (Fox 2001:275). Again, this was the case in Rwanda with the adoption of tools such as the CRC. Fox argues that this has led to the creation of a new morally defined hierarchy of victims that is structured by notions of victimhood and perpetration. Those who are judged to have participated in and been perpetrators of war and other conflicts are not entitled to aid as this would prolong and strengthen their participation in conflict (ibid.). Thus, those who are 'undeserving' do not become targets of support and thus do not become a 'category'. Thus while modern rights approaches are based on the idea of universal rights, they in fact promote what Pupavac has described as a traditional rights concept, where rights are earned and deserved through respect and are thereby exclusionary and exclusive (2001b:98). People have to be considered to 'deserve' to have rights. Fox's argument of a victim-perpetrator structuring of notions of vulnerability and deservingness is pertinent in the Rwandan context.

State-Family (Mis)Alignment

The inherent categorisation through rights approaches is played out through a rather interesting intimate language that aligns some orphan care projects with notions of kin and family but others with that of the community. It is in this linking we may begin to see how village leaders and communities may be attuned to some orphans' suffering but not others. André and Godin (2014a, 2014b) bring attention to the need to investigate some of the dynamics at play in the relationship between families and the state affected by children's rights approaches. In a study on child labouring in mines in the Democratic Republic of Congo, they show the differential incorporation by low- and middle-income families of NGOs' children's rights campaigns, sensitising families to send children to school instead of sending them to the mines. Low-income families continue to engage with pride in child labour in the mines as a joint familial strategy while middle-income families begin to

appropriate the promoted children's rights language and feel ashamed of child labour. Differences in 'child protection' and children's rights discourses thus begin to diverge and become class-based. In Rwanda, similar socio-economic divergences are occurring. These are strengthened through very specific incorporations of notions of kin and family in orphan projects.

The divergent use by Mwiza and Kaganza children of a rights language to make claims about neglectful parents and orphanhood are in very specific ways influenced by subtle trends in an unequal alignment of politics and kinship grounded in the two communities' inherently different relationships to the state. In particular, the government is seeking to assert its influence on intimate family relationships through a deliberate paternalisation of the state. Pupavac has argued that

> "...the international children's rights regime treats children as rights holders separate from their parents or guardians and effectively challenges the capacity of the latter to represent their interests. Underlying the imperative therefore to institutionalise children's rights is an implicit mistrust of their carers (...). The overall impact of children's rights, in this view, is to empower outside professionals to represent the interests of the child, displacing the child's family as advocates of the child's interests."
>
> (Pupavac 2001b:100)

In this 'misanthropic' view of adulthood there is an obvious disillusion with adult agency in general. Thus, according to Pupavac, the "flipside of a children's rights discourse is the pathologisation of adulthood, professionalisation of intimacy and the erosion of the right of adults to determine their lives" (Pupavac 2001b:100). This 'pathologisation' of parents necessarily shifts the locus of responsibility from families to the state (and NGOs), which is seen as a better protector of children and is thus required to intervene (ibid.:95-6).

President Kagame has publically cast himself as "the father of orphans" in his attempts to encourage the Rwandan population to help care for the large numbers of orphans following the genocide (Pells 2011:80). This creation of (national) fictive kin for orphans is mirrored in some orphan care projects. AERG is the student branch of FARG, which assists student genocide survivors. In each university, AERG has created a number of small families where a particularly mature student survivor may be acting as mother or father to younger or less mature student survivors[65]. In a similar vein, the article "[a] New Rwanda, Made by Orphans" frames genocide orphans as simultaneously a

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[65] 'Maturity' defined not by age but by how well the student is coping with grief, student life and other everyday challenges.

"lost generation" and Rwanda's new citizens. The author writes of orphans in an orphanage in Kigali, Orphans of Rwanda, Inc. (ORI), where the children call each other brothers and sisters. One student is quoted to have said "We are in the whole family" and to refer to ORI as a "father" (Shaddox 2009). The sense from the article is that the 'family' provided by the orphanage is 'saving' a generation of orphans through the creation of fictive kin relationships that make new children and citizens of otherwise lost and abandoned souls. It is significant that both these projects focus only on genocide orphans. With the extent of loss of family during the genocide, the use of fictive kinship relationships in support structures is unsurprising and has provided one of the most valued supports for the genocide survivors and orphans participating in this research. But there are implications.

Kagame's role as the "father of orphans" is reflective of a dynamic interaction between state and domestic authority (Borneman 2004) and sits within a broader construction of a national family. Early in my research, an NGO worker spoke to me of the President's use of *umuryango* (family) to refer to the 'community of Rwandans' in a deliberate intent to change the most intimate of relationships for nationalistic and reconciliatory purposes. A large number of killings during the genocide took place within families (Fujii 2009; Mamdani 2001). According to the NGO worker, Kagame evoked *umuryango* to encourage the re-establishment of these intimate relationships. The use of kin terms in nationalist projects is widely documented and is often used as a device to intensify feelings of patriotism and people's commitment to the nation (Borneman 2004; Gat and Yacobson 2013; Salmon 1998). The salience of such arguments was evident in accounts of Tutsi repatriated from exile of their return to Rwanda. Mama Julianne said they[66] had been invited back from Congo as the President's children and desired the peace and protection he could offer as their father, while Christian's notorious, drunken father had returned from Uganda because he wanted to be with his Rwandan brothers[67]. The majority of Kaganzans identified with the national father and relied on similar notions of benevolence within their community. Thus, a strong alignment of the nationalist project and kinship sentiments was evident in multiple ways in Kaganza.

It is notable that this use of kin terms in orphan projects was prevalent only in organisations that specifically targeted genocide survivors such as AERG and ORI. In CYP and similar projects in the northwest, supported orphans never spoke of other orphans included in the project as siblings nor

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[66] Mama Diane used the pre-fix for we (*tu-*) and then spoke of the Tutsi who had had to flee past cycles of violence.
[67] His biological brothers were all killed in Uganda and thus any reference to 'Rwandan brothers' would have to be understood in a metaphorical sense.

of CYP's director, Joseph, as father. Rather, terms used here included 'new friends' (*inshuti*) and 'advisors' or *nkundabana*, both of which signifies specifically non-kin relations. This nests genocide orphans within strong family contexts and under the protection of a national Rwandan family but in contrast assign non-genocide orphans as the responsibility of their communities and unrelated others with whom no kinship is promoted. Amongst Mwizan residents, notions of state and kinship were not aligned. Vincent as Mwiza's *nkundabana* representative spoke of some of the subtle benefits of the *nkundabana* programme. An important aspect of the programme is raising communities' awareness of children's rights. Vincent believed the programme had been successful in this regard, as he thought increasing numbers of people in Mwiza were beginning to show more respect towards children. The *nkundabanas*' role herein had been to show other community members that the youth were worth showing respect and attention; that they, too, contributed to the community.

Unlike in Kaganza where children's increased status is attributed to the president, the state's role was not mentioned by Vincent. Instead, he gave credit to Joseph. Where children and adults in Kaganza evoked President Kagame as the protector of children's rights and wellbeing, Joseph was sometimes evoked as the campaigner for children's rights and wellbeing in Mwiza. Unlike the president, however, Joseph was not considered a 'father of orphans' but rather a local businessman who, with limited resources, tried to support children, and not just orphans. Indeed most people associated him with the school he had built for children with intellectual disabilities and his hugely successful mainstream primary school. Thus, while the state has cast itself as the father and protector of orphans, it was clear from children's use of a rights language that the state as identificatory father was only available to children and youth subsumed under the new political-ethnic construct 'Tutsi'. An important element of the *nkundabana* role is that NGOs to Mwiza children and youth become an alternative to family and kinship. This alignment seems to facilitate a distancing of children from their kin structures when children start to employ the rights language promoted by such organisations. As children and youth in Mwiza become bureaucratically invisible as orphans, socially they become squeezed out of family structures and cast as the responsibility of the very institution that renders them invisible. In Kaganza, in contrast, the child protection and empowerment discourse that bureaucratically sanctions their suffering is, as we see in Chapter 7, a key factor in 'un-orphaning' of orphans. While lacking in some cases both parents and most family, many such 'orphans' have lives that mean such children do not perceive themselves as orphans. In other words, bureaucratic orphanhood implies its opposite social definition.

Conclusion

In de Lame's detailed account of Rwandan sociality and culture in the 1990s she writes "blatant inequalities denied by official statistics and government ideology and overlooked by imported aid projects" (2005:207) and so it appears, history repeats itself in the bureaucracy of aid no less than in the politics of history and identity politics, which bred the ground for the genocide. The individual villages' orphan lists vary to such an extent that as a bureaucratic tool of fair and equal resource distribution they become meaningless or indeed harmful. The infamous orphan list, when compared to the realities on the ground, suggests an intense political-ethnic structuring of the recognition of orphans and their need for support. Different discourses on vulnerable children exist in the two villages that contrastingly cast children as deserving victims and undeserving perpetrators. What influences the two communities' discourses on children "who see more problems than others" is their relationship to the central state, which in turn is structured by the political-ethnic histories and current identities of their populations. In other words, the genocide is structuring notions of who is deserving of government support and thus influences who can get registered on the orphan list and become officially recognised.

The government's rhetoric of kin-based national solidarity and the alignment of genocide survivor support and fictive kinship is strongly influencing the relationship between central government policies and local communal-familial dynamics. With increasing state and NGO influence on intimate family relationships there is scope for implicit government policy (and discrimination) to shape such relationships. The communities' different relationship to the state, through their particular political histories, influence families' notions of responsibility towards children and children's concurrent understandings of their rights. The inherent tendencies of the UNCRC is playing an important role in this structuring by enabling an already existing victim-perpetrator structuring to extend deeper into intimate family relationships. I now turn to a thorough examination of the communal dynamics in this differentiation of orphans and the consequent influences on children's reaction to orphan categorisation.

Chapter 6

Genocide Orphans

Of Discourse and Definition

The politics of needs interpretation is intricately tied to the cultural construction of children's needs and suffering (Woodhead 1997). This cultural construction is in turn intrinsically linked to the official identity categories prevalent in Rwandan communities. According to Hacking, people learn to perceive of their world through the categories used to define and count populations. People's perception and use of such categories add to the category's 'agency' and thus power (Hacking 1995, 2002). Through my early conversations with people in Kaganza it became clear that there existed a pronounced preoccupation with the village's households that were believed to "meet more problems than others". When people spoke of the difficulties they experienced in their lives in the village, I usually replied *biragoye*, it is difficult. With this acknowledgement, people's moods changed, they lightened up and suggested that while it is difficult, they try to be patient and "live through" the situation (*kwihangana*). One way in which many villagers tried to be 'patient' was to pray to god (*gusenga imana*) and thank him for what they already had and think of those who had even less. Living in a village built for the 'vulnerable', there was always somebody worse off. Even towards the end of my research, I continued to find myself in conversations that were directed towards comparisons between the speaker's situation and that of neighbours.

Other households' difficulties were often expressed through a concern with the lives of the children in the particular households. Through these conversations, a strong discourse emerged on the particular deservingness of genocide orphans. The exceptionality and deservingness of genocide suffering was such that children growing up in survivors' households were by definition considered genocide orphans. In the words of Samira,

> *"Although children in the village are too young to be actual genocide orphans they are orphans of genocide survivors. That is why they are genocide orphans".*

By implication they are considered to suffer more than other orphans and thus to be more deserving of support. Through an examination of these "needs narratives" (Song 2008), I explore how communal orphan understandings and dynamics in Kaganza are heavily grounded in a 'genocide exceptionality' that is structuring emic understandings of hardship, suffering and deservingness.

The moral dynamics at play in the different needs narratives cast the deservingness of genocide orphans in strikingly similar terms to those that have dominated much of the history of

providing relief or charity to poor people. Since 15ᵗʰ Century England resource distribution has been affected by a segregation of the poor into the deserving and the undeserving (Evason et al 1989; Halper 1973; Katz 1989; McIntosh 2005). The majority of poor people are seen as being responsible for their own fates, their poverty perceived as caused by immoral living. For these undeserving poor, there has been a "robust tendency to blame the disadvantaged for their predicament" (Phelan et al 1997:323) and thus to exclude them from the moral community and the ethics of social obligation. In contrast, a smaller section of poor populations have been interpreted in much more empathetic terms: their poverty perceived as caused by incapacitation or accidental misfortune. The cause for their poverty interpreted in social terms, the responsibility lies with society, and thus, the 'deserving poor' have been the targets of relief, charity and aid. The cause for a person's suffering, in other words, determines the community's sense of social obligation towards the suffering.

These notions persist throughout much of the world today. Drawing on Fraser, several researchers of poverty show how it is through officials' and claimants' needs narratives that defined groups of people are cast as either deserving or undeserving (Phelan et al 1997; Song 2008). Similarly, Appelbaum (2001) evidences how policy decisions in the US continue to be made according to notions of deservingness. These historic and contemporary concepts of the deserving poor have also been present in Africa (Iliffe 1987) and can help us to make sense of the dynamics surrounding the politics of, and symbolic struggle for, recognition of suffering in present-day Rwanda. Nixon advocates for a focus on the process by which "social needs are initially defined and articulated" (Nixon 2010:165). It is to such a process that we turn here (Kaganza) and in Chapter 8 (Mwiza).

Deserving Orphans

Kaganzans' needs narratives commonly revolved around two 10-year old girls, Husina and Cindy. Both girls' households were led by widows, both known as Shangaze (Swahili for aunt). Cindy lives with her maternal grandmother, an older widow and one of Kaganza's most respected genocide survivors. In addition to Cindy, Shangaze also cares for Cindy's two cousins, to whom Shangaze is paternal aunt – hence her name Shangaze. Cindy has lived with her grandmother since she was a baby. Cindy's mother became pregnant in a refugee camp in Congo and when she fled to Tanzania, she left Cindy with neighbours who brought Cindy to Shangaze. The mother has since moved to Belgium and regularly sends money to Cindy and Shangaze. Cindy's father is unknown although Cindy often claimed that he was a successful businessman in South Africa. Shangaze lost her husband and most other family members in the genocide but survived herself when she managed to escape to

Congo. As she returned to Rwanda and heard of the plan to build Kaganza she immediately applied for and was granted one of the houses designated for genocide survivors. She is a distant aunt of the village leader, Samira, and heard of the village's construction through her. Shangaze was the victim of sexual violence during the genocide and is infected with HIV as a consequence. Shangaze's house has become a popular place for children to watch television, lounge on the comfortable sofas, eat bananas and sweets and get an occasional fizzy drink or mug of tea. Shangaze is too old to cultivate or work; their garden is not used for crops but for chickens who provide them with eggs. Nonetheless, the family is able to eat three times a day, have many changes of clothes and generally have more comfortable lives than many other villagers.

Husina lives with a younger woman also known as Shangaze, in her mid-thirties. Young Shangaze lost her husband, parents and siblings in the genocide. In addition to her son, she looks after her three nieces whose parents died from HIV/AIDS. Of the three daughters, I only knew Husina as the older girls attended boarding school. Before the death of the girls' parents, young Shangaze lived in a neighbouring constructed village, a bit farther removed from the road. When Husina and her sisters' parents died, Shangaze moved to the girls' house in Kaganza but kept her own house and fields. Young and physically able, she continues to cultivate her own field and garden, along with the garden attached to her nieces' house while also working fulltime at the commercial farm. As already described, Husina's house was extensively refurbished during my research with a grant donated through the annual Genocide Commemoration Week. Both Cindy and Husina, have contracted HIV through their mothers and are both receiving the required medication as well as food parcels, which the government aim to provide to all HIV-infected Rwandans. Both households receive support from FARG and the girls are registered on the orphan list.

That Husina is emphasised as an example of a particularly vulnerable child is perhaps no surprise. The genocide caused the death of most of her family and the HIV epidemic led to the death of the few who remained. Only five members are left of the family, Husina and her two sisters, her aunt and the aunt's son. Yet, on the other hand, Husina is a surprising example. Husina does not consider herself an orphan; she believes Shangaze to be her mother and her cousin to be her brother. There is no doubt that the lack of a family network is a difficult situation and the aunt, especially, has undergone traumatic experiences. Yet nothing in the household suggests that the family is worse off than other families in the village. Indeed, with a full-time job, two houses and accompanying fields, support from FARG and the government, the household has considerably more material and social resources than most other households. The example of Cindy is even more surprising. Cindy's status

as orphan is not straightforward. Her mother is alive, is in contact with her and sends her money on a regular basis. The mother has even come to visit Cindy once, making the journey from Belgium to northwestern Rwanda, to do so. While she has never had a father, she has also never experienced the death of a parent, nor any of the worries or difficulties associated with the lack of parents. According to Cindy herself, her grandmother has cared for her since she was a baby and has ensured she never missed anything. Cindy experiences her household as a loving and secure one in which she always finds great comfort and refuge on days that she does not feel like being social.
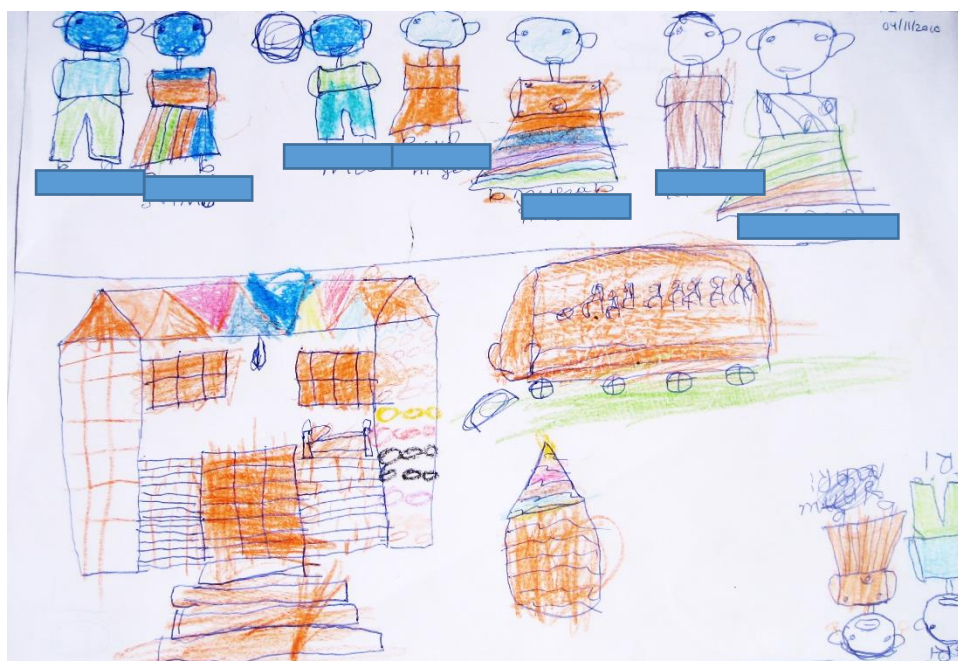
Figure 6 Cindy's drawing of "My family and area". It is notable that her family can afford to travel by bus, that she is surrounded by a large family and has a big, colourful house.

In all my conversations with people in Kaganza, the children who were never mentioned as examples of other people's more difficult situations were equally surprising. Husina often helped out in my neighbour Papa Joieux's house. She shared meals with the family and happily played with the couple's firstborn, toddler Joieux. Eight-year old Elisa, also lived in this house. Elisa is the younger half-sister of the wife in the household, Mama Joieux. The images of the two girls associated with the household took a while to reconcile in my mind: Husina, a happy girl I would never have taken to be an orphan had I not known her family background, and Elisa who in many ways fits the common description of an orphan. She often, entirely alone, looks after the *cabaret* (bar) that her foster parents run from their house, whilst cooking and looking after the couple's own two children. Her parents

157

meanwhile might be out looking for day labour, enjoying a drink (or many!) at the village centre or grocery-shopping. Helping out with chores at home was something many children enjoyed and took pride in but only when the nature and amount of such chores are appropriate for the child's age. While Elisa seemed to enjoy looking after her two foster siblings, she drew a telling picture of a sad child, whom she described to be lonely, sitting alone by the cooking fire while a group of children are playing in the corner. She was also visibly in bad health due to malnourishment and her eyes were often puffed and red from the lack of sleep. Her foster-father was reproached by the village leader, Samira, on numerous occasions for refusing to pay her health insurance. Her foster-mother confided to me that Elisa often refused to eat at home. When I provided the family with clothes for the children in appreciation of all their help as my neighbours, I was sad to see that the clothes meant for Elisa always got folded up as best they could and wrapped around infant Wimana.

Figure 7 Elisa's drawings of her home. Left: Elisa's sister's funeral in front of her house. When I asked about the funeral she did not remember it well but said it had not been as difficult an experience as her father's funeral. Right: the drawing where Elisa described herself as working while the other children are out playing.

It is interesting why Cindy is considered an orphan but not Elisa. According to the National Policy on OVC (RoR 2003), Elisa should have been written on orphan list as living with foster carers and having problems of food, health and school. Elisa was not written on the list. Neither did community members interpret her life in this manner. Possibly due to the worse treatment in her mother's home, Elisa also herself said she preferred to live with her older sister. Mama Patrick was

the only community member to comment on the poor treatment of Elisa within her household, which she did in terms commonly used to describe the maltreatment of orphans. Unlike community members' descriptions of Husina and Cindy she never used the term *imfubyi*.

In a rare intimate conversation with Papa Joieux, I asked about Elisa's life. He described her father's death and Elisa's subsequent feeling of marginalisation when her mother remarried. Elisa had wanted to leave. I asked him if this made Elisa an orphan. It did not: she was well-cared for, had everything she needed and was looked after like a biological child. Neither, he reckoned, would anyone in the community consider her an orphan because they, as well as Elisa, knew that she had her mother whom she sometimes visited. Consequently, neither did Elisa nor any community member consider Mama and Papa Joiyeux her parents; instead they were called by their tektonyms, even by Elisa, although tektonyms are rarely used by members of the nuclear family. The death of Elisa's father and her consequent poor integration in her original and foster homes was not interpreted by her or anyone else as "meeting problems" or constituting orphanhood.

Husina, on the other hand, according to Papa Joiyeux did not have everything she needed. Her family wa poor and her aunt suffered from trauma. When I asked why, he answered "*Kubwo jenoside!*" ("Because of the genocide!"). Husina and Cindy, it seemed, were deemed particularly vulnerable *orphans* because of their families' genocide-induced suffering. Of course, as her foster father Papa Joiyeux interpreted her care in a positive light, otherwise he would have been criticising himself. However, his interpretation of who had a lot and who had little was directly structured by the genocide. Husina suffered because of her family's genocide suffering, although in reality Husina had access to many more resources and social capital than Elisa. Genocide orphans are in other words exceptionally deserving by virtue of suffering from the genocide, regardless of their current socio-economic situation. Many people partly put the deservingness of genocide survivors and orphans down to the politico-economic corruption of the village leader; she favoured genocide survivors because she was one herself. Yet it was more than simply a village problem. Two interviews with youth from Mwiza suggest similar perceptions.

> Interview with Jeneti's brother:
> *"Maja: Many people have told me that genocide orphans get more support, do you think that is true?*
> *Brother: All help in the country goes to those orphans.*
> *Maja: Do they have more value than children like you then?*
> *Brother: Yes, it's very difficult. The government does a lot through public works (umuganda) but the help you can get here depends on someone in the family participating in umuganda so if our father doesn't participate and we can't because of school then we don't get considered for any help."*

Interview with Joy:
"Maja: Is there a difference between orphans of AIDS, other sickness, war or gencocide?
Joy: Yes because genocide orphans are supported (gufanwa), which other orphans are not.
Maja: Are genocide orphans' lives more difficult?
Joy: No they are just supported because they are orphans from the genocide."

It must thus be asked what it is that makes genocide survivor- and orphanhood so deserving of sympathy and support. What is it about genocide suffering that is so difficult that other kinds of suffering do not get socially recognised despite stark visible signs of maltreatment, neglect and pain?

Trauma and the Recognition of Suffering

In the needs narratives surrounding Husina and Cindy two 'needs' repeatedly came up: poverty and trauma. I have made the observation that poverty, while being widespread in rural Rwanda, is observed more so amongst rural Hutu and to some extent Congolese Tutsi. Albeit not wealthy, the majority of genocide survivors have carved out a privileged socio-economic standing within Kaganza. They have access to employment, power and social capital. Yet in the needs narratives, genocide survivors such as Husina's and Cindy's families continue to suffer from genocide-induced poverty. This suggests that the genocide has gained such social salience that some people's lives continue to be framed as 'vulnerable' or suffering *because of* the genocide, regardless of whether or not they have progressed to a higher socio-economic status. This continuous interpretation of survivors' lives through worse-than-average poverty in many ways seemed to be associated with the understanding of the genocide as a deeply traumatic event and thus eliciting exceptional sympathy. Just as talk of orphans immediately prompts people to think of the genocide, the genocide often prompted people to talk about 'trauma'. This inherent linking of very specific kinds of suffering with trauma requires further examination.

The origin of trauma to many of the villagers and people I spoke to was due to the manner in which people's families had been killed. Death by genocide was by many considered fundamentally different from death to war and accidents, which were considered 'normal deaths'. A Mwiza orphan's foster father for example explained:

> *"Death from war is natural so it doesn't traumatise people, we haven't been traumatised from losing our members in the war, but the genocide, that is very different, people were traumatised from that."*

Part of the difference lay in the fact that many people witnessed particularly horrifying events as described by Samira's daughter:

> *"You know our history, genocide orphans are different because they saw their parents get killed with machetes, you should watch the films and see how pregnant women had their babies cut out with machetes and you will understand, those children are traumatised and they cannot get completely normal because always they have that picture in their mind and they always worry, they think about why, how their parents got killed like that."*

While the assertion that only genocide survivors can suffer from trauma was not universal amongst villagers there was a common public perception that trauma was a kind of suffering primarily experienced by genocide survivors. This association is partly coincidental, partly political and is similar in nature to that between genocide and orphan. It is a result of the coinciding of the genocide and an increase in the numbers of people suffering from psychological distress[68] and an increase in the public services through NGOs and state bodies for those suffering. The role of trauma is crucial to the exceptionality of genocide orphans; it constitutes a part of the political landscape that has helped to create the discourse on the genocide orphan.

Suffering from the genocide has been interpreted in predominantly psychological and psychiatric terms of post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD) and trauma (Veale and Doná 2002; Pells 2011a). This has been critised as neglecting deeply political issues and failing to move beyond the dualistic (ethnic) nature of Rwandan communities (Veale and Doná 2002:57-8). The dominance of the trauma discourse is not exclusive to Rwanda but is part of a wider PTSD "movement" that reproduces realities of war and atrocities in very particular ways (Fassin and Rechtman 2009; Pupavac 2001a; Stubbs 2005), and which has been strongly criticised in later years (Eyber and Ager 2004). In a similar vein, Spitzer and Twikirize suggest that the term child soldier in Uganda has become popularly associated with notions and corresponding concepts of trauma and PTSD and thus *a priori* frames children's experiences and vulnerabilities in a particular way (2012:68). Trauma as psychosocial assistance has come to attain an important position within emergency responses (Stubbs 2005:53; see also Fassin and Rechtman 2009).

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[68] Five years after the genocide, it was estimated that 15,5% of people in one community in Rwanda suffered from depression, which the authors contemplated to represent chronic illness not readily resolved without treatment (Bolton et al 2002:635).

Trauma as a diagnosis and term was unknown to most Rwandans prior to the genocide. A psychologist at a hospital in the northwest suggested:

> *"Prior to the genocide people did not know about trauma. They kept their problems inside. After the genocide, many NGOs came to the country and started to speak of trauma. The government also started to talk about it in their attempt to help the survivors. Universities started to teach psychology. So now there is a bigger focus on people's mental health."*

Psychological instability was, historically, socially stigmatised due to cultural values of strength and courage (Williamson 2014), which strongly encourage people to hide psychological problems by letting "tears flow within" (Bagilishya 2000). Yet in Kaganza, people's appearance as traumatised incurred sentiments of sympathy and support. During Commemoration Week, young Shangaze "fell sick with trauma" (*aratweye guhahamuka*). Immediately, the community mobilised. Claire's grandmother, Mama Joseph, who normally spoke out strongly against the favouritism of genocide survivors, rushed to Shangaze's house to stay with her through the night and the following day. Other visitors, including Gisele's grandmother, then came to take over from Mama Joseph. Shangaze was not left alone until her trauma had receded. In the meantime, Husina lived with Mama Joseph and Claire, Husina's closest friend. When Papa Charlotte similarly "fell sick" his wife took time off work to be with him and Samira brought him for long walks. Here it is important to remind the reader of Fideri's sister, Ndayisenge, when she fell sick with trauma in Mwiza. This led Fideri to run to the local authorities to register on a bureaucratic list. In the meantime, her sister received no visitors other than her other older sister who lived close by, although Fideri had asked the village leader to come. The different reactions to their trauma lay in the origin of their trauma: When Husina's aunt fell sick the word *guhahamuka* was used. Fideri in turn used the word *gutwara mu mutwe* (sick in the head). The former locates the origin of suffering outside the individual, in a nationally sanctioned source of political suffering; the latter on the other hand locates the origin of suffering in the person herself. According to Guglielmo, the clinical category PTSD links mental illness directly to a life-threatening event. As such, trauma - as opposed to individual memory - engages directly with violence in its definition and therefore "offers a narrative framework that concerns the legitimacy of the state, power and security" (2015:147-8). Unlike Ndayisenga's solitary pain, Shangaze's trauma affects both the individual and the nation by symbolising an "open wound in the collective memory" (Fassin and Rechtman 2009:15). Guglielmo observes that

> "...among the mental illnesses recognised in Rwanda, post-traumatic stress disorder (or trauma) is uniquely exempted from social stigma due to its inextricable link with the 1994 genocide. As it afflicts only genocide survivors, trauma symptoms validate the recognition of violence and victimhood. Individuals do not occupy a space of moral

uncertainty, as they embody the memory of the genocide and the innocence of its victims, and so participate in the creation of a historical past shared by all Rwandans... Data suggest that diagnoses of trauma often take into account individuals' ethnic backgrounds, discerning between legitimate and illegitimate forms of memory, and appropriating the former within official historical discourses of the genocide. The production of moral entitlement through the body thus endorses a dichotomous logic that is crucial to the construction of an ideal status of nationhood which is built upon a very exclusivist recognition of suffering." (2015:146)

Trauma inherently lends itself to being inscribed into socio-political discourses and has thus shifted from being a biomedical tool to being used to analyse socio-political environments (ibid.). Similarly, Fassin and Rechtman (2009) describe "trauma" as a new language of the event. The genocide thus, according to them, constitutes a cultural trauma as the "dominant mode of representing [Rwandans'] relationship to the past" (ibid.:10). This has rendered trauma a legitimate status, a new condition of victimhood that endows rights of compensation on the victim, leading Stubbs to consider psychosocial interventions as 'essentialising trauma' (2005:56). Trauma becomes both the cause of suffering and a resource that can be instrumentalised to support a right (Fassin and Rechtman 2009:10). Crucial to this understanding of trauma is that the "event has become recognised as the sole etiological factor" (ibid.:87). It follows that when a genocide survivor suffers, the cause of suffering must be the genocide.

From this genocide-trauma association emerges a "bureaucracy of memory" at local level through the process of identifying survivors (Guglielmo 2015). Like claims to orphanhood, trauma has become instrumental and utilitarian (Fassin and Rechtman 2009:10). As an example, in order to make land claims, survivor status is hugely beneficial. Survivor status can also entitle people to financial support. Many people are therefore keen to identify as survivors. In order to do so they have to submit a formal request to the community chief in order to arrange a public meeting with local authorities. In this process, a person's community has to validate the identification of a person as survivor, which they do based on the loss of relatives in the genocide, ethnic identity and the community's general recognition that the survivor status is legitimate. This certification process involves the entire network and scale of administrative units across the country, from the village level to the nation-state and FARG and involves immense bureaucratic paperwork of "certification which links bodies and histories" (Guglielmo 2015:154).

In this bureaucracy, it is practically impossible for non-survivors to be recognised as suffering from trauma. Thus, Ndayisenga was solitarily 'sick in the head' while Shangaze suffered from social trauma in which the nation's history and collective suffering is contained. The social basis of her

163

suffering led to communal support, whereas Ndayisenga had to rely on her own internal strength to keep her "tears flowing within." It is here significant that the entire body of literature on psychological distress, depression, prolonged grief disorder and trauma in Rwanda situates itself in relation to the genocide and not the surrounding wars (Bolton et al 2002; Cohen et al 2009; Hagengimana et al 2003; Kaplan 2013; Neugebauer et al 2009; Schaal et al 2009, 2010). Pertinent here is Fassin and Rechtman's observation that the history of trauma is a history of hierarchy and inequality, which "distinguishes between individuals who have suffered painful events. The way in which one's suffering is viewed will depend on their status or their social usefulness." (2009:30). In the words of Zraly and Nyirazinyoye, survivors can rely on a 'survivor mission', which allows them to speak the unspeakable and by doing so gain significantly more access to resources and support (2010:162).

Poverty and Suffering

Papa Joiyeux linked Husina's poverty directly linked to the genocide. Husina's aunt is poor because she is a survivor. According to Shagnaze herself, people cannot recover from trauma as long as they live in poverty, reflecting Maslow's hierarchy of needs whereby psychological health becomes impossible without basic physical health (1954). If people are faced with shortages of food and poor access to everyday necessities, they continue to be reminded of their problems, and the cause of their trauma. Pells points to a similar association in her research with genocide orphans in eastern Rwanda (2009). The belief that trauma was perpetuated through poverty is also reflected in people's understandings of orphanhood: orphans are reminded of the pain of not having their parents in moments when they encounter a particular material lack, such as shoes, food, lotion or other necessary articles. In line with this thinking, one of the first strategies to support traumatised people (and indeed orphans) is material support. During Commemoration Week, several survivors received budgets to refurbish their homes; it was at this time that Husina's aunt's house turned from an average house in Kaganza to one of the more well-furnished ones.

Significant here is the contextualisation of survivors' poverty within a socio-political landscape, which like trauma sees poverty as a weakness and problem that people need to hide. Notions of the deserving poor were more or less directly transferred to Africa through colonialism (Iliffe 1987:100-101) and are visible in the Rwandan government and local authorities' approach to poverty. According to Ansoms, it "seems to have become 'prohibited by official policy' to be poor" (2009:305), thus emphasising the responsibility of each citizen to overcome his/her own poverty (ibid.:297-8, de Lame 2005:451). Related, Thomson contends that the government "strategically

situate ordinary people as 'passive', 'powerless' and 'like infants' to justify continued authoritarian control of its population" (2009:16). In de Lame's account of rural Rwandan culture and social structures immediately preceding the genocide, such notions of deservingness are also strongly emphasised when she writes:

"Respect for ageing parents is a hallowed value but does not contradict the custom, mostly among the poor, of letting die when one is no longer of any utility. Local Christians may officially express solidarity with an orphaned family in the form of nominative, ostentatious money-collection at the church, following which they feel no need to extend any more spontaneous aid. Mutual aid mostly partakes of strategies of upward mobility for the family, favouring the potentially successful and rejecting the unfortunate." (de Lame 2005:282)

This approach is also evidenced in the symbolic death of the father. Poor fathers who drink and will not work for their families are blamed for their poverty and asked to correct themselves; they do not receive support and are instead 'sensitised' to live appropriately (for the social dynamics of excessive drinking historically see de Lame 2005:328). Samira did not put Elisa on the orphan list as lacking health insurance but instead constantly 'sensitised' Papa Joiyeux to pay the insurance. Children's needs are primarily, it appears, defined according to their parents' perceived ability. The categorisation of people as either deserving of protection and welfare or undeserving and in need of correction historically translated almost directly into the lives of children (Boyden 2004:248), as a hierarchy of innocence (Moeller 2002, see also Meyer 2007). In the literature on orphanhood in western cultures, it emerges that parents' cultural context and backgrounds directly determines a child's definition as an orphan, thus creating a category of social orphans (Kudasova 2013). Parents who are deemed unwilling to care appropriately for their children have often been rejected from the moral parental community (Rockhill 2010:143; see also Murdoch 2006). Consequentially, they have had their children taken off them and put into children's homes where, as 'social orphans', they could be appropriately raised and nurtured (Abrams 1998; Kudasova 2013; Murdoch 2006; Rockhill 2010). In Rwanda, parents' perceived abilities regarding their children's care does not lead to institutionalisation. It leads to either 'sensitisation' (Kayiranga and Mukashema 2014) – often in the form of patronising condemnation as for Papa Joiyeux – with the implication that the child is not deemed eligible for support, or it leads to children being deemed orphans eligible for registration.

Where poverty is linked to the genocide the attribution of responsibility differs than for the ordinary poor. Poverty has commonly been constructed as an individual moral problem (Fanning et al 2004), arising from notions of responsibility and blame, *except* with regards to the deserving poor. People seen as lazy or drunks were 'undeserving', unwilling to improve their own condition or change the behaviour considered to have caused their poverty in the first place. The poverty of the deserving

poor, on the other hand, was attributed to no fault of their own but to misfortune, sickness or ageing. They were considered to have a good work ethic and to try to work their own way out of poverty (Katz 1989; McIntosh 2005). The genocide eradicated whole families and left people traumatised and impoverished. Survivors are deemed unable to 'correct themselves' because they suffer from other people's fault: vicimised by the collectively perpetrating Hutu. By implication, it is the responsibility of communities and the state to alleviate the suffering of survivors. According to Phelan et al "focusing on a particular category of poor people may make the referents seem more 'precise and human' and consequently more difficult to blame for their situation" (1997:326).

According to Lane (2001), the deservingness of poor people is intrinsically related to whether they elicit emotions of pity and anger. Waters has made a similar argument in relation to humanitarian crises, which he suggests are 'emotionally managed' according to donors' emotions (2001:13-14). For a cause to be socially validated and receive funding it has to speak to potential donors' emotions (see also Kleinman 2000 and Klouda 2007). Pity and anger structure the political landscape in Rwanda: people are cast as either victims (who warrant sympathy) or perpetrators (who warrant anger). Because poverty is so strongly explained through the genocide, the new language of suffering instigated by genocide directly applies to the poor. Although Shangaze had achieved a relatively comfortable life, because she still fell sick with trauma during Commemoration Week it was assumed that she still experienced poverty and thus could not recover from trauma, eliciting great sympathy from community members.

The link between psychological suffering and poverty is further compounded by the way in which 'trauma' is alleviated: through visits where a friend or neighbour either talks the traumatised through his/her suffering or actively seeks to distract the traumatised from the pain, and through monetary or other material support. Like poverty is considered worse for orphans due to existential insecurities created by an emphasis on material love, poverty is considered worse for genocide survivors because it immediately reminds survivors of the genocide and thereby elicits extra attention to survivors' poverty. It follows that genocide orphans are doubly challenged by poverty. Perhaps because trauma is considered the worst imaginable emotional pain, material compensation has to be comparatively larger for survivors to 'overcome' (*kwirenga*) their trauma. This may help to explain why survivors continue to be framed as particularly poor and in need of assistance; their lives are not yet economically of such a standard that they have overcome their trauma. The link between trauma, as a specific type of social suffering, and poverty thus becomes crucial in explaining the deservingness of genocide survivors and orphans.

The State and Charitable Support

"Genocide orphans are favoured (gutona) more than others because they lost their families in the genocide. The genocide gets more support (inkunga) because it is internationally known. Other orphans are just put in the category of poor children by the local authorities who just normally choose genocide orphans."   *(Samira's daughter)*

"They are different because the government supports genocide orphans more than the others. There are the big organisations like FARG and Survivor's Fund that have a lot of money and power and they only support genocide orphans."   *(Jeanine)*

The 'bureaucracy of memory' directly structures the 'bureaucracy of orphanhood'. When Jeanine refers to the 'government' supporting orphans, she is referring to FARG. This is an important distinction. The government is not trying to cultivate an obvious and explicit distinction between genocide orphans and other orphans. Rather, government campaigns demand support for *all children* through slogans such as "Take every child like your own". Nonetheless, FARG is a semi-state organisation funded by 5% of the state budget. In Kaganza, support from FARG had a special role in people's feeling of being supported (*gufanwa*). The particular combination of NGOs in Kaganza and the types of support they provided meant that only genocide orphans (and survivors more generally) were believed to receive substantial support. Of all the organisations present in Kaganza, the survivor organisations, FARG and Ibuka, were the only two to have local representatives. Ibuka as an umbrella organisation does not support individuals. FARG, on the other hand, provides support to a larger number of residents than any other NGO operating in Kaganza, namely to most of the survivors living in the rows of houses built by the organisation. FARG also provides the most substantial support through money allowances, house refurbishments and school costs. It is notable that all FARG households had electricity and relatively well-furnished houses. It is significant that both organisations have representatives on the village council as the two most important members, the village leader and the security officer. Nothing takes place in the village without it being signed off by these two figures. FARG, in particular, is therefore considered a powerful and wealthy organisation, despite frequent criticism by survivors elsewhere in the country that it is failing to provide sufficient reparation for survivors (Blewitt 2006; Schimmel 2010). The prevalence of FARG does not mean that other children do not have access to support. Children who benefitted from child sponsorships came from diverse backgrounds. Elise's younger half-brother had been included in a child sponsorship programme prior to leaving for a life on the street, and Albert's brother and

Christian's sister were included in such programmes despite having both of their parents, a father in well-paid full-time employment and living in a house that their families owned.

What is significant however is the amount of people and the nature of the support organisations provided. The donation of monetary allowances and the lack of obligations put on beneficiaries made the support from FARG seem more attractive to many villagers than support from other organisations. Gisele had received a child sponsor through one of the international organisations and as part hereof on occasion received clothes. What Giselle really needed was school materials, kerosene and food, neither of which was provided through the sponsorship. While Giselle was not ungrateful for the clothes, Giselle and her friends loved sharing clothes, access to which was thus not a problem for her despite her family's relative poverty compared to her peers. The support she received consisted mostly of 'hand-ups' rather than 'hand-outs', referring to the focus on teaching self-sufficiency rather than charity. In Chapter 4, I suggested that such self-sufficiency projects are desired by youth who want to shed their status as orphan beneficiaries instead to become orphan mentors and benefactors. As a 10-year old girl and a physically disabled ageing widow, such desires for self-sufficiency were not shared by Gisele and her grandmother. Instead, their views mirror Sherz's (2014) argument that programmes focused on sustainability often feel disempowering to beneficiaries and as failing to fulfil their needs. Children assisted by FARG, on the other hand, received money to spend on what the family deemed necessary and were not required to attend additional education, thus freeing up important time for house work, schoolwork etc. It is here interesting to consider some of the notions structuring deservingness.

People deemed undeserving are blamed for their own misfortunate and therefore excluded from notions of social obligation. They have to rely on themselves to come out of poverty without being given appropriate tools to do so. Those deemed deserving on the other hand are pitied for their unfortunate circumstances, which society or some other external force is seen as having put on them. By implication, people feel empathy for them and extend support. Such feelings are also evident in the difference between charity and sustainability approaches. Empathy and pity are foundational to the notion of charity, which is based on the impulse to give that arises from emotions in the donor (Bornstein 2009; Waters 2001). Sustainability approaches however are based on making people 'self-reliable' in order to solve their own problems. Interesting here is Das' suggestion that "while agency is given to some kinds of poor, others are seen in policy discourses as populations to be managed through both policing and paternalistic interventions by the state" (Das 2015:S4). Although it would appear that 'sustainability' approaches would provide people with more agency, the findings

presented here suggest that the reverse occurs. The unconditional nature of charity given to deserving survivors facilitates agency in prioritising their own needs and means for alleviation. 'Undeserving' non-survivors instead rely on pre-defined training without sufficient resources to implement their skills and few material means to address needs potentially unrecognised by the donor/benefactor.

Being Supported: Suffering, Recognition and Status

The differentiation of unconditional charity to deserving survivors and self-sustainability for the less deserving contributes to feelings in non-survivors of not being supported by the state and NGOs and that they have to work incredibly hard for their own survival. Claire's grandmother, Mama Joseph, wanted Claire to be written on the orphan list because she believed it came with an increase in positive communal attention, such as the offer of extra resources (food, clothes, school materials) and sympathy (*ibambe:* pity, sympathy, mercy). She felt that other community members did not consider Claire an orphan like other orphans and believed this could only be changed by having Claire officially registered on the list. For Claire's grandmother, recognition was expressed in the flow of resources to the other children she referred to, resources that she did not receive. Claire was in fact registered on the list yet because the ambition to be registered on the list centred on a desire to access important resources, because Claire did not receive anything in this regard, the grandmother believed she had not been written on the list and thus felt she was perceived as less deserving. As Claire's grandmother saw it, until Claire received the same resources as other orphans in the village, they were not supported, their situation as a household with orphans not publicly acknowledged.

Mama Joseph points to an intricate relationship between the experience of suffering, its acknowledgement by community members and local authorities, communal status and NGO support. For non-survivors, there is a desire to be supported (*gufanwa*) in order to feel acknowledged and recognised as suffering. Morris has suggested that suffering is a social status that is either withdrawn or extended depending on whether the sufferer is considered part of the moral community (1996:39). This concern with support as a sign of recognition speaks to a larger debate on the politics of pain and suffering, which Sarah Ahmed describes as the contingency of pain (Ahmed 2004) – the inherent necessity of pain to be acknowledged by others. Thus, while Ahmed points out that pain may be a solitary experience, with which Rwandans agree, it can never be private because those in pain need the acknowledgement of that pain by their loved ones (ibid.:29-32). Claire's grandmother suggests that it is not only the acknowledgement by loved ones that is desired but acknowledgement by the

community and local authorities through bureaucratic registration and its expression in material support. For Elise's grandmother the lack of official recognition of her difficulties suggested to her that she was not valued in her community. Instead, she was made to feel that she did not belong. In a conversation with her, she explained:

> *"There is no one who has a good heart (umutima mwiza) for them. If you have orphans you have to make the sacrifices yourself because orphans have no value[69] in general. The orphans in my house, when the local authorities come they always choose other orphans to support with goats, radios and other things. It is because I come from another place. Other people in the village know each other but not me. I only came here because my son wanted me to move here so they don't know me and my orphans have no value."*

The discourse on the deserving genocide orphan does not stand uncontested. While most villagers "live through" their difficulties by thinking of those worse off, not everybody accepts that those worse off are households such as Husina and Cindy's, or that these households deserve support more than others. The people who contest the exceptionality of genocide orphans were often, but not always, the people who also spoke out strongly against Samira's favouritisation of survivors more generally. Jeanine hints at a dissatisfaction with the structure of state/NGO support for orphans when she mentions "other" orphans' challenges in relying solely on family:

> *"...for the rest of us there is very little support even though we need support as much as they [genocide orphans] do. The others try to solve the problems within the family, for example asking aunts and uncles for lotion and school materials but you cannot keep asking them for money. For the survivors there are the funds to help them so there is a difference."*

The people who contest the exceptionality of genocide suffering do not do so because they do not agree that genocide survivors suffer but rather because of a concern with the unjust structure of resource allocation by NGOs, local authorities and central government, which this entails. It is interesting to note that the people who spoke out strongly against the favouritism of survivors were also the people who were the first to offer support when survivors "fell sick with trauma". The notions of deservingness are thus deeply penetrating, even where people are consciously distancing themselves from it.

Conclusion

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[69] The grandmother first said *ijambo* (word) then elaborated with *agaciro* (dignity, integrity, value).

In this chapter, I have explored the "genocide orphan" as a discourse of particular victimhood that structures NGO support and communal sympathy and status. In Kaganza, the categorical targeting of its population and correspondent resource allocation has facilitated local adoptions of state-endorsed categories. This consecrates and perpetuates such categories. There is value in promoting the vulnerability of genocide orphans; it attracts extra resources and it affords the community special status within national politics and hierarchies. The exceptionality of the genocide orphan originates in a particular understanding of vulnerability and how it should be addressed. The genocide constitutes a critical event in the conceptualisation of suffering, including childhood adversity. The coinciding of the genocide with the introduction of the word 'trauma' has seemed to facilitate a shift in the way people's inner worlds are conceptualised. Trauma has become the new language of the event. The association of trauma with genocide survivorhood has thus facilitated a new social regulation of grief and mourning, which directly and indirectly influences experiences of orphanhood, not as expected due to children's personal grief upon parental death, but due to their families' collective grief from historical events.

Those who consider genocide orphans to be particularly deserving may not necessarily claim that other children are not orphans, although this is what my neighbour did regarding his own foster daughter. Yet orphans who "meet more problems than others" for reasons other than the genocide are considered "less" orphans as their suffering is perceived as lesss extensive. This suggests that orphanhood is a fluid term, a continuum of suffering that is structured by a political reading of suffering. The relationship between genocide orphans' status as deserving victims and their access to composite support suggests that only those with a relation to the genocide has access to the language of suffering recognised bureaucratically, socially and politically. This inherent association between genocide and orphanhood is notable at a time when most child orphans cannot by definition be orphans of the genocide. Of all the children in Kaganza who were considered particularly vulnerable and deserving *because of the genocide* not a single child was old enough to have lost a parent in the genocide. The association nonetheless exists: the genocide as a critical event has instigated a new language of suffering, access to which is afforded through proximity to the physical experience of genocide.

Chapter 7

Transient Orphanhood

Experiences of Orphanhood in Kaganza

Children's Discourses on "Meeting Problems"

In light of the categorical differentiation of orphans, how do children respond to their own framing in such public discourses? New categories and classifications lead to new modes of identification (Hacking 2005). By creating new categories people may change, the "targets" of the category "move", and people become recreated and redefined. This in turn influences the dynamics of the category (Hacking 1995, 2002). Have children like Kaganza's epitomic genocide orphans "become the category"? It would appear not, at least not yet. Husina and Cindy do not identify as orphans but see themselves as children who "have everything they needed", including parents (each called their Shangaze *Mama*), food, school materials, several sets of clothes and good quality shoes. Husina and Cindy's denial of their orphanhood despite the community's widespread casting of them as orphans demands a look at identity-formation processes in children labelled as orphans. Despite the push to understand orphans' subjective experiences and the newer social scientific focus on processes of identity-formation in children (Wells 2014; Williams 2016), there is little research on how orphans themselves understand their categorisation, use the labels attached to them and consciously engage with locally available tools of status and identification[70]. The relationship between social status and subjectivity are not straightforward (Wells 2014:263). Following the critique of 'identity' as a cross-cultural analytical category (Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Handler 1994), in this chapter, I explore in more detail the relationship between Kaganzan children's social status, their casting as deserving genocide orphans, and their subjectivities and self-representations as individual acting, reflective children.

Children's definitions of "seeing bad things" were distinguished from that of adults by centering round apolitical understandings. Amongst peers, Husina was popular and Cindy

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[70] G. Mann's work on Congolese refugees (2011) is a notable exception that has given great inspiration for this and other chapters.

controversial, but their reputations were largely an effect of their personalities rather than their familial histories and situations, or their official status as deserving victims of genocide suffering. When one day I spent the morning with Placidie and Julianne, drawing and painting our nails with colouring pens, as Julianne especially loved doing, we got talking about friendships and what makes good friends. When I first arrived in Kaganza, Placidie had been close friends with Cindy but the friendship had slowly waned so I asked about their old friendship. This immediately made Julianne snort and Placidie laugh, exclaiming that Julianne "knew her sickness." Julianne then imitated a movement that Cindy often did with her mouth, looking caricaturely disgusted with an open mouth and sticking her tongue straight out. They then agreed that she is too "talkative" (*afite amagambo*), literally and figuratively talking too much and too loudly. The girls did not trust her to keep secrets, a key defining feature of social relationships (De Lame 1995:18). Placidie speculated that her talkative nature might have been why Cindy made such good friends with Gisele whom the girls agreed was also "talkative". Cindy's explosive temper also made her 'complicated' (*aragoye*). Especially interesting were also other words sometimes used by children in frustration at something Cindy had done: 'selfish', 'irritable', 'angry' and likes to quarrel (*gutongana*). These are words that Betancourt et al in a study on mental health syndromes in Rwanda identified as indicators of *umushiha*, a state of irritability that is considered specific to the experience of being HIV-infected and –affected (2012:406-407). Thus, while adults cast Cindy as deserving due to genocide, children spoke of her in phrases commonly associated with the stigmatisation of AIDS orphans (ibid.). Husina was much more liked, revered especially for her theatre acting and directing skills. Nonetheless, Shangaze confided that Husina sometimes came home upset because children teased her for not having parents. It is significant that Husina's sympathised status as genocide orphan amongst adults did not preclude school peers' teasing of her. Thus, when Jeanine expressed that "orphans are orphans but they are different", this difference was not expressed amongst children in Kaganza.

The inexpression of the exceptionality of the genocide orphan in Kaganzan children's interactions, play and discourses raises important questions about children's parameters for assessing their own labelling as orphans and attributing it with meaning and significance. Many of Kaganza's 'orphans', in particular those discursively emphasised as epitomic orphans by adults, actively distance themselves from a language of orphanhood to describe their experiences within their families and communities. They do so because they operate with a different, apolitical understanding of orphanhood that is moral in nature. As such, as a language of suffering, orphanhood is not a relevant description of their lives. Several 'acts of concealment' facilitate this concurrent apolitical

understanding of orphanhood and refusal of orphan identities. In response to a strong 'culture of remembering' the genocide, many Kaganzan orphan carers are imposing a 'culture of silence' to protect their children from perceivably harmful knowledge. This culture of silence is applied to orphanhood as well as to 'genocide talk' and acts to restrict experiences of orphanhood to transient, momentary feelings of hardship and suffering that quickly fade. Thus, I employ the notion of transience or momentary experience to describe the processes of identification instigated by the orphan label and its application to children's lives.

A Culture of Remembering

In her research on genocide orphans in eastern Rwanda, Pells found that many young people confirmed one genocide orphan's statement that "we've got used to the genocide, it is daily life that is the problem" (2009). Pells draws on the girl's statement to suggest that children's concerns and worries arise from their everyday lives in which the violences of the genocide are sustained through ongoing poverty and the lack of parental care. In doing so, Pells is informed by Das' (2006) and Kleinman's (2000) arguments that the struggle to survive after a traumatic event occurs within the context of a damaged social fabric. This stands in contrast to the dominant view that the genocide manifests itself as a traumatic memory and wound that needs healing (Pells 2009). All authors by implication foreground the need to understand constructions of the everyday rather than traumatic memory. By doing so, it is in attending to the first part of the statement, "we have got used to the genocide" that we may understand the lack of the genocide's explanatory power for children in describing hardships. For children, genocide talk and memory appears mostly as popular media rather than 'politics' or a cause for present suffering.

Several months prior to the annual Commemoration Week, I went to visit Sebastian's brother who lives with his family at the top of the same street as Sebastian. Sebastian and I arrived early and joined the brother's children in the living room where they were watching a film, a much-enjoyed pastime in their house; Sebastian's brother and his wife enjoy watching Adventist choir performances but their children like to watch Nigerian soap operas, east African music videos and whatever films they can get. As Sebastian and I settled into the couch, joined by the younger children who immediately jumped up to sit on our laps, I instantly recognised the film Shooting Dogs (2005), an English language film about the genocide. With amazement, they watched as a young English teacher recently arrived in Rwanda, drives through ghostly streets; in his jeep he has to manoeuvre around tortured, slaughtered bodies and is stopped by a roadblock controlled by genocidaires. The youngest

girl, aged six, gives a scream in excited horror when she sees the bodies; her eight-year-old sister of a more serious character remains quiet but continues to look with a concentrated expression. Neither of them understand English but this does not seem to take away from their interest in the film. Sebastian says he thinks I know the film; I tell him I do and that I had in fact seen it only a short while ago in Samira's house (where Samira's four-year-old had also watched it). I am surprised that such young children are freely allowed to watch such realistic violent films about the genocide; with the huge focus on trauma from the genocide I wonder why exposure to such horrific images are not more strictly controlled. Very young children are generally considered too young 'to differentiate between things', that is to understand things beyond hunger, sleep and other immediate physical needs (see also Snipstad et al 2005:191). However, I am bewildered why older children are allowed to watch it as they are thought to understand "something, but not everything". I am also perplexed as to why children do not react more strongly to it. The images are shocking yet for the children it seems like any other film, violent or not.

Other evidence also suggests that young children perceive such portrayals of the genocide as little more than another topic covered by popular media. A week before the annual Commemoration Week started, Kaganza's newly formed youth club was officially launched with an afternoon of performances, timed for the start of Commemoration Week in an attempt to get children and youth more proactively involved in the seven days of mourning. Speakers, microphones and benches were set up at the Cell Office but were soon moved to the open space immediately outside as people arrived in unexpected numbers. It was drizzling but no one seemed to mind. Old men and women and young children from Kaganza's new units were the first to arrive, happy to observe the chaotic preparations. As the seats filled up, the event started. Groups of boys and girls danced and sang along to modern Rwandan pop and hip-hop songs. The children laughed and moved along to the music. Five-year old Gasake charmed everyone with his passionate and rhythmic dance at the edge of the stage in his black leather jacket and sunglasses. The old people looked bored; heads rested in hand or turned to their neighbour, engaged in quiet talk. The crowd kept growing as passers-by on the paved road stopped to see what was going on. The performers were in their late teens and early twenties. After five song performances, the Sector Chief, JM, showed up and officially launched the youth club with a short introductory speech. He complimented them for creating a club to address the problems they themselves had observed in society, mentioning the problems of poverty and AIDS. He complimented their creativeness, through film, song and dance addressing issues of genocide ideology, conflict, reconciliation and peace. Then the youth performed a traditional dance to lyrics about people's

responsibility to carry out their duties in society. A role play was performed next. JM leaned over, telling me with obvious demand of my interest that it was about "reconciliation": parents meet their children's killers in the *cabaret.* It was a humourous performance with everyone laughing. JM took notes more vigorously than me and the old men who previously looked bored now followed the performance with focused attention. Papa Charlotte and Samira were part of the play, acting as advisors tasked with creating peace between the two families. When achieved, three genocide orphans entered and approached the two advisors to ask for help; as genocide orphans they are poor and need help to complete their studies. The two advisors decide to collect money for them during Commemoration Week. The next role play followed a similar story line. JM explained the play to me as denoting the time after the genocide when "there used to be two sides but now people are mixing again" as he proudly interlaced his fingers. Everyone payed close attention, some children trying to get so close to the stage that they nearly climbed over me. Feeling claustrophobic, JM told them to move back. Then the play dragged on and the children lost their concentration. Even JM put away his notebooks and took out his phone. Only the survivors and old people still followed with interested concentration. The children stood together in a big group, as if feeling the need to be serious, but they were bored and could not concentrate, fidgeting, chatting and fighting.

A few days later, Commemoration Week started with an opening ceremony that I attended with Sebastian who dutifully translated and explained anything I didn't understand. Sebastian looked painfully bored. When the ceremony was over and we walked back to the village to rest before the evening ceremony I asked him what he thought of it:

> *"You know, the ceremony takes place every year, so we have heard it all before, and it is not so interesting now. We know about the genocide. But the survivors like to talk about it and remember it."*

The next day during a drawing session at my house, François heard Placidie humming one of the most played genocide songs and asked her why she was humming it. Placidie, with an embarrassed grin, suddenly could not keep herself from laughing, commenting that she had not even realised she was doing it. While François was initially shocked, he also could not keep from laughing, eventually however exclaiming that the genocide was too serious a matter to laugh at, that it was not respectful to be humming genocide songs as a general pastime. Such reactions by children and youth suggest a level of 'normalisation' of the genocide.

Communal events such as Commemoration Week and the activities performed by the Youth Club indicate that there is a strong emphasis on transmitting knowledge about the genocide to the younger generations. However, children's reactions to these messages suggest that the medium of instruction (song, film and other media) engages children more so than do the lessons about genocide. It seems that all the focus on the genocide, on reconciliation and rebuilding lives post-genocide, affects a sort of normalising effect through which the genocide came to lack explanatory power. This is compounded by strategies deployed by adults that prevent an association of current problems with the genocide, most particularly an emphasis on keeping 'peace' (*amahoro*).

But There Is Peace…

The needs narratives examined in the previous chapter suggested a powerful discourse on genocide exceptionality. These conversations always ended with a comment that for months I merely took as rhetorical: "but we need to have peace, so we stay friends and we try to forget our history". It was not rhetorical, however. People were happy that their children were growing up in peace and did not want them to see anything else. One strategy to do so was to not let children know about the genocide's influence on the differential treatment of people, and in particular orphans. Most non-survivors in fact wished that children could be less exposed to the culture of remembering. I had several conversations with Claire's grandmother about the biased politics of the village leader, about the favourable treatment of survivors and the lesser treatment of people "like her" who were considered less Tutsi and more Hutu because of their absence in Rwanda during the genocide. She was not afraid to tell me about her opinions. Yet when her granddaughter made similar comments, she dismissed them. As Christmas approached, the children were getting excited about the end of the school year, the harvest season and Christmas, hoping that their parents could afford to buy them presents and serve meat. I often brought out my little digital camera to capture some of the dynamics and characteristics of the particular session. Many of the children loved to watch themselves on the camera screen afterwards and often asked if I could print some of the photos for them, which I then decided to do for Christmas. When I came to Claire's house with her photo, she was so excited that she barely knew what to do with herself. Her patience did not stretch to the usual greetings and questions of news and wellbeing; to her grandmother's amusement, she interrupted all our attempts at catching up on news. I took out her photo to put an end to her excited misery. First, she laughed but then she became visibly upset. She thought she looked horrible in the photo. Her grandmother

told her not to be rude and to appreciate the gift without complaints. François laughed at her sincere but upset reaction, asked to see the photo and asked what was wrong with it. He thought she looked nice in it, as had I thought when I went through the photos on my computer. She immediately took the photo and hid it, not wanting anyone to see it. Then she complained that her top was hanging off her shoulder, exposing her skin. She then pressed her nose flat and said it looked like Cindy's. By doing so, she was distancing herself from a historical aesthetic stigma (Taylor 2005). Cindy has the facial characteristics historically associated with Hutu. She is dark and has a flat nose and she looks stunted compared to her peers. Claire did not want to look that way. This was a rare suggestion that historical understandings of cultural ethnicity still prevail, even amongst children. Claire's grandmother immediately dismissed the ethnic reference and tried to laugh it away, repeating that she thought Claire looked nice in the photo.

Mama Joseph also did not want Claire to know the particularities of genocide suffering. During Commemoration Week, Claire's grandmother felt it was wrong to continue memories of the genocide in children. Claire and her grandmother had gone to the fire ceremony at the start of the evening but had unusually stayed towards the back and had quietly slipped away before a candle ceremony in which survivors stand around a massive fire, each holding a candle and taking turns to give their genocide testimony. It was a long, terrifying ceremony where survivor upon survivor fell screaming to the ground in a fit of "trauma" before being carried away to receive counselling. It was only several days later that I got a chance to discuss this ceremony with the grandmother. Mama Joseph thought such a ceremony was inappropriate for children, as is, in her view, the continuous cultivation of the culture of genocide remembering. The grandmother then, judgementally, elaborated that it was not appropriate for survivors to always show children films about the genocide. Consequently, she tried to keep Cindy at home when such films were shown – although this was difficult as she did not want to deny her granddaughter the chance to enjoy television or to be with her friends. She therefore did not prevent her from going very often but rather soon after purchased her own TV and encouraged Cindy to bring her friends to her house instead where she had more control of what was watched. Many people from the surrounding villages also kept their children away from events associated with Commemoration Week, believing that whatever children learned about the genocide in school was enough. Thus despite the fact that there on the one hand was a concerted effort at sustaining a strong memory of the genocide and on transmitting knowledge about the genocide to children, there was, on the other hand, an attempt by many villagers to "hide" the particularities of genocide suffering and the differential treatment of people.

Figure 8 Children's drawings of the 7 Days (Commemoration Week).

Appropriating the Politics of Identity

At aged 10, Claire was starting to make some implicit references to cultural ethnicity of which she probably was not fully aware. Understanding of political ethnicity, categories and causalities do not develop until later. When the schools started back after the end-of-year Christmas holidays, I passed 15-year old Mutabasi in the street. In his usual energetic and cheerful manner, he was half running, half skipping through the street, waving a schoolbook about. As he greeted me, I asked with interest what book he was carrying – it was not common to see children with schoolbooks, which are normally borrowed from and thus kept at the school. He showed me a Social Studies book, and with the usual hint of laughter in his voice said he had just had a class on Rwanda's history, "you know Maja, our bad history of genocide, we have many problems". Mutabasi was the youngest person I heard speak of or refer to the genocide openly and outside the context of Commemoration Week. His 12-year old cousin who lived with him never mentioned it, nor did 12-year old Placidie and Julianne who were otherwise well-informed and politically interested girls with dreams of becoming journalists and presidents. It thus seemed that it was sometime in the mid-teens as children transitioned to secondary school that an understanding emerged in children of the genocide as a causal

179

factor of social "problems", and as having a structuring effect on governmental and NGO support for orphans.

The Social Studies books in fact provide a crucial insight into children's changing mode of understanding vulnerabilities and "problems" (*ibibaso*). Primary school spans over six years, from Primary Class 1 (P1) to Primary Class 6 (P6). In the first five years children learn that conflicts and problems arise when family and community members do not treat each other well. In P2 children learn that common conflicts include pupils who "quarrel because one has torn the book of another", while family members may quarrel because one member makes another member angry. Causes of conflict include stealing, greed, selfishness and hatred. Hatred is exemplified as "hatred of people who are different from us" because they are of a different colour or because "some people feel that other people do not have good ideas... [and] make them feel bad". From P1 to P5 conflict is framed within the sphere of family and local community. In a chapter on leadership, children learn that "family members help the needy members of the community such as the sick and the orphans" and that "if we do not care for the needy and the orphans in the district, poverty will increase and there will be more street children". In P6, the focus of the textbook changes and children start to learn about Rwanda's history[71]. A third of the book is dedicated to pre-colonial culture, colonialism, conflict and genocide. Conflict now becomes framed in terms of politics and ethnic hatred as children begin to read about the consequences of genocide. Two of eight causes read:

> *"Family members and relatives were separated as they ran away in different directions. Children lost their parents and women lost their husbands. This left many orphans and widows without any help"*

> *"Parents were tortured, beaten and killed in front of their children. Women were beaten, raped and killed as their families watched. The people who survived, especially the children, were affected and suffered from trauma because of the horrifying things they had witnessed".*

From the last year of primary school children learn that conflict is political and that orphanhood, and the lack of care for orphans, is genocide-induced. Children's emerging understanding of the structuring effects of the genocide coincided with two general changes in their lives: changing from the status of children to that of youth[72] (*umusore*), which concurs with the

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[71] Up until at least 2004, history was not taught as a subject in school (Bird 2003; Obura 2003; Zorbas 2004). Currently it is taught as part of social studies.
[72] At which point children can also join the youth club.

transition from primary school to secondary school. 13-year old Juliette was usually present when I spent time with the children. Then suddenly, about four months into my research, I rarely saw her. She stopped coming to the house and I no longer saw her playing with the other children in the street. Instead, she started hanging out with two older girls, "strolling around" or hanging out on the top of the water tank belonging to the Cell Office from where they could observe village life. She continued to greet me but showed no more interest in my research. As I was known in the village to be "the children's friend" (*inshuti na bana*) she might have wanted to distance herself from me because she no longer seemed to continue to see herself as a child. "Strolling around" in the street, hanging out in public places and taking on a strict (rather than playful) parenting role for younger siblings are all indicators of a maturing status and part of the process of becoming an adult. Spending increasing time in adult company, she was also more exposed to adult conversations that were normally carried out in the absence of children.

According to Gottlieb and Bronstein (1996, quoted in Snipstad et al 2005:183) children worry more than adults realise and adults often misjudge the issues that children mostly worry about. Adults for example think children are mostly concerned with peer relations and personal matters, whereas, according to Gottlieb and Bronstein, children tend to worry more about serious events and matters (ibid.). Through the ethnography presented here, however, it appears that children in middle childhood, before they enter their mid-teens, worry exactly about peer relations and personal matters whereas more serious events do not start to dominate children's concerns until they are well into their teenage years and approaching adulthood. Greenstein (1960) found in a study of New Haven children in the US that while children may develop an understanding of key political figures early on – expressed in overwhelmingly positive views of such figures – deeper political understanding, such as political contents and cynicism, does not develop until adolescence or later. Thus, he argues, younger children have an affective understanding of politics, while older children have a cognitive understanding. Kaganzan youth shared similar perceptions of childhood suffering as those of adults. It was 20-year old Jeanine who helped me to understand the political differentiation of orphans. It was her best friend, Samira's second-eldest daughter, who helped me to understand the link between trauma and the exceptionality of genocide orphans. Thus the discourse on the deserving genocide orphan only becomes expressed as children enter their mid- to late teens – although there are of course exceptions as evidenced by the 12-year old boy's drawing of bad/good experiences below.
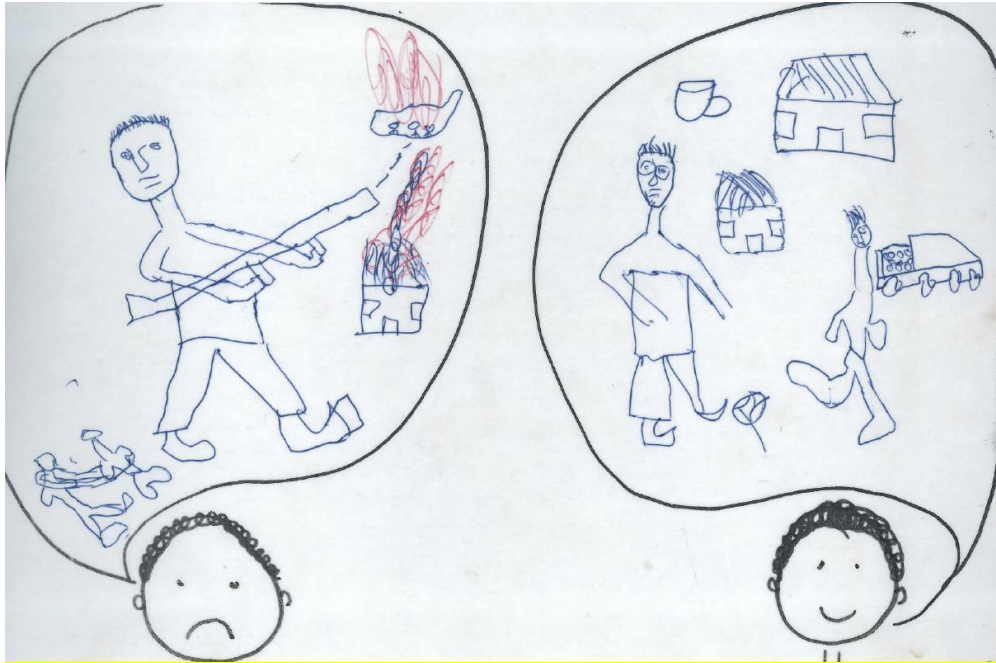
Figure 9 A drawing by the only infiltration war orphan in Kaganza.

A Moment of Orphanhood

The apolitical understanding of orphanhood warrants an examination of the relationship between Kaganzan children's social status, their casting as deserving genocide orphans, and their subjectivities and self-representations as individual children. Towards the end of my research, I organised a small focus group of five girls, aged 8-10, who all knew each other well and were good friends. They all had in common that they lived with family members who were not their biological parents and at least one of their parents had died. The group included Elisa, Cindy, Claire, Gisele and Husina. I had chosen these girls for the focus group because they were comfortable speaking about complicated or difficult issues and could often clearly articulate their thoughts and feelings. To keep the conversation general I asked them in the third person what they thought were the possible experiences[73] an orphan may have. I could not seem to get the focus group going. Except for Gisele who remained quiet, they all said they did not know because they were not orphans (*sinzi, sindi*

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[73] The English word experience does not as such exist in Kinyarwanda. Zemback (2009) translates *kugerageza* as 'to experience'. However in the online official dictionary (www.kinyarwanda.net) and in popular usage, *kugerageza* means to try or attempt and often involves a process of learning. Experience, rather, is often talked about in terms of what someone 'sees' (*kubona*), 'understands' (*kumwa:* listen, understand, feel) or feels (*kumera:* implies feeling in the sense of state of being). My research assistant sometimes used *kumwa munda*: to feel in the stomach (deep inside).

imfubyi: I don't know, I am not an orphan). I decided to change the topic to discuss *why* they were *not* orphans. Then an interesting discussion emerged, primarily between Claire, Cindy and Husina. Despite being popularly known as an orphan, Husina did not in any straightforward way consider herself an orphan. Husina said she did not know what it was like to be an orphan because she had never experienced it herself. She had a mother who looked after her well (*gufata neza*). Husina did not miss anything. Unlike Gisele who had gotten downcast, Husina was clear in her voice and seemed entirely unaffected by the topic. Husina's rejection may suggest several things, especially as it compares to other reactions by her in other contexts relating to her orphanhood. Firstly, it suggests that, in accordance with Veale et al's suggestion, Husina adhered to a definition of orphanhood as a child who lacks means and parental care (rather than biological parents), neither of which she felt she lacked. By rejecting her classification as an orphan, she rejected any notion that her aunt was not a good enough carer and that family is about biological relations. This stands in stark contrast to how community members perceived her.

Equally important may be Husina's emerging realisation of her public identification as an orphan. In Chapter 2, I described Husina's upset reaction when her peers suggested her as the leader for a play on orphanhood and her later insistence on only discussing happy things because she wanted to be happy. Worried that my work with the children the afternoon of the play planning incident had hurt Husina, I went to her house to apologise. Husina had not yet returned home so I asked her aunt if she would help me apologise to Husina. Husina's aunt laughed heartily at my suggestion that the children's calling of Husina as an orphan could have upset her. The aunt told me that Husina did not know she was an orphan and must have gotten upset by something else. She explained that she had never told Husina that she was an orphan because she wanted to protect Husina from the worries associated with orphanhood and had therefore always told Husina that she herself was her mother, repeating this whenever Husina came home complaining she had been teased for being an orphan. Several weeks later, I got the chance to discuss with Husina what had happened during the theatre play discussion. Now she explained that although she was not an orphan, or at least had not thought of herself as an orphan, she was beginning to wonder if perhaps she was an orphan. She could not explain what had made her think about this but rather fell quiet for a moment. It did not seem appropriate to continue the conversation in that direction and instead we talked about what she chose to talk about: school and friends as things that made her happy.

Later, in a different context, her aunt confided that Husina was slowly starting to realise that she was an orphan because she was beginning to be confused (*kuyoberwa*) about her father's

whereabouts – remember she had some vague memories of dialogues with her father – questioning whether the aunt was really her mother as her peers kept telling her she was not. As Husina was only ten, Shangaze did not think she was old enough to be told about her orphanhood and had confirmed that she was Husina's real mother. At the time of the focus group, I did not know if Husina had begun to "realise" her status as orphan. Her rejection may suggest that she had not, being so categorical in her rejection. Or she may have "realised" and simply rejected this category because she did not want to be identified as an orphan. This at least seemed to be the case when she then insisted that she did not want to talk or think about "sad things". Perhaps her desire to only discuss "happy things" was an attempt to forget her orphanhood or deny its existence or an act of disagreement with a description of her life as orphan. Thus, while Husina on the one hand did not consider herself an orphan because she was well-cared for by a mother figure, on the other hand she was slowly coming to see herself, in some way, as an orphan. What exactly she did imply in the focus group is difficult to know as she was still in the process of "learning". At age 10, the discourse on the needy and deserving genocide orphan offered little in terms of how Husina identified herself.

The adult discourse on the deserving genocide orphan reflects a dominant view in the scholarship on orphanhood that it is the event of parental death that is significant to the experience of orphanhood. In the case of genocide orphans – and genocide orphans 'by proxy' –the cause of parental death, rather than the fact of death, facilitates an essentialised status as a particular kind of orphan. However, Husina and the many examples provided throughout this thesis of children claiming to be orphans when their parents are still alive force us to reposition orphanhood as a more fluid category where parental death is only one of several factors contributing to orphan identity-formation in children. Rather than seeing orphanhood as grounded in a single, dramatic event, limited in time and space (Meinert 2009:8), of parental death or absence, I suggest that orphanhood is more aptly conceptualised as arising from a series of "small momentary events" (Stern 2004), present moments of daily life occurrences where change occurs and lives unfold. This is similar to how Mann reconceptualises the experience of refugeeness in the lives of Congolese children in Tanzania (2011).

Dilthey's distinction between mere experience and 'an experience' (Meinert 2009:8) is helpful. 'Mere experience' can be defined as "passive endurance and acceptance of events" while 'an experience' "stands out from the evenness of passing hours and forms a structure of experience" (Throop 2003:224). Stern writes:

> "In a present moment, as we bring a past experience forward and reconsider it in this moment, we may reinterpret, relive and retell, coming to new understandings that have the power to both

reinterpret the past and propel us forward into the future." (Stern 2004, quoted in Pinnegar and Hamilton 2009:23).

Here, Boltanski and Thévenot's notion of *moments critiques* (critical moments) is also useful. 'Critical moments' denotes the critical activity of persons and the unusualness of a moment of crisis (1999:359-360) where a person realises that something is going wrong. Emphasising the reflexivity of the moment, they write:

> "In the process of realising that something is going wrong one has to take a distance from the present moment and to turn backwards towards the past. Old things, forgotten words, accomplished acts, come back to one's mind, through a selective process, which links them to one another in order to produce a story, which makes sense."   (ibid.)

Such a critical moment often forces a person to feel the need to "express discontent to the other persons with whom he is performing, until then, a joint action" (ibid.). Kulle has defined such moments as "situations of forced identification", and explains further "other experiences of events that challenge the integrity of the individual [are] potential reflective moments to which people assign great significance" (2003:113). While Boltanski and Thévenot are primarily concerned with disputes, I here consider critical moments of interaction as moments of "orphanhood crises" where children either reject the orphan label or start a process of reflectively incorporating it into their broader identity. On the day of planning the theatre play, Husina had a critical "moment of orphanhood" where things started "to go wrong" and she could no longer get on with the group. She acted by disappearing for the afternoon. As Boltanski and Thévenot emphasise, such critical moments are transitory because they "break the ordinary course of action" (1999:360). The next time I saw Husina, she had re-established herself as a 'happy child' but her categorical rejection of the orphan label had started to waver. To fully incorporate the orphan category as part of one's self-perception, it seems, a series of such critical moments of orphanhood, or transitory orphan experiences, have to take place. At the time of the focus group, Husina had not undergone enough of such "moments of orphanhood" or "experiences-that-stand-out", to self-identify as an orphan. Whether she will ever experience enough such moments is impossible to foresee. In light of the experiences of older children and young people in Kaganza, she may not. While a significant number of children and youth lived without at least one of their parents and had experienced "moments of orphanhood" – being teased by friends in school, remembering the death of a parent – only for Elise and the boy who drew the war memory above did such moments become permanent, what I term "embodied orphanhood" in Chapter 9.

The transition from transient to embodied orphanhood can also happen in the reverse. Pierre who came to live with his grandmother in Kaganza initially experienced orphanhood not as "small

momentary events" but as a dragged out, lonely and prohibiting experience. Pierre was still in mourning. But as he settled into life in Kaganza with his grandmother and cousins, this dragged out experience turned into increasingly infrequent "moments of orphanhood" that also started to lose their significance. The deeply painful original moment of orphanhood, his parents' death in close succession of each other, had in the words of Stern and Dilthey transformed his life and propelled it in a new direction into the future. But, as time passed the event's significance declined and became "small momentary events" of remembering that slowly ebbed out and asserted less influence over Pierre's daily life. When my research ended, Pierre had transformed from an 'embodied orphan' to a successful student and popular friend whose football skills, subtle character and *ubwenge* (intelligence) made him a highly respected peer. The sadness from his eyes and his need to be alone ('seek solitude') had disappeared. Pierre, thus, within the space of a few months became a 'transient orphan', and represented a process of 'unbecoming' an orphan.

Hiding Orphanhood

I suggest that in addition to evading political talk, another strategy of concealment exists that helps to confine Husina's reflections on and feelings of orphanhood to transient moments that evaporate, with perhaps a little trace of new possible modes of identification left behind for mulling over. This strategy emphasises 'hiding orphanhood' from children. Parents want to prevent their children from "knowing orphanhood" by distracting them from feelings of loneliness, worry or confusion. Close friends often help in this endeavour. Thus, just as genocide commemoration – and trauma – has been confined to a defined period once a year, so orphanhood is actively being confined for Kaganzan children to manifest itself only as 'moments of orphanhood'.

It has been widely documented across sub-Saharan Africa that guardians "conceal AIDS-related infections and deaths on the assumption that silence protects children from trauma" (Cheney 2015:38). Snipstad et al have observed that in Tanzania "strong, local traditions exist to shelter children from difficult issues like sickness and death, including to keep children away from funerals and only informing them that the deceased has 'gone on a long journey'" (2005:183). Hutchinson's (2006) research on orphans in Malawi confirms the existence of similar practices. There has been some debate whether this is harmful or protective of children. Regardless of the consequence, deKlerk (2012) interprets guardians' silence as compassionate towards children. The strategy of hiding orphanhood in Kaganza arises from a similar emphasis on compassionately protecting children from perceivably harmful knowledge by keeping them in "painless ignorance" (Bluebond-Langer

1978:165-166). Similarly, Doná suggests that foster parents consider fostering successful when the child has 'forgotten' where he or she came from before being fostered (2001:52). A child who "continues to know that he does not belong 100%" in a new family, has not been fostered successfully (ibid.). Unlike most of the concern with such practices of concealment which sees concealment as related to stigma associated with HIV/AIDS (Cheney 2015), Kaganzan family members conceal orphanhood not due to HIV-related stigma but because they do not want their children to "know" a difficult life. That is why they evaded ethnic, political and genocide-related talk in children's presence. For the same reason, most adults emphasise hiding children's orphanhood.

When 15-year old Elise started behaving badly, I had a lengthy conversation with his worried grandmother. I asked the grandmother why she thought he had become problematic. In addition to having a difficult nature (*aragoye*), she said he "knew" a difficult life. He knew his mother had died from AIDS and that his father did not want him (at least that was what the grandmother thought he knew, Elise himself claimed his father was dead). According to the grandmother, his younger half siblings and cousins who also lived with the grandmother showed an entirely different behaviour. They did not "know" their situation and therefore had not developed bad behaviour. According to the grandmother, they both thought that she was their real mother and therefore did not know they were orphans. Because the grandmother thought Elise's knowledge of his orphanhood contributed to his bad behaviour she had decided not to tell the younger children about their orphanhood. She reasoned that as long as she could hide the children's 'real' situation from them, they would not suffer. Husina's aunt relied on a similar strategy.

The strategy of hiding is often conducted through 'distraction' (*guhuzenza*) and can have an immense impact on children. On a day, I came to visit Pierre and he was not home, I sat down to talk to his grandmother instead. Shortly after, his two cousins, Albert and Chadrake, joined us and I asked them about their relationship to Pierre. They immediately spoke of their attempt to help him; it had not been easy for him to come to the village to live with his grandmother. The cousins could see that Pierre was often sad; he might leave a ball game because he wanted to be "in solitude" or simply walk around the streets by himself, with a distant look in his eyes. Albert and Chadrake followed after to cheer him up. If he wanted to talk they listened, but usually they tried to "distract" him so he would forget his situation and encouraged him to be "patient" (*kwihangana*). With time, they thought their cousin started to "forget" (*kwibagirwa*) by not seeking solitude as often. Pierre's grandmother concurred. The moments when Pierre needed distraction – which she offered by focusing his attention on education – were becoming increasingly infrequent. The emphasis on protecting children from

seeing bad things by either "hiding" difficult situations and knowledge from children or distracting them from bad memories, helped children to not identify as orphans.

Conclusion: Transient Orphanhood

Outside the adult discursive space, Husina is not a suffering genocide orphan because the two labels deployed by adults to describe her experiences (genocide and orphanhood) have not yet come to make sense to her. In relation to AIDS orphanhood, Cheney has suggested that silence "often compounds surviving children's emotional suffering because they cannot articulate their fears or accurately process information about the progress of the disease" (2015:39). Yet it appears from the ethnography presented here that acts of concealment protect children from identifying as orphans. Such acts restrict feelings of hardship to transient moments that soon fade, rather than compounding suffering. When neither politics, genocide or orphanhood are discussed within the context of children's specific situations, children do not easily relate genocide orphanhood to their own lives.

Periodic feelings of being an orphan or wondering about one's potential status of orphanhood may arise in children like Cindy or Husina but such feelings are confined to 'moments of orphanhood', which quickly pass with the help of friends or family. Yet Kaganzan adults are consciously working hard to prevent their children from developing a political understanding of orphanhood. Like Hutchinson's Malawian families, Kaganza families tried to hide the fact of a child's orphanhood from the child for as long as possible to protect children from "knowing orphanhood". In attempt to hide orphanhood from children, families go to extra lengths to provide sufficiently for their children. Nonetheless, adults recognise that the older children become, the more they will know and understand and thus they will, inevitably, know their orphanhood. Adults simply hope that this knowledge can be delayed to a time when children are perceived as better able to cope. That adults take on such strong responsibility for alleviating children's vulnerability and suffering as potential orphans significantly helps to reduce children's feelings of orphanhood and thus act to confine parental death or absence to confined moments, making orphanhood an only transient experience that can be overcome. The strong focus on loving, respectful parent-child relationships in Kaganza prevents most children from existential orphanhood, from the feeling of always being incomplete – at least most of the time. Structural orphanhood as manifested by being teased by peers for lacking a parent presents children with difficulties. However, as these only arise in particular moments of tense peer relationships, and as they can be denied by other peers and family in other contexts, such moments do not cause children to identify as orphans.

Chapter 8

Ghosts of History

Orphans of a Silenced War

"Most cultures share a tendency to silence traumatic histories. Traumatic amnesia seems to become inscribed as cultural practice. Yet, trauma can never be completely silenced since its effects continue to operate unconsciously. Suggesting that the silence intended to cover up a traumatic event or history only leads to its unconscious transmission, Abraham speaks of a haunting that spans generations. […] Facing the psychic effects of the legacy of violence, guilt, shame and (impossible) mourning as it has been passed down to the next generation is an excruciatingly complicated process. Such an archeology of the psyche is indispensable for allowing the children of perpetrators to address the unfinished business of their parents. […] The exhumation of the ghosts of the past is […] indispensable for trying to avoid the repetition of traumatic history or its displacement onto other people."　　　　　(Schwab 2004:186)

A Different Kind of Child

By quoting Schwab on the ghostly hauntings of perpetrator trauma, I do not claim that Mwiza and neighbouring village residents are perpetrators. Most I would assume are not[74]. However, as assumed Hutu, Mwizan residents are, like Hutu generally (and in particular northwestern Hutu), inherently cast as perpetrators in the post-genocide politics of identity. By implication, their children are perceived and treated as children of perpetrators. My intention in quoting Schwab is my suggestion that the delinquent orphan discourse that exists in Mwiza derives from the intense silencing of Hutus' suffering due to their assumed perpetrator status, as well as their suffering in the infiltration war. Through this silencing act, trauma is being transmitted to orphans of the infiltration war that appears much deeper than seems experienced in Kaganza. It is from this transgenerational trauma (Braga et al 2012; Schwab 2004; Starman 2006) that their stigmatisation arises.

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[74] I only ever met one person whose statements raised suspicions of participation in the genocide, a pastor whose conversion narrative strongly hinted at a deeper truth that he only half-heartedly sought to cover with excuses of alcohol problems.

The social salience of the deserving genocide orphan facilitates a simultaneous social undesirability of other kinds of orphan. The genocide orphan discourse is well-known in Mwiza and was on several occasions emphasised as the reason for a lack of charitable and governmental support for orphans in Mwiza. An 18-year old female orphan and a male orphan in his mid-teens explained,

> *"I have heard about those orphans who are recognised and get support but here we are not considered like them, we get no support, their situation is not relevant to our lives".*

> *"Yes I have heard that President Kagame loves people because he respects them, but I have not seen this myself so I don't know about it."*

I have suggested that orphans in Mwiza are often perceived through a discourse on orphans as a burden to their community and as someone else's responsibility (*inshingano*). An important question is why adults in Kaganza take on the responsibility of worry for orphans when people in Mwiza do not. A closer look at how the infiltration war is communicated and remembered, or indeed forgotten, suggests that Mwiza and Kaganza may engage in significantly different orphan care practices due to differential access to public mourning and social memory and the ways in which this is transmitted to the next generation. In Kaganza, the village's physical structure, the culture of remembering as well as topographies of power and wealth embeds the history of genocide into Kaganza's physical and social structures, while familial and communal practices concurringly seek to eradicate orphanhood. One would do well to forget the genocide or to notice orphanhood. In Mwiza, interestingly, the reverse appears to hold true. As much ambiguity, silence and fear as enshrouded references to the war, as loud and clear were many Mwiza adults' public and derogatory evocation of children's orphan status. The old man's clear denunciation of Dusabimana and the unnamed male youth, Dusabimana's grandmother's frequent judgements against Dusabimana and loud verbal scolding, Isabelle's grandfather's constant conversations about his grandchildren's orphanhood, Jeneti's father's frequent reference to the death of Jeneti's mother all went contrary to Kaganzan adults' conscious, daily attempts at never mentioning orphanhood in front of children. It appears that orphans in Mwiza are ostracised as the symbols and embodiments of the decline of their community and its plunging into an uncertain, frightening future where hope has become as scarce as the resources upon which people depend for survival. In Shwab's words, Mwiza orphans have become the ghosts of the past through the region's traumatic amnesia.

Other People's Children

The old man's perception of orphans as a problem was symptomatic of several family members' conceptualisations of their orphaned children's lives and behaviour. Dusabimana was more often than not on bad terms with her grandmother who blamed Dusabimana for stealing her fields[75], for making 'unreasonable' demands on her and for failing her responsibilities towards her family. In reality, Dusabimana had been given the contested fields by her grandfather, shortly before he passed away. Dusabimana's 'unreasonable' demands had been encouraged by neighbours who suggested that the grandparents build a house for Dusabimana and her sister because the grandparents had "stigmatised" (*gutoteza*) them in their own house by denying them food and keeping them from going to church. The sisters were given the kitchen hut, which could not be locked and it leaked. They could therefore not protect their harvested crops. The hut was then abolished by the local authorities under a new policy outlawing thatched roofs. The grandmother did not feel responsible for helping Dusabimana build a new house but rather put this responsibility on the local authorities. When Dusabimana then approached the local authorities, they agreed to pay for her tin roof, the minimum standard that any house is required to have, if she could find the wood for the house structure herself. Dusabimana asked her grandmother for help with this but was told that this was not the grandmother's responsibility. Instead, Dusabimana sought paid employment and instrumentalised some of her relations with neighbours. Eventually Dusabimana succeeded in building the house and the local authorities provided the roof. But, in the meantime Dusabimana's harvest had been stolen, her 13-year old sister had left home, intendedly for good, and Dusabimana's relationship to her grandmother was severely strained as Dusabimana believed her grandmother wished her dead.

In part the tendency of community members to relegate responsibility for orphans to outside agents may be due to the sheer number of youth in need, given the devastation of the infiltration war and the loss of a large percentage of adult caregivers. For some family members, like Isabelle's grandfather, the lack of resources certainly presented a significant obstacle in offering support to orphans. The grandfather had looked after his brother's orphans when his own children were young in the 1950s and 1960s and had not felt this to be particularly difficult. He had been able to raise them like his own children (*gufata neza nkabana banjye)*. When faced with his children's orphans, the situation was different and he felt he had nothing to offer them. However, the lack of resources is far

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[75] Land conflicts and disputes have often posed problems to widows and orphans in different African countries (see for example Roys 1995, Rose 2005)

from sufficient explanation. Dusabimana's grandmother, Evelyne's adoptive mother and Jeneti's father had more than sufficient social and material resources to draw on but they did not feel the responsibility for orphans was theirs.

It was not uncommon to witness disagreements, friendly bantering and fights full of anger between children, youth and their adult family members that revolved around questions of responsibility and familial care, including in families that did not experience a particular lack of means. When I went to visit Mutesi and Angelique, I met the sisters outside their compound but as I approached their hut, the sisters looked distraught. It was clear why. Angelique was wearing a big blood-stained bandage around her head and did not look well. The doctor said it was only a minor cut but the story behind was immense. The sisters' paternal aunt had accused them of not looking after their elderly, dying grandmother. Angelique had explained to the aunt that they were trying to assist their grandmother as best they could but that they were struggling to survive themselves. The girls live by themselves in a hut without a field and live off whatever they can grow on their little garden patch. The aunt, in turn, has several fields. Angelique also reminded the aunt that it was in fact her responsibility, not theirs. In response, the aunt hit Mutesi's sister in the head with a machete. Mutesi and Angelique seem an extreme case but it was sadly a reality for several youth in Mwiza. Evelyne, a 20-year old double orphan was similarly attacked by her adoptive mother. Her mother did not use a machete but instead targeted Evelyne's right leg and foot, which had been crippled by polio when she was small and often caused her considerable pain.

In light of how well-cared for many orphans were in Kaganza, even those not officially registered or publically pitied, the level of familial and social ostracism orphans experienced only a 45-minute walk away is disturbing. Had the incident with Mutesi and her sister happened in Kaganza several things would have happened. Firstly, the village leader would have intervened even prior to the machete incident. Samira, or indeed the two other village leaders I knew, would have tried to encourage family members to integrate the girls within a family member's household. If that failed, they would have looked for NGO support. Secondly, had an attack with a machete happened in Kaganza, the police would have been called, the aunt would have been arrested and likely asked to pay for her niece's medical care. Thirdly, had the attack happened on a "genocide orphan" or survivor, Ibuka would have been involved and the incidence considered 'genocide ideology', or at least as breaching the rights of survivors, effecting severe punishment. Neither the village leader nor the police were involved when Angelique was attacked. When I asked why, Mutesi did not think they cared and then asked me rhetorically what they could have done in the situation in any case.

Although children and young people complained that the local authorities ignored their claims for need of assistance, many adult family members continued to locate the responsibility of orphans with local authorities. When Isabelle's grandfather spoke with anger of his grandchildren's difficult situation, he blamed the local authorities for not living up to their responsibility. He accused them of being corrupt and of not "considering" or "giving value" to his grandchildren and other orphans in the area. Like Dusabimana's grandmother, he believed the responsibility for his orphans lay with the authorities, not with their kin network even though his orphaned grandchildren had a larger kin network than most orphans. This is not to say that community members did not feel sympathy towards orphans. Several community members expressed frustration on behalf of orphans that they could not get included in NGO projects or access resources from the local authorities, as had Dusabimana's neighbours upon her grandparents' mistreatment of Dusabimana and her sister. Nonetheless, there was an obvious sense that orphans were perceived as a burden to which the community felt unable to respond and people's frustrations rarely translated into any significant support. Had Dusabimana's neighbours gotten together, they could have built her house in a week or had they spoken on her behalf to the village council, an *umuganda* (public work) would have been dedicated to building her house. Neither of this happened.

The old man's reaction described in Chapter 5 suggests that Mwiza's "problem of orphans" is blamed on children themselves and by implication the community no longer holds responsibility. An often referenced saying, "a child of somebody else is difficult[76]", suggests that the failure to integrate orphans historically may have been with children themselves and that family members could only be expected to do so much to integrate orphaned children. It is however interesting to compare the rhetoric used around difficult integration processes in Mwiza and Kaganza. While children are blamed for not being properly raised and cared for in Mwiza, this did not occur in Kaganza. In Kaganza, there was indeed the same recognition that integration of orphans could be difficult but this was not explicated with 'difficult children', except for Elise's grandmother. Rather, people often described how it was difficult for mothers to love children who were not their own, as with Gisele described in Chapter 3. Gisele's father never suggested that Gisele was difficult or could not be raised but instead recognised the difficulty of replacing a mother's love. Children and adults alike agreed that nothing can replace the love of a mother and thus if children are difficult it is simply because

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[76] *Umwana w'undi abishya inkona* (Dion 1971 quoted in Veale and Doná 2002:55).

they are "nostalgic" (*guha urukumbuzi*) for their mother. The strategy in that situation therefore becomes to distract the child into thinking of happier things or to convince the child that he or she is still loved and looked after, for example by buying them a new pair of shoes, cooking them a good meal or working harder to help them through school. The responsibility lies with the adults, not the children. Here it is beneficial to return to Veale's observation that "the fragmentation of kin structures due to genocide means that suddenly the individual unit of analysis, the child, is presenting enormous challenges to Rwanda's societal and legal structures outside of which many children now live" (1999:110), as Rwandan society is severely challenged regarding the role and responsibilities of children within their families and communities (ibid.:108). This tension between the child, the individual, and the collective is played out in the community (ibid.:110).

Denied Grief and Liminal Lives

According to Veale, the genocide is critically important in communal fragmentation. In Mwiza, the critical event is not the genocide but the infiltration war. The war represents to many Hutu an instance of sudden decline from a high-ranking position within national political hierarchies (Pottier 2002:35; Prunier 2001:86) to a marginalised position. In the words of Isabelle's grandfather,

> *"What development? We see nothing here... there is only bad life here. We used to have many fields and a lot of food, we used to never miss anything, and we had enough to look after orphans, but today, since the war, I have nothing to give to the girls, life is bad now... No one considers these girls and the children, they see we have nothing and no longer respect us, we can do nothing to help them".*

According to him, the community has lost status not only in the eyes of the nation but of their own children. Their very identity as breadwinners and respectful patriarchs have been undermined and their respect lost. While the old man cast this primarily as an issue of discipline, through the social regulation of behaviour, the issue of respect and responsibility have deeper existential implications as the very foundations of people's identities are being questioned from both the top (nation) and the bottom (families).

Feldman contends that "the event is not what happens. The event is that which can be narrated" (1991:14, quoted in Thomson 2009:69). The infiltration war cannot be narrated and is thus inadvertently a 'non-event'. It is this very non-narratability that renders this event so penetrating and destructive for northwestern Hutu. Psychological and anthropological literature on memory has evidenced the role of (social) memory in identity and group formation, in particular after conflict and mass crimes (Cattell and Climo 2002; Dooley 2013; Lemarchand and Niwese 2007; Lemarchand

2008; Nordstrom 1997). Weiss emphasises the role of ideologies of bereavement in sustaining collective boundaries where "self" and "other" are inscribed in the ideologies and practices of bereavement and commemoration (1997:91). An equally large body of work highlights the dangers of the denial of memory, in particular denied grief and mourning (ibid.). Hale for example argues that "in discrete and relatively brief moments, societies in different parts of the world have developed an intense collective need to remember their past as a precondition for facing the future" (1997:817), while Cole writes about the "work of social memory, the means through which a group reconstructs, assimilates, understands its past, and its role in the formation of the group's contemporary identity" (1998:610; see also Fisiy 1998:19). By implication, if a community, group or people are denied the opportunity to remember their past through particular mourning practices, such as public events of intentional remembering, they may face significant obstacles in forming their identity and "facing into the future". Fowlkes' framework for conceptualising grief is useful here.

> "Grief feelings and their behavioural manifestations are socially regulated so as to either permit or deny the individual mourner access to a socially legitimate grief role. Such access indicates social comprehension and validation of the meaning of loss to the bereaved individual. It also establishes a benign social milieu that recognises and makes allowances for the dysfunction and incapacity of the grieving person following a major relationship loss. For these reasons the establishment of a socially legitimate grief role on behalf of a grieving person is a key, if not *the* key, resource for overcoming grief and facilitating social reintegration" (Fowlkes 1990:636-7).

The focus on the social regulation of grief, of allowing a person to publically grieve and be affected by grief, following a death, speaks to a concern in anthropology with burial rites and public, structured mourning processes that facilitate a renewed social integration upon the loss of a member of the family, community or other social unit (Nordstrom 1997:145). In this view, mortuary and burial rites are important rites of passage that people and communities must go through to ensure personal and social re-integration and cohesion upon loss. Fowlkes elaborates her view of grief as a form of deviance from a state of normality. Moral judgment is "operative in the definition". Fowlkes therefore writes of the right to grieve: "The right to grieve is conferred (or not) on the mourner in consequence of the social approbation that is conferred (or not) on the loss." (ibid.). While Fowlkes had in mind the social regulation of individual deaths, such as the social recognition of the need to mourn the loss of particular relationships (parents, children, spouses), her argument is acutely relevant to the Rwandan context. Here it is not the nature of the interpersonal relationship that provides the ground for social regulation but rather the deceased's socio-political (ethnic) identity. Fowlkes' emphasis on the deviance from a state of normality touches on important anthropological work on liminality.

195

Without appropriate burial rites – mourning practices – people cannot enter the next stage of recovery. This applies equally to orphans. Daniel (2005) suggests that ostracised orphans experience stigma because they live in a 'liminal state'. She writes:

> "For children, the death of a parent initiates a rite of passage, a three-stage process: separation from their status as 'son' or 'daughter', a period of liminality with rituals of mourning, burial and interment, and finally re-aggregation into a re-formed social network with a new status as a 'child without parents'. Many orphans in Botswana are excluded from the funerals of their parents; they are structurally invisible. Sometimes, particularly in the case of young children, they are taken to another place, thus they are literally not seen. In the case of older children, some complete all three stages of the rite of passage and the transformation results in clear aggregation into a new status and role. Those children are often resilient and cope well with the trials of orphanhood. For others, liminality is prolonged and the orphans are not reincorporated into a new social network; they are marginalised and may seek 'belonging', 'acceptance' and 'membership' in alternative relationships and in socially unacceptable ways." (2005:195)

Mwiza orphans' status can easily be interpreted as 'liminal'. Words such as deviant and "no longer the community's responsibility" suggest that orphans are outside the bounds of their community. When the local authorities put responsibility back on families and sometimes the orphans themselves, it suggests that orphans are "betwixt and between" (Turner 1964). Here I am not concerned with orphans' participation in their parents' burials. Views and practices in relation hereto vary. Rather orphans' experiences require a closer look at the relation between the social regulation of grief (Fowlkes (1990) and liminality at communal level. Regardless of participation in burials, many Mwiza youth have only been marginally successful in being reincorporated into a new social network. Indeed Sommers interpreted the lives of the northern Rwandan youth he conducted research with as inherently liminal. I suggest here that Mwiza orphans are not liminal due to denied personal grief and mourning but due to a wider communal grief that is even more strongly denied. Buckley-Zistel (2006b) writes of a chosen amnesia after the genocide where people choose to forget the recent traumatic past due to the immediate necessity of having to live side-by-side and get on with life. Similarly, Fisiy writes of the "tendency to rule by amnesia" (1998:20), leading Lemarchand to rephrase it as forced amnesia (2008:28). While genocide survivors and others are encouraged to remember the genocide, other traumatic experiences are publically denied and even criminalised. This forced amnesia was particularly strong in relation to the infiltration war, so much so that when I was approached to make a presentation in Kigali at a conference on gender and education, the American organisers felt the need to censor my presentation to not mention the war at all. Northwestern Hutu in my research often said that they were under much stricter surveillance of 'war talk' than anyone

else, in particular compared to their Tutsi neighbours. One could aptly evoke references to everyday violences of fear (Green 1994; Kleinman 2000). The fear was often real. Arrests of Hutu were indeed made during and after Commemoration Week in April, a time when the presence of police and soldiers increased exponentially in Mwiza and its hinterlands with several daily patrols marching through the streets. Never have I experienced a place as quiet as when the red or blue uniforms moved along Mwiza's meandering paths and the fear became so thick it could be sliced through.

On my first visit to Mwiza after Commemoration Week[77], I tried to bring up the topic of the recent commemorations. Jeneti's father refused to talk about them. The week had passed, he said, and we should not dwell on such difficulties. Dusabimana's grandmother snorted. The young people themselves replied with a simple *sinzi* (I don't know). The only person willing to talk was Isabelle's grandfather who spoke of how people in the area were not able to give their testimony or speak of their suffering; this, he explained, closes people's hearts and makes them ready to burst. He himself thought he would die from this 'bursting heart' some day. Habimana, introduced in Chapter 3 as suffering in his own view from poverty-induced mental ill-health, explained something similar:

> *"People here in the village remember their members whom they lost in the war, the Hutu lost in the war. During the 7 days[78], we remember only those members of society who lost their lives who are Tutsi, we don't remember the Hutu because the genocide was focused on the Tutsi. [The villagers] they don't give it value (i.e. they don't remember). They cover the problems in their heart."*

As suggested by Isabelle's grandfather, covering problems in the heart is dangerous but few Hutu felt able to speak about this pain and thus kept it hidden. The trauma discourse is thus perhaps at its most powerful in the lives of those to whom it cannot, by virtue of trauma's definition, apply. Publically, Hutu suffering cannot be labelled, discussed and thus addressed. Similar incidents have happened numerous times at national level. Guglielmo (2015) for example writes of the singer Kizito whose song *Igisobanuro Cy'Urupfu* (The meaning of death) expresses a similar sentiment when his song addresses all victims (Hutu and Tutsi) as siblings. Kizito was accused of genocide ideology despite being actively involved in reconciliation activities and was officially charged with terrorist activities (ibid.:151). The trauma-genocide association became especially clear to me when I was invited to attend a meeting between the Sector Chief Executive, JM, and the sector's religious leaders. JM was dedicated to the welfare of the people in his jurisdiction but he was also deeply committed to

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[77] I was required to stay in my village of 'residency' during Commemoration Week.
[78] Most Rwandans refer to Commemoration Week as "The 7 Days".

fulfilling his obligations as a representative of the government at local level, and thus to implement government policies. JM had invited the religious leaders to a meeting because he wanted to seek their assistance in rolling out basic education, such as literacy, math and modern agricultural techniques. I was invited along to the meeting to assist in his and the leaders' understanding of some of the problems that faced rural villagers. The timing of the meeting coincided with a period of my research when I had been approached by several villagers in both Mwiza and Kaganza, as well as by people I had met in the streets who knew of my research. A woman whom I had never met or spoken to before approached me as I was leaving my neighbour's cabaret. She asked me for help, she said, because she was suffering from bad depression (*amajune*) and could only think of ending her life (*kwiyica*). Thankfully, my research assistant, François, was with me at the time. François has a degree in psychology and knew well the local mental health services, however basic they were, and referred her to the main hospital in town. The woman was relieved to hear of this service and went away from our short conversation with a slight, content smile on her face. A few weeks later, as I walked through Mwiza with François, a woman passed us whom François immediately pointed out as "mad". He knew her from town. When I asked what he thought had made her mad he didn't know; shortly after we arrived at the house of Isabelle's grandfather and François decided to ask him. The grandfather seemed to think that we were half-crazed ourselves for asking him; as if it was obvious, he immediately said "well that is from the war, what else could it be?" He appeared both offended and annoyed by François's question.

I described some of these experiences at the meeting; I spoke of the many people I had come to know in the area who suffered from poor mental health but who felt they had nowhere to go for help. Due to the widespread culture of silence and danger of implying any criticism of the government, I had been somewhat nervous to recount these experiences of people's unaddressed psychological suffering. Their reaction illuminated just how strong the genocide-trauma association was. JM thanked me warmly for sharing my concerns as he wanted to know "all his people's problems" and immediately opened up for a discussion on how to address the problem. The religious leaders took a round of expressing their thoughts. The consensus was that none of them had thought of their congregations' suffering in this way before. Indeed, the many services I had attended had been focused on problems of poverty and paganism, or immoral behaviour such as alcohol consumption, prostitution and unfaithfulness. War-induced psychological suffering was never a theme. JM agreed, he had not thought of people's problems in that way, but he could see now that many of the behaviours he was trying to change, such as parents spending their money on alcohol

rather than on their children's school materials or health insurance, might revolve around unaddressed suffering. At the meeting the men decided that they would try to "create a project" to address the problem. François and I offered our assistance as we both had important contacts to experienced psychologists. We arranged another meeting where we invited along these contacts and together we brainstormed what the project could look like. JM, François and the invited psychologist were obviously excited and passionate about the project. The disappointment was obvious and deeply felt when several months later JM was given the news by his superiors that there simply could not be allocated any funds to such a project. This in itself was not a problem as one of the psychologists was employed by a religious organisation that had offered to contribute with funds if necessary. Yet upon the bad news from JM's superiors, JM suddenly became unusually unresponsive. At this point, my research had ended. Neither François, nor the other psychologist could reach JM and the project was shelved. The message was clear, without government funding there would be no project. François interpreted it as yet another sign that the government did not "give value" to people in the area. Starting such a project would have involved addressing suffering incurred by government forces, thus implying a critique of the government.

Transmitting Memory

In light of the silence enshrouding suffering and (political) life in Mwiza and the simultaneous 'culture of remembering' in Kaganza, it is pertinent to attend to how children and young people learned of their community's and family's history. Snipstad et al have observed that

> "The HIV/AIDS epidemic has made funerals more visible to children, while ways of caring and communicating with children on life-and-death issues may not have changed accordingly. In the present context, it is a challenge to adults to convey messages that will give children hope and a sense of control. Concrete messages on the nature of the HIV/AIDS epidemic are necessary to help children engage in ways of thinking geared to problem-solving." (2005:192)

Like Cheney (2015), Snipstad et al therefore argue for the need to break the cycle of silence between generations (2005:191). A similar need appears amongst intergenerational relationships in Mwiza, a need reinforced by Rwandan children and young people's desire for "exchanging ideas" with adults. In a study of Brazilian offspring of Holocaust survivors Braga et al (2012) explored mechanisms of transgenerational transmission of both trauma and resilience in the second generation. These observations are particularly interesting in the Rwandan context. As we shall see below, for

the majority of strategies they identify as leading to either secondary trauma or resilience, such strategies map more or less directly onto the topographies of remembering and forgetting in northwestern Rwanda. The strategies Braga et al identify as facilitating children's resilience against secondary trauma are strategies widely used by Kaganzan adults whereas the strategies they found to create secondary trauma are practiced more widely in Mwiza.

According to Braga et al, one of the key mechanisms for making a second generation resilient to the trauma of their parents was parents' communication style. Where the style was open and loving, such as through bedtime stories and particular linguistic resources such as jokes, and framed to contain messages of hope (rather than judgement or resentment), the communication enabled the creation of symbolisation mechanisms which favoured more resilient outcomes, such as a more positive outlook on life and pride in parents and parental experiences (2012:137-138). This style was observed in Kaganza when children and young people learned about the genocide through popular media and performative youth club activities, as well as through conversations where children and adults "exchanged ideas". Braga et al (ibid.) found three communication styles to be particularly prone to transmit unaddressed trauma from one generation to the next:

1) Indirect communication where children learn of parental experiences through listening in on conversations but never being directly engaged in conversations,
2) 'Catastropic, fragmented communication' in which the focus is on the violent crimes and atrocities committed by perpetrators,
3) Secrets, silences and the unsaid.

All of these three communication styles were observed in Mwiza. I observed the first communication style, indirect communication, on a number of occasions. The war as a term of explication was commonly evoked. When I was out walking in the street with Evelyne we suddenly came upon an abandoned house, which she immediately pointed out as having been burned down and damaged during the infiltration war. An important man had lived there with his family, they had all been killed and the house was left standing. When I asked her how she knew this, she said that this was 'common knowledge'. However, while the war was often evoked as an explanation for poverty, a child's injury, loss of family or the decline of the community, such evocations happened in frightened whispers after a cautious look over the shoulder and never progressed to anything further. They were not contextualized (Starman 2006:333) for children, or even for youth, an age category it must be remembered that in Kaganza were considered ready for such knowledge. Testimonies and long survivor narratives as those often engaged in by genocide survivors, or the long accounts of

being in exile for decades, did not happen in Mwiza in contexts that I could observe and were not volunteered to me. Delphine was five years of age when the infiltration war broke out. When towards the end of my research I had come to know Delphine so well that I felt it appropriate to ask her about her memories of her parents and how they died, she recounted the following memory:

> *"I remember we were in the house with our parents and suddenly men started shooting everywhere. We heard all the gunshots, they were loud. When it got quiet and the men left, our mother was dead. I remember her face a little bit but it is very vague, it is difficult to remember, I was very small. My father survived but he left and remarried, my sister went to live with my grandmother because she was very small [aged two when the war broke out] but I stayed here with my brother, we were old enough to look after ourselves and we had to keep the house and the land. I remember the fighting but I don't remember my mother's face very well. I want to remember that."*

When I asked if anyone had told her what happened in the war, Delphine responded that no one had told her about the war or her parents. Later, I asked her *nkundabana* if people in the area ever talked about the war or told children about what had happened. She told me that these conversations do happen because they do not want children to forget that there was a war. On the other hand, she emphasised that they were afraid to talk to children about the war too much because they did not want children to worry or remember bad things. This dilemma of simultaneously needing to remember and forget was not dissimilar to the dilemmas and dynamics of remembering in Kaganza. A key difference however is in the differential public-private distinction between remembering and forgetting. In Kaganza, a public emphasis on remembering the genocide stood in contrast to a private emphasis on forgetting it. In Mwiza, in contrast, a public emphasis on forgetting seemed to exist in opposition to a private emphasis on remembering. Shrouded in forced amnesia, in the public concealment of past suffering people sought but struggled to find private ways of remembering and communicating the war. Like Delphine, many of the youth remembered the death of their parents, their flight out of Rwanda and their return but they struggled to situate these memories within the wider history. Mutesi for example did not know if they had returned to their birthplace in Rwanda and knew none of their family although community members had told them that they thought they had known their parents prior to their exile. Hakizimana knew his mother had been sick during the war and had died from something in her heart but other than that he could offer very little in terms of information. What is significant is not necessarily whether adults recounted stories of the war or explicated it to children and young people but that young people were not satisfied by the amount of information they got and that they were not helped to process their memories. In the cases where adults talked, it seemed so

general as to elicit very little insight. Thus, even if children and young people may have been told of the war, the public silencing and constant fear of being overheard by 'talkative' neighbours who could not be trusted to keep secrets from the police or military, meant that conversations were short, clouded in fear and did not address the majority of children and young people's questions.

The second strategy of 'catascrophic, fragmented communication' happened on numerous occasions when locals spoke of the crimes committed by the government and consequential desires to revolt against the government. As suggested by Braga et al, these conversations were often fragmented, angry and rarely contextualised. When I asked Isabelle's grandfather and aunt about the current focus on education for all children, the grandfather suddenly got extremely angry and criticised the government for focusing so heavily on education when they had no means of facilitating their children's schooling in the area. When I asked how much schooling his grandchildren had managed, he said that the youngest girl had only been to school for a couple of months after the infiltration war because a grenade had taken most of her hearing and the teachers could not teach a hearing impaired child so she had had to drop out. I had several such unexpected conversations with the grandfather, all of which were witnessed by his granddaughters.

It was also obvious from Isabelle and her sister's accounts when their grandfather was not around that conversations where they "exchanged ideas" did not happen. When one day as we sat in the girls' house, sheltering from the rain, I asked them if they had ever been told tales or stories by their grandparents, as used to be custom (Maquet 1961:44). Isabelle immediately said that their grandfather never told them anything and did not want to exchange ideas with them. On a separate occasion the grandfather complained that his grandchildren had no interest in listening to him and he therefore did not "exchange ideas" with them. Similar 'fragmented' conversations often arose with Dusabimana's grandmother. Interesting to consider here is also an approach within parenting studies, which focuses on emotional transmission and which suggests that negative emotions are especially likely to be transmitted through a variety of pathways to children and can lead to a "chain reaction" of stress, especially when fathers have negative emotions (Larsen and Almeida 1999). Through these pathways parents' emotions from outside the family often make their way to children. Through their review of evidence, Larsen and Almeida suggest that the availability of psychological resources (such as Kaganza's focus on 'distracting' and trauma counselling) reduce families' tendency to transmit negative emotion (1999:15). Despite emanating from western cultural contexts, these insights may help us understand the process of transgenerational trauma better in light of the experiences of orphans' carers in Mwiza whose denied mourning significantly reduces their psychological resources.

The third strategy of silence was the most widespread. This strategy is, according to Braga et al, associated with shame and the inability to construct theories of the violence and memories. This strategy therefore leads to difficulties for the second generation in achieving "psychical and biographical integration of these events" (2012:138). Although I never heard children and young people speaking of the shame of their parents (by virtue of being Hutu deemed as perpetrators of the genocide), it surfaced several times that many of the youth experienced shame in simply being alive. In the following chapter, I describe the youths' elaborate strategies of reshaping and refashioning their bodies so as to appear as something other than what they feel they are perceived to be because they are afraid to be seen in a particular way. According to Schwab, this is in itself a sign of secondary trauma (2004), concurred by Braga et al's study (2012). Dusabimana directly suggested a link between the shame of orphanhood and the shame of war. Before she moved into her new house, we had many intimate conversations on the edge that ran along her kitchen hut behind her grandmother's house. One day when I came to visit, she and her grandmother were in a particularly bad mood with each other and Dusabimana was visibly distressed. At several points in the conversation, she had to compose herself to hold back tears. As François in his usual respectful and loving, compassionate tone tried to find out why they were in such bad mood with each other, Dusabimana angrily commented that her grandmother had always regretted that Dusabimana and her sister survived the war while their father, the grandmother's son, had died. Dusabimana chokingly said that the grandmother had always wished it had been the other way around, that she and her sisters' lives were not wanted. Dusabimana then said: "my father was shot when the men came but my grandmother always wished that we had been shot instead".

The silence of the war, its status as 'secret' and taboo (Schwab 2004:186), thus appears as extremely loud and derogatory evocations of children's orphanhood, which they are never allowed to forget. Following Schwab knowledge of the war is silenced and removed from public life whereby it becomes a "tacit knowledge, shared by everyone yet treated like a taboo subject". Its implication is that "people who bring it to the surface are often treated with passionate hostility as if they threatened a fragile sense of balance" (ibid.). Here I suggest that the sometimes violent stigmatisation of orphans in Mwiza arises from them embodying and thus acting to 'surface' memories of the war. The social regulation of grief has implications for how the community's history and status, including its suffering, is passed onto the next generation. Schwab makes an illuminating case for how the silencing of WWII in post-war Germany meant that the fear, guilt and shame that accompanied being

a citizen of a 'perpetrator country' became transmitted to children, through a cultural unconscious that did not allow for public debate and working through of the trauma.

> "Given that the war generation had retreated into the treacherous refuge of 'silence,' it is symptomatic that knowledge, education and particularly language became containers for this fear. This is the psychological climate of a relentless authoritarianism that still reigned during the postwar era. While any sense of true authority was weakened by the loss of the war, the compensatory use of violence toward 'inferior' or vulnerable members of a community, including children, often escalated exponentially." (2004:182)

Schwab's final point about exponential escalation of violence against children appears pertinent to Mwiza in light of the examples provided above. While violence towards orphans was not endemic or inherent in Mwizan orphan care practices, the instances in which it happened were nonetheless frequent enough to warrant attention and worry. The fact that these instances all occurred in arguments over familial responsibilities and that orphans' families related their poverty and lack of status to the infiltration war suggests that Schwab's argument may go a long way in describing the processes at play in orphan discourses and implicated orphan care practices.

Self-Traumatised, Self-Wounding

Punamäki et al suggest that children are more likely to develop resilience in the face of war and conflict if their parents practice supportive parenting styles and are mentally healthy (2011:407). The parenting practices I have described above, practiced by orphans' closest surviving family members, are practices that Starman has referred to as 'narcissistic family systems' that are prone to transmit suffering. Quoting Wajnryb, Starman observes of Holocaust survivors that, although a "'survival-driven need to suppress normal emotional responses to abnormal events' means the difference between life and death […], the lingering deployment of this defence mechanism [is] obviously maladaptive" (2006:334). Simons et al (1997) in turn link quality of parenting with community contexts through parental emotional wellbeing, level of stress and access to social support. The psychological exclusion of Hutu from the culture of remembering in other words seems to transmit to children a transgenerational trauma that becomes expressed through in many cases neglectful and abusive orphan care practices.

According to Bourdieu, "losing the symbolic struggle for recognition may be the worst form of dispossession, and privation for material hardship is inextricably entangled with the injustice of being denied social/symbolic value" (quoted in Das 2015:S4). Within the post-genocide topography

of memory, northwestern Hutu have lost most of their social/symbolic value; they have lost the struggle. In the context of post-genocide memory and reconciliation, Lemarchand (2008) writes of the 'tyranny of memorial laws', which sees the assassination of memory. The ambivalence of guilt and perpetration and its strong structuring effect on the psychological post-genocide landscape effects the nationally imposed culture of remembering to undermine its reconciliatory aim. The perception of the infiltration war as a temporal and political instigator of socio-economic decline is an inadvertent implication of the emphasis on the genocide as a structuring event that suddenly became the background for political, social, economic and charitable initiatives. The first decade after the infiltration war ended has depleted Isabelle's grandfather of any hope that life will improve for his orphaned grandchildren. He is waiting to die from a bursting heart. Such hope for the future, or lack thereof, and the extent, to which people feel they have a share in this hope, has an essential influence on the communities' approaches to and discourses on orphan care, and by implication, on children's experiences of life within the community.

When writing of the trauma discourse as a new language of the event, Fassin and Rechtman note that there exists a dilemma of what to do with the perpetrators of the event. This question is particularly pertinent to Rwanda where there are currently believed (by the government) to be more perpetrators than actual genocide survivors ('victims'). Fassin and Rechtman suggest that perpetrators can be seen as "self-traumatised" (2009:93). By implication, no external support is offered in order to alleviate the trauma. In Mwiza, the continued unalleviated "self-trauma" currently manifests itself in a "self-wounding" (Kiefer 2007) of the community. Kiefer perceives communities with little hope as self-wounding communities, which she contrasts to communities with a lot of hope that are self-healing. In the case of orphan care more generally, this distinction is useful. Through the social (and material) regulation of grief, and its associated ritual and material alleviation through commemoration acts and donations (cows, house refurbishments etc), hope for a peaceful and prosperous future is distributed (Hage 2007) primarily to people in Kaganza. Without such hope and drive for the future, people in Mwiza are stuck in a present that feels overwhelming and burdensome. Nostalgia for the past dominates. Failing to invest sufficiently in their children, the symbols of the future, their community has become self-wounding in its most literal sense when orphans are being physically attacked for insisting on their families' responsibility towards them.

The general lack of government attention to orphans seems to symbolise for people a broader governmental neglect and condemnation, that is, their 'non-labelling' in the broader political project of addressing the needs of vulnerable people. Moncrieffe points to the potential of regional

stigmatisation to influence stigmatisation and neglect of children (2007:83). As an extension of the community's non-labelling, infiltration war orphans have become a non-category of vulnerable children, which has given new life to old notions of orphans as being 'difficult' and disruptive to social order. As such, Mwiza's rejection of responsibility for improving orphans' lives may represent their rejection of the current national political hierarchy in which they have lost their status, rejecting their status as perpetrators along with the responsibilities imposed on them by the Tutsi-dominated regime. The discourse on the delinquent orphan appears to absolve local responsibility for orphans by framing orphans as acting outside cultural norms and therefore not deserving of communal assistance. Failed by the government, adults insist on holding local authorities accountable for the suffering caused by the government's war with rebels in the area. Much of this suffering now revolves around 'difficult' orphans and perceivably disruptive youth. The community's neglectful orphan care practices can thus, in a sense, be interpreted as a critique of the wider political neglect of the community, including its orphans, by refusing to pick up the pieces of the devastation caused by the war and the subsequent 'violence of peace' (Henry 2005) caused by continuous ethnic differentiation.

Chapter 9

Existential Orphanhood

Experiences of Orphanhood in Mwiza

Thought-Work: Unthinking, Unknowing Orphanhood

The radio is a highly valued possession for Mutesi who lives with her younger sister at the other end of the village. One day when I visited Mutesi, the heavy morning rain was about to start and we sought cover in her home. Mutesi was listening to the radio when we arrived, to a program about young people in Rwanda. Inside the hut, we huddled up closely together. The house is small, no more than 5-6m2, and it leaks. I has a bedroom where Mutesi and her sister sleep and the kitchen area where were sitting and where there is a bench, a fireplace and a little stool. The fire was out, it was early in the day and the girls only eat at night so they were saving their wood and matches for the evening. In the meantime, we tried to distract each other from the cold and wet. We wrapped ourselves in what we had of scarves and jumpers. Inspired by the radio programme, which had then finished, we started talking about being young in Rwanda. Mutesi said she hates her age, she does not like being 18 but she could not explain why. Perhaps because it is a time of limbo. She has a lot of responsibility but she is not adult. She then laughed and wondered loudly that maybe she just does not like being a teenager. I laughed with her in agreement and confided that I hated that age too. My research assistant was more positive; he pointed to all the good things being done for young people in Rwanda. I cringed slightly because he knew as well as I did that very little of that will ever reach Mutesi. Few initiatives aimed at youth are implementable for young people living in the remoter areas such as Mwiza (Sommers 2012). But Mutesi agreed, there are some good things about being young. She likes listening to some of the many radio programmes aimed at youth, especially role plays. I asked her which ones she likes. Her reply was instant, she likes the role plays about orphans. They show her how to solve her problems. The orphans in the programmes are different[79] to her, but she said she does not mind because she welcomes the chance to receive much needed advice. The radio

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[79] Most such programmes are about *imfubyi ya jenoside.*

shows also help to reduce the feelings of loneliness, of being entirely alone in the world that penetrate these lonesome days when her sister is in school, when other people are at home because of the rain, and when Mutesi feels that she is stuck alone because of a very limited support and peer network that she attributes to her status as orphan. The conversation I had with Mutesi that rainy morning suggests that Mutesi has taken it upon herself to 'solve her problems as an orphan', to overcome orphanhood, and has found an enjoyable way to do so, listening to entertaining and interesting radio programmes. To 'solve her problems as an orphan' means to feel normal, to source a variety of strategies and do elaborate work on oneself to abide by expectations of normality by *appearing* normal in the eyes of the beholder, a strategy Goffman terms normification (1968:44).

The fact that in Mwiza family members do not try to hide children's orphanhood means that orphans "know" their situation of orphanhood: what it means to worry about food and shelter, to suffer from recurring hunger and poor communal standing, from having to run a household and work above one's age. They also "know" their orphanhood because they have become socially ostracised and branded, in many cases, as deviant youth who disrupt communal and familial peace. This ostracism for many Mwiza orphans mean that they feel other people "know" them as orphans simply by looking at them in the street, through visible cues such as the appearance of their skin, the quality of their clothes, the cleanliness of their bodies. Within the context of debilitating poverty in Mwiza orphans nonetheless feel that their appearance of being poor cast them inherently as orphans in the eyes of strangers in the street. This is a situation that Mwizan orphans want to 'overcome' (*kwirenga*). They want to 'unknow' orphanhood. In the absence of families employing strategies to help them do so, Mwiza youth find their own ways to 'hide' their orphanhood and thus forget it. These strategies are multifaceted. As their ostracism appears both social and bodily, their strategies also have to be. It also requires certain thought work. In other words, Mwiza youth employ multifaceted strategies to enact or perform a non-orphaned status. They actively and ambitiously seek to unbecome orphans (Mann 2011). Many of their private acts of concealment seem mundane and ordinary and not dissimilar to normal children's concern with showing 'good behaviour' or to have integrity. However, the elaborate daily rituals, thought work and social-communal activities Mwiza youth have to combine to 'unknow' orphanhood often appear to them as tiring and beyond that expected of their peers. The very strategies employed to unbecome orphans thereby become a daily reminder of their orphanhood. For some youth, their attempts thus, ironically, act to essentialise and further embody their orphanhood.

Although there is significant literature exploring the social processes of stigmatisation and marginalisation of orphans in different African contexts, some of which I touched on in the previous chapter, there is little exploration of the ways, in which orphans experience such stigmatisation and how they may incorporate orphanhood into their subjectivity and self-representation. In other words, while we are overwhelmed with reports of stigmatised, neglected orphans, we know very little of how children come to see themselves as orphans, how this status affects their sense and representation of self. Corrigan and Watson (2002, quoted in Shih 2004:177) distinguish between public stigma and self-stigma. Public stigma denotes judgments and negative stereotypes placed on stigmatised individuals by society. Self-stigma refers to the degree to which individuals internalise such stereotypes and judgments (see also Corrigan and Rao 2012). Akers argues that "the identity a person takes on will be profoundly shaped by the ways in which others identify and react to him or her" (quoted in Moncrieffe 2007a:6). Reflecting my own and Wells' observation that the relationship between subjectivity (encompassing self-stigma) and social status (encompassing public stigma) is not straightforward (2014:263) Crocker and Major (1989) question initial theories of stigmatisation, which assumed that public stigma automatically led to self-stigmatisation resulting in lowered self-esteem and self-efficacy. Here, however, I show how the public stigma described in previous chapters in this case does translate into an existentially significant self-stigma that facilitates in children an essentialised status and embodied self-understanding of a deviant orphan. Because it is in everyday engagements and activities that Mwiza children and youth feel different from their non-orphaned peers, it is in these mundane and trivial engagements that Mwiza orphans in particular try to overcome their orphanhood. Here I describe some of their stigma management techniques, in particular their public persona appearance – or in other words their 'front stage performance' (Goffman 1959, 1968).

Reshaping Social Personas

The process of othering orphans in Mwiza described in Chapter 8 manifests itself in a social ostracism that is deeply felt by children and young people. Dusabimana feels limited in what she can ask of her neighbours when she has nothing to offer in return. Mutesi does not feel that she can ask her neighbours at all; unless neighbours offer support, she cannot ask them. It is not appropriate, according to her, to initiate such relations of communal assistance. These feelings partly originate from notions of duties of reciprocity and diplomacy/etiquette that also applied to Isabelle's grandfather felt restrictions that I described in previous chapters. Yet they also originate in the girls' perception that other people see them as something less than others and therefore as beyond social

obligation. In response hereto, orphans employ 'stigma management techniques' (Goffman 1968:68; Gramling and Forsyth 1987) of (re)shaping their subjectivities and social personas to appear more attractive to other community members who may consequently include them in more wholesome social relationships. A significant element of *nkundabana* programmes is to make orphans more socially esteemed. Shih terms such an aim a compensation strategy through which "stigmatised individuals develop skills to compensate for the stigma. These skills help them to achieve their goals and overcome the disadvantages associated with the stigma" (Shih 2004:177).

One such compensation strategy used by some of the youth is to seek out a new family. Delphine's 15-year old sister suddenly left their home to "marry" a man from a different village over an hour's walk away. The marriage shocked the community and surprised her now lonely sister as none of the usual rituals had been completed and no one had known of the man beforehand. She moved so far away that Delphine only visited very rarely and it was over eight months until I met the sister again when she came to visit Delphine, heavily pregnant. People were shocked, not only because she was so young, but because she was one of the few lucky orphans receiving support from CYP. While Delphine's sister's attempt at gaining a new family had been successful in that a year later she had given birth to a baby and continued to live with her husband in his natal village, thus changing her status from that of uncared-for-orphan to *umugore* (married woman with a child), Evelyne's attempt at the same, as described in Chapter 4, was unsuccessful and indeed damaging. Dusabimana, at the younger age of 14, took a different approach to access a new family when she tried to convert to Catholicism, which she became attracted to because of its tradition of godparents. Tormented by constant conflicts with her grandmother and an only scant relationship to her biological mother, she desired more responsible and dedicated parents and hoped she could achieve this through the Catholic godparent figure. Her grandmother refused to help her as she disapproved of the conversion and believed that Dusabimana had no interest in religion; Dusabimana was unsuccessful in converting.

Despite Dusabimana's feeling of failure, the church offered several ways in which orphans could try to negate their status as orphans. Delphine and Jeneti both joined the choir at their local church. They both loved singing because it made them "forget their situation" by bringing them out of their constant state of worry and of feeling different. They also thought it would provide an opportunity to make new friends. Yet for a while, Delphine gave up her choir singing because she felt the other girls teased her. What she had first felt to be a way to forget about her situation had become a strong reminder of it. Her sister's *nkundabana,* whom she had stayed in close contact with, eventually convinced Delphine to return and make an extra effort to become friends with the girls.

Delphine followed the advice and slowly, with dedicated effort, became friends with some of the girls. This had been a difficult process for Delphine but she said that by feeling encouraged to return to the choir she had felt able to reinitiate and re-establish the friendships and had therefore learned an important strategy for improving her social relationships. Jeneti joined her choir for the same reason. Through the new choir, she fell in love with Augustin, whom she married half way through my research. Augustin had joined the choir for similar reasons – he loved singing and music because the songs made him feel happy and gave him much needed advice to solve some of his problems. For the same reason he was taking guitar lessons in town and teaching religious psalms at his church's Sunday school for young children. These activities all helped him to feel normal and with purpose.

The strategies of reshaping lives through family and church are intrinsically related. Not only was the church somewhere that neglectful or non-existing families could be replaced or social isolation reduced, several youth used religion as a way of addressing tense family relationships. To many Rwandans what is significant is not someone's denomination but his or her faith in God (*imana*). Conversions often have more to do with people's moral and social beliefs, or preferences for particular kinds of music[80], than their faith in god. As such, conversions are a powerful manifestation of claims about their life situations. In a conversation on Jeneti's conversion from Catholicism to Pentecostalism, she commented in a hissing, angry voice that she had struggled with religion as a child because she felt her father was more committed to the church than to her and her brothers. Thus, while she said she had been attracted to Pentecostalism due to the music and its lesser focus on worshipping the Virgin Mary[81], her initial detachment from the Catholic Church arose from her frustrations with her father. Likewise, Elise, converted from Pentecostalism to the Anglican Church because he longed for the time when he had lived with a friend in town who belonged to the Anglican Church. He converted to stay in close contact and continue the strong attachment to his friend. Children and young people often became attracted to the churches of their friends rather than family as church going was a much loved social activity – having someone to walk with to church and perhaps even to invite home for lunch afterwards was an important act of friendship and a sign of 'love' between people. Thus, I did not gain any form of intimacy or friendship with Evelyne's mother until I sat through the eight-hour mass with her in the burning sun. From these brief accounts, it is evident

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[80] Pentecostalism is considered to have lively and energetic music while the Anglican church is more quiet and monotone.
[81] The celebration of Virgin Mary in Catholicism was often considered excessive and named as a cause for conversion by people who had left the Catholic Church.

that spiritual kinship and relations consecrated through the church have become a valued way for kin-poor orphans to expand or reestablish kin networks. Indeed, some Rwandan churches actively encourage spiritual kinship by creating kin structures within the church congregation (Grant, nda). More generally, as many churches have become 'affective spaces' (Grant 2014), it is perhaps not surprising that children and young people who feel an existentially unsettling lack of love and affect turn to these places for the fulfilment of such incompletion.

Most Mwiza youth also actively tried to improve their standing in their community. Dusabimana and Delphine had made a conscious choice to stay away from cabarets and were selective about their friends and family. Dusabimana chose to stay away from many family members because of their actions and behaviour with which she feared to be associated. As orphans already felt limited in their choice of peers and availability of kin, this constituted a significant decision. When we drew up her genealogy, she had the most extensive kin network of all children and youth in Mwiza (and Kaganza) but when it came to kin that she would actually engage with, her kin network was reduced to a sorry fraction that meant she often had no one to turn to in times of hunger. In Shih's terminology, such a decision constitutes a strategic interpretation of the social environment, which can increase a person's sense of self-efficacy. Thus, "by changing their standards of comparison, stigmatised individuals are able to ameliorate perceptions of inequity and relative deprivation" (Shih 2004:178-179). Yet, while Dusabimana might have improved her communal standing, she had significantly reduced her network and thereby her access to material support.

Where Dusabimana reduced her network, Delphine and Jeneti sought to expand theirs through a strong sense of social responsibility. Jeneti, who had felt so frustrated with her father's neglect of her, made an effort to make children feel welcome in her new marital home. Her husband was visibly proud of her efforts; he enjoyed having so many children – and their mothers – around so often. Jeneti and Delphine were also the first to visit friends or family in hospital or when they were sick. Neither Delphine or Jeneti had a lot of resources to spare yet they always made sure to bring food to those they visited and never turned away children who were at their homes at mealtimes. Delphine and Jeneti thus both sought to replace an absent kin network with close friendship – through church and neighbours. Jeneti's husband, Augustin, also unlike Dusabimana, tried to mend broken relationships with his brothers. He had fallen out with his brothers when they had tried to take his share of the family land when Augustin received a small field from a friend's mother. The mother had given it to him upon the friend's death because he had sat vigilantly by the friend's side as he lay dying in hospital. Augustin however did not want to be on bad terms with anyone and had approached his

brothers to make peace. He had started to help the older brother with the business he was trying to set up and had slowly improved the relationship with his family, even though they had caused the conflict to begin with. In addition to expanding their network, such strategies may also have been employed as a way of casting themselves as resourceful kin relations, thus de-emphasising their orphan status, associated with kin and resource deprivation, in favour of a kin-based 'patron'. According to Shih, drawing upon alternate identities is an effective way of protecting oneself from stigma (ibid.).

Lastly, they all tried to improve their material standing, not only to overcome their poor communal standing but also to gain a better life (to be and appear less poor). Whenever I asked the young people if their neighbours ever came to visit them (as I never saw this happening), with the notable exeption of Delphine and Jeneti, the majority said that their neighbours did not visit them for two reasons: firstly, they claimed that neighbours had no interest in them. Secondly, they said that without ever having anything to offer their neighbours in return, the neighbours did not want to visit them. I asked if they instead went to visit their neigbours or asked specific neighbours for help when they met a particularly difficult situation. Dusabimana did this on occasion, except rather than asking for help, she asked for work so she might earn some money or be paid in food. Isabelle, Fideri and several of their peers however said that they could not go to ask for help without anything to offer. Also, as young people they could not approach those older than them. Dusabimana had found a way to offer them something, by working. Although her grandparents called her lazy, she was not afraid to work "above her age" as the street children had called it. Shortly after her grandfather's funeral, I saw her with a cousin carrying ten meter long logs along the mountain ridge, delighted that she had found cash labour for a few days. As Isabelle explained upon the delight of finding a neighbour willing to rent them a field, by showing that she was able to work and accumulate resources, she had a better chance of being incorporated into exchanges with her neighbours and thus that people would respect her instead of excluding her (see also Roalkvam 2005). Cooperatives had for the same reason become an important strategy for many to try to improve both their communal and material standing. Except for Dusabimana, all the girls had joined cooperatives in order to save up money. Jeneti used some of this money for her wedding ceremony, while Ndayisenga made sure her sister, Fideri, could finish school. Following on from the arguments presented in Chapter 3, young people knew they needed to have some resources they could share with others in order to be considered legitimate community members and inserted in kin and communal relationships. When they did not think they had anything to offer, or did not feel they could ask for help (they may have recently asked for help for something

else), it is especially during such moments that bodily strategies for showing good behaviour and *agaciro*, through cleanliness, become existentially crucial attempts at *unorphaning*.

Significant Routines and Ambiguities of Un-orphaning

Many of both the bodily and non-bodily strategies for appearing 'normal' and overcoming orphanhood seem mundane and ordinary. Visiting a friend in hospital is a fairly normal thing to do, as is cooking a meal for a sick relative. It is something that most people do at one time or another, although of course with varying frequency and dedication. Some of the strategies also do not exactly appear as particularly effective in "solving the problem of orphanhood"; they will not effect better relationships within the family, except in the case of Augustin, nor do they necessarily influence a better communal standing as Evelyne experienced, nor will they provide them with significantly better lives. Dusabimana actually reduced her social network, Delphine's sister left an attractive NGO project and *nkundabana*, and Jeneti' conversion further increased the tension with her father. Nonetheless, Jeneti, Evelyne and Delphine's sister deemed their strategies worth the risk. Following Mattingly, I suggest that it precisely the mundaneness and ordinary nature of some of the strategies that is so attractive to the children and young people:

> "Small moments like a clinic visit or a drill team performance can represent something enormous. These activities speak to a cherished ordinariness, to the cultivation of significant routines". Turbulence, uncertainty, a drama are such pervasive qualities that ordinary routines are not the daily expression of a habitual way of life culturally inherited so much as a fragile achievement, a hard-won moment of mundaneness. Under such circumstances the ordinary is freighted with a special moral weight and it can acquire an unexpected symbolic density" (Mattingly 2014:79).

Similarly, following Masten, the ordinariness of their actions may be the most significant contributor to actively build their own resilience. For Masten, resilience arises from ordinary rather than extraordinary processes; it is the little things such as everyday strategies and actions that provide the 'ordinary magic' for developing resilience (2001). For children and young people in Mwiza who experienced considerable obstacles and social exclusion on a daily basis, these strategies became "significant routines" that created meaningful affiliations, joy and care for themselves and others (Grøn 2005:35) because they were so mundane as to make the young people as normal. The more ordinary the less hard work and effort they required. While Dusabimana worsened her relationship to her grandmother and distanced herself from her kin network, her attempted conversion made her feel that she was working towards a life of normality, of ordinariness, where she did not have to worry

about the lack of food because her grandmother stole her crops. It established a series of "enormous" moments similar to 'critical moments' where a person becomes extraordinarily reflexive and new modes of action and thought are enabled.

Shih distinguishes between two models for developing resilience in the face of stigma. Coping models refer to preventative models in which a person adopts strategies to avoid negative consequences of stigma rather than trying to creative positive consequences. Over time, according to Shih, "employing these strategies is a draining process that ultimately hurts individuals in the end" (Shih 2004:180). In contrast, models of empowerment view individuals who are stigmatised as active participants in society who "seek to understand their social world and create positive outcomes" (Oyserman and Swim 2001, quoted in Shih 2004:180). Shih has identified several factors that may help to predict which model will be employed. Firstly, the perceived legitimacy of the stigma may lead to particular modes of action. If a person perceives that the stigma is unjust this may lead to anger that spurs the person into action to remove the stigma. Secondly, the degree of group identification may also have an influence in that individuals who are closely identified with their group, despite its associated stigmas, might more likely be empowered. Such persons may be less likely to adopt the negative messages received from society and thus reject the negative public images, making such persons more likely to strive to maintain social status and to function at a high level (Shih 2004:181). In their strive for normality, Mwiza orphans seem to primarily employ a coping model of stigma prevention. Due to the low status of northwestern Hutu in Rwanda, the second of these factors is absent and while Mwiza youth perceived the stigma against Hutu and orphans, respectively, as highly unjust, the stigmatisation of orphans was so ingrained in the social fabric of life that this injustice was associated with a despaired resignation rather than empowering anger.

Through refashioning and shaping their orphaned bodies and public personas, Mwiza orphans are relying on and actively using notions of 'good behaviour' and *agaciro* to influence their social standing. This is not without significant ambiguity however for while such strategies provide ordinary magic to build resilience, in some cases they actually work to further consecrate an embodied and essentialised orphan identity in others. Thus, when Dusabimana will not go to mass and Isabelle will not walk in the street due to the lack of soap, they show behaviour of a 'lonely' person who seeks solitude. According to some of the *nkundabanas,* community members consider this behaviour to be the direct opposite of what the young people intended, namely to not give value to the community and to not be 'sociable'. This is to act *without agaciro* and respect. Corrigan and Rao write of self-stigma, the process of internalising public stigma and thus to socially isolate oneself. When Isabelle is afraid

to walk in the street because people "know" her to be an orphan, her embodied knowledge is a sign of such a 'self-stigma' and her behaviour, accordingly, is associated with social isolation, which I have suggested is both frowned upon and feared in Rwandan culture. Solitude is also something that is directly associated with orphanhood. Her behaviour has therefore further consecrated her status as orphan although that status was what she was seeking to avoid by staying home. Similarly, Evelyne's attempts at establishing communal relationships, at finding benefactors and avoiding being a shameful bridesmaid gave her a reputation as 'complicated' (*aragoye*) and as not having *agaciro.* By seeking to overcome orphanhood some orphans, albeit not all, seem to essentialise and further embody their own orphanhood. As such, their attempts at normality might increase their 'abnormality'. As Shih (2004) suggests, coping models of stigma prevention are draining and potentially self-wounding as I also suggested Mwiza residents' coping is self-wounding. In the second part of this chapter, I turn to young people's attempts at modifying their bodies to feel and appear less orphan-like.

Striving for Normality: A Strategy for Disembodying Orphanhood

When Delphine and her sister come home from a day of working in the fields, the first thing the sisters do is to bring out their yellow water container, a bucket and a blue bar of soap. They bring it to the side of their house that overlooks the hillside. Then they turn on the radio and sing along to the songs they know, occasionally interrupting the singing with sisterly chatting. They then go about washing off the hard day of work. With meticulous care, they scrub their feet, legs and arms free of dirt from the fields. The daily afternoon ritual finishes with the sisters vigorously washing their tight, curly hair before combing it through and rubbing lotion on their newly washed, uncovered limbs. This ritual of physically transforming from hardworking labourers to shiny young people is something they visibly enjoy. The bar of soap and the pot of body lotion are some of their most treasured belongings and important items when they plan their weekly budget. They want to look and feel clean and shiny. The radio is a donation from CYP, which supports Delphine's sister, given to them so they can follow the news, get advice from the government and enjoy a bit of leisure time by listening to role plays[82] and music. The sisters consider it invaluable, especially Delphine who likes to sing and seems to completely disappear into her own world as she sings along.

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[82] Through which they can also receive important government messages of children's rights, orphanhood, etc.

The soap, body lotion and radio are important in the sisters' lives, not just because these keep them clean and in tune with national affairs. Shortly into the academic year, Delphine had felt necessitated to drop out of school shortly into the start of Year 6, her final year of primary school. The school had requested a 'voluntary' donation, which Delphine could not afford. Delphine had loved being a school student: the daily routine of rising early to tend to the sheep, rub her skin in lotion and dress in her uniform, walking "with purpose" (*agenda na mugambi*) to the school and immerse herself in the day's lessons, taught with passion by a young teacher whom she greatly respected – a man I knew well, originating from the top of the hill at the other end of the village but now living in town and who considered her a bright and engaged student. Leaving school had not been an easy decision. Rather than spending her days immersed in a 'hopeful' and future-oriented environment of school (Meinert 2009) she had to transition to a day of labouring, digging in the soil all day for very little money and spending the day amongst community members whom she felt somewhat ambiguous about. Her life had come to represent the structural challenges and negative outcomes associated with orphanhood and from then on became a downward spiral. In light of such everyday struggles, children and young people such as Delphine hoped that if they could appear normal, they may overcome some of these negative outcomes.

It is interesting that in her negotiation of such challenges, Delphine reacts not by seeking out her older brother who is employed as a bike taxi driver, her father who lives down in the valley (but whom she doesn't see often) or her sister's *nkundabana* for a loan of money to pay the school contribution. While the contribution was more than she could afford herself, the amount was not so extortionate as to be unpayable if these three socially significant people had contributed. But she does not ask for help. Instead of approaching familiar others, Delphine solitarily sought to restructure her life. She left school to 'dig', the ambiguous income-generating activity that disadvantaged youth get up in the morning hoping to acquire because it means food on the table, and if fortunate, 20-50 Rwf to put aside for roof tiles, soap or better clothes, yet which they simultaneously despise because it also represents a failed life – a life where the hope for a better future through education and reliable, well-paid employment has all but disappeared (Sommers 2010). In this transition, an important strategy for Delphine became the refashioning of her body. Digging is a dirty job and leaves a visible trace of poverty on her young body. Dry mud turns grey and crusty and removes any glossy shine from healthy skin. Sweat leaves the hair greasy and tangled. By engaging in an elaborate routine with a ritual-like quality to it every evening, Delphine sought to maintain her 'normal' appearance of a

young person ready for a brighter future. Such "techniques of the body" (Alberth 2013; Mauss 1973), while undertaken by many children and youth, are of conscious existential value to Mwiza orphans.

Delphine and her sister spend a lot of their time striving to "feel normal" and "to be like others" through every day, trivial activities that, importantly, are not associated with the work and worry of survival. Soap, lotion and radio have come to constitute some of the most significant aids in helping Delphine and her sister feel like normal young people because these are items and rituals that normal people engage with and thus become symbols and strategies of being able to 'hide' orphanhood and thus perhaps to forget their status as orphans, even if only momentarily. They are products for consumption that not only tie the girls to a global cultural aesthetics productive as "a means of producing more socially advantageous forms of subjectivity" (MacLean 2007:400), but as material facilitators of "significant routines" that have transformational quality (Grøn 2005) in their severely marginalised positions. The items are thus also productive artefacts in Mwiza orphans' existential attempts to transform their degenerated embodied status *as orphans*. The soap, lotion, radio amongst other products and practices of consumption constitute an invaluable force in disembodying strongly embodied stigmatised orphan identities.

A Clean Body, a Clean Society

Delphine's and her sister's concern with washing and dressing their bodies was not unique to them as orphans. Soap and body lotion were desired possessions by most girls in Rwanda. In Kaganza, Claire said that she was *not* an orphan because her grandmother gave her everything she needed like school materials and body lotion. The body lotion was stored with her school uniform, bag and books and formed part of her daily routine. Even Muja whose parents struggled to feed their children every day made sure to always have body lotion in the house, which Muja with precision and dedication rubbed on the visible parts of her body every day after putting on her school uniform, and like Delphine and Delphine's sister, visibly enjoying this ritual. The concern with cleanliness, free of dirt and with smooth, soft skin arises from historical aesthetic and cultural ideas of beauty and health. Dating back to the time and tradition of warrior kings, Rwandan culture (*umuco muRwanda*) has valued strength and courage in people. As previously described, those who show psychological instability are perceived with suspicion as are the extremely, 'undeserving' poor (*abatindi*) who are seen as a hindrance to the advancement and peaceful integration of their communities and country. Similarly there is a strong cultural emphasis on hiding one's problems – and as observed in Kaganza, on helping others to hide their problems. To show that one may be poor, such as through dress or

looking unhealthy, or that one may be experiencing other significant problems, is not well accepted. Historical and ethnographic accounts describe people's desire for privacy; traditionally, compounds were designed as self-contained enclosures surrounded by walls to protect residents from curious passers-by (de Lame 2005:127). In this cultural – and political – landscape, people are expected to try to address their own problems.

The concern with hiding one's problems has also led to meticulous attention being paid in all public places to maintaining beautiful, neat facades. It is not uncommon to being woken to the sound of sweeping brushes before dawn so leaves and dirt that have accumulated overnight are gone before people venture outside. When I moved to Kaganza, I was strongly reminded that there is a law to keep one's compound clean at all times. Similar regulations concern bodily cleanliness that also have strong cultural roots. In eloquently detailed accounts of Rwandan healing practices and cultural systems, Taylor shows how bodily aesthetics and ideas of bodily systems, perceived through a flow/blockage dialectic, feed into cultural ideas about ethnic identities and can be traced through to social relationships and structures (1992). People are required by law to wear shoes in public and school children must have their hair cut in a certain way. Many adults live in perpetual fear of getting dirt on them. Even when they are straining over a hoe in their fields, they take great care not to dirty their clothes. For my research assistant, who considered himself an intellectual, educated urbanite, the fact of having to sit on dusty rocks and unclean chairs during our visits in Mwiza caused him great humiliation and fed into his wider narrative of Mwiza as a "pure, pure village" where people did not respect cleanliness and development.

According to Bryan Turner, "regulating the body, disciplining the soul and governing society [are] merged in political theories of the state" (2003). This observation seems especially pertinent for Rwanda where people can be fined for having unhygienic bodies and homes or dressing in unclean clothes (Ingelaere 2011:74), reflecting traditional, cultural symbolism of obstructing bodies as "impediments to the descent of beneficent flows" (Taylor 1999, 2004). The local authorities frequently inspected people's houses and considered them unhygienic and unhealthy for children if they did not have a table exclusively for drying dishes after washing them, a cement building for toilets and a separate kitchen hut[83]. As the authorities recounted such inspections to me, they spoke of the inhabitants as "ignorant of development". This sentiment was echoed amongst many of

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[83] See Twizeyimana (2006, quoted in Ansoms 2009) for a list of such rules.

Mwiza's youth. Evelyne was outright disgusted when during one of our many walks together we passed an intermittent looking toilet 'hut', which was nothing more than a little shelter of bamboo-looking sticks spread wide apart and with a few branches over a deep hole to stand on. Passing the toilet led us into a long conversation about villagers' lack of hygiene, a sign in Evelyne's eyes of their lack of development. My close friend Sebastian from Kaganza believed that the government was in such a hurry to destroy all thatched roof houses because they were associated with poverty, the proof of which the government was anxious to hide in order to appear 'developed'. However, Sebastian, like many others were not fooled: "Just because they make us look developed does not mean that we see development!", what one of Grant's informants called "fast food development[84]". Healthy bodies meant clean bodies and clean bodies meant development, clearly reflecting modern bio-political understandings of the centrality of healthy bodies to healthy states, particularly pertinent in the governing of childhood (Wells 2011:20).

Mwiza's orphans feel they have to make an extra effort to live up to communal expectations of cleanliness and neatness. Like Delphine and her sister, they dedicate large amounts of time to washing their bodies and clothes and to tidying up and sweeping their compounds. The effects of such efforts are of an existential value that is of a different nature than to the girls and women in Kaganza. In Kaganza, girls did not want to look like orphans or *mayibobo*. They rubbed lotion on their bodies to appear healthy and thus well-nourished and not overworked. The aim was the same for girls in Mwiza but the meanings and implications were different: rather than preventing an appearance of orphan, they sought to disembody an already embodied orphanhood. They appeared as orphans because they *were* orphans and often could not complete the most basic of daily care practices. For Evelyne the fact that her foster mother would not buy her lotion became the last straw in a series of daily care practices that made Evelyne feel so neglected that it ensued a cumulative eruption of severe fights between them. While the lotion, or lack thereof, was not the single instigator of this prolonged conflict, to Evelyne it became evidence that her foster mother was not committed to "taking [Evelyne] like her own child", and thus to help her forget her orphanhood. That lotion was made freely available to her adoptive sister but Evelyne herself was told that she could earn her own money to buy it, despite the impairment of her crippled leg, indicated to Evelyne that her foster mother differentiated between the two girls and thus deliberately reminded Evelyne of her precarious status as an orphan. Isabelle

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[84] Reyntjens critically writes of the harmful social engineering of modernity (2008:1).

and her sister often could not afford body lotion. During these periods, Isabelle hated, indeed feared, walking in the street because she felt her dry and grey skin would indicate to others that she is an orphan. Every step along the path, Isabelle felt that people looked at her and 'knew' she was an orphan and therefore looked at her in a certain way that revoked all her memories of losing her parents, looking after her siblings, going to bed hungry with painful and distracting worries in her head.

The Knowledge of Orphanhood

Delphine, Isabelle, Evelyne and other young people's strive to look and feel normal derive from their belief that other people always "know" them to be orphans. Isabelle spoke of how she hated to walk in the street *because* people immediately *"knew"* that she was an orphan. When I asked her how they might know, she did not locate their knowledge in sociological explanations of other people knowing she had no parents and therefore no heritage and social status, nor because other people might know the circumstances of her parents' deaths (e.g. AIDS, infiltration war, genocide etc.), both prevalent arguments of the stigmatisation of orphans (Caserta et al 2016; Henderson 2006). Instead, she attributed their knowledge to her physical appearance: grey, dry skin, torn clothes, unwashed hair and a general appearance of dirtiness. All of these physical characteristics denote poverty. Thus, it would appear that her sense of stigma was due to poverty more so than orphanhood. Yet despite widespread poverty in the children's community, Isabelle's sense of always looking poor made her feel different from others in the community. For while the examples she gave of how people might know that she is an orphan are all to do with poverty, she felt that they knew she was an orphan, not simply a poor youth. If orphanhood was a matter of parental status, association with genocide, AIDS or the pollution of death, as has commonly been argued, people should not be able to stigmatise orphans unless they already know their family situations. However, Isabelle's fear of walking in the street suggests that she expects even people who do not know[85] her to "know" that she is an orphan. Exactly for the same reason 'normal' children (non-orphans) worried about looking poor. The aesthetic work on the body undertaken by many children and young people – to wear the right clothes, look clean, and appear as one ethnic identity over another – is not exclusive to orphanhood. It must

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[85] With one of the world's highest rural population density, few people in northwestern Rwanda made the assumption that everyone knew each other within a community. Not a clearly defined village or community, but immersed in a densely populated hillside, it is common to encounter a large number of people daily to whom one is entirely unacquainted.

then be asked why, for Isabelle, it has become a symbol specifically of her orphanhood that people inherently "know" from looking at her.

Grøn (2005) explores a kind of "knowing" that bears resemblance to Isabelle's assumption of other people's "knowledge". Patients whom Grøn studied attending a weight loss centre in Denmark "know" what makes them lose weight. Grøn argues that, if speaking of an 'objective' body such 'knowledge' makes little sense; the patients cannot know that it is a new romantic-sexual relationship that makes them lose weight rather than the fact that they now cycle instead of drive to work. This kind of knowledge only makes sense if we approach the body experientially. The woman in Grøn's examples know that sex, not cycling, makes her lose weight because of experiences of weight loss that she has had in the past and because in her many attempts at losing weight she believes she has learned how her own body works. Her lived body has built up a particular kind of knowledge that guides how she interprets things that happen in her life, such as weight loss (2005:45). This way of approaching "knowledge" is useful when trying to understand Isabelle and her peers' assumptions of others' perception of them as orphans. Objectively speaking strangers cannot know Isabelle is an orphan by looking at her; most people in her area are poor and look no shinier than Isabelle does. This knowledge, or the assumption of the knowledge, instead, may be grounded in her bodily experiences. "The lived body exists in a close, symbiotic and interactive relationship with the environment, both physical and social" (Grøn 2006:46, my translation). Budgeon suggests that, rather than conceptualising the body as an object for modification, it is a process through which 'identity' – the combination of status and self-understanding – becomes embodied. The self and the body are here thought of as ongoing, multiple processes (2003:48), and, following from this self-understanding becomes "an embodied event". Significantly, this means that this kind of knowledge is cumulative (Grøn 2005). There is merit in trying to understand Mwiza orphans' feelings of stigma and exclusion from this perspective of embodied selves and cumulative, bodily "knowledge". This "knowledge" has been built through years of intimately experiencing the process of "othering" described in Chapter 8. For example, research suggests that individuals experiencing stigma "monitor their social interactions more vigilantly" (Shih 2004:178), such as recalling in greater detail social interactions than non-stigmatised individuals (Frable, Blackstone and Scherbaum 1990, quoted in Shih 2004:178).

Young people engage like their western counterparts in an aesthetic reflexivity, a "capacity to reflexively incorporate aesthetics of contemporary culture into presentations of self that has become a means of producing more socially advantageous forms of subjectivity" (MacLean 2007:400). As MacLean points out, not everyone is equally well positioned or equipped for such reflexive

construction and adaptation of the self. Aesthetic reflexivity is intimately linked to the availability of resources (ibid.:401). While practices of consumption can offer group affiliations, they can also lead to exclusion and isolation, as is suggested by Isabelle's fears. Such exclusionary practices associated with global culture revolve around class, race and ethnicity, as well as poverty (Frost 2003), as is particularly evident in Sommers' account of young men in a different part of northern Rwanda (2012). The mere fact of having access to the artefacts of consumption that renders children 'normal' thus help to make orphans 'unknow' orphanhood, leading them to expend great energy on these ordinary rituals of washing, dressing and moisturizing their bodies. As everyday artefacts and rituals of bodily care have become an exclusionary process, orphans have re-employed these very artefacts and rituals as a strategy of re-integration, of re-appearing normal. The significance of their attempts at washing off orphanhood is thus to turn their 'stigma symbols' (their bodies) into 'disidentifiers' (Goffman 1968:60) so that their bodies will no longer socially cast them as orphans. The body, thus, is an "ethical horizon for the (un)making of self, identity and belonging" (Wolputte 2004:251).

Conclusion: The Boundaries of Reflexive Embodiment

"Stigmatised individuals possess a devalued and denigrated identity in our society. As a consequence, they regularly confront prejudice and discrimination. They receive less help and face glass ceilings in terms of career advancement. They receive fewer positive nonverbal cues and encounter awkward social interactions more frequently" (Shih 2004:175-176)

In their different ways, the children and youth in Mwiza all worked incredibly hard to try to subvert what they felt to be an essentialised status as orphans. They had, in the words of Goffman, developed particular 'moral careers' that were strikingly similar in their focus on normification (1968:45-46). The cumulative effect of the strategies of hiding and forgetting orphanhood suggest that many Mwiza orphans have, through their public treatment, physically embodied an orphan status that their lives become consumed with disembodying. Mwiza orphans engage in a variety of mundane actions and strategies to strengthen their social status but in some cases in doing so end up strengthening an embodied orphan self-understanding. For most Mwiza youth without parents, their status as orphans made them feel perceived as fundamentally different from "normal" children and youth in their community, those with parents. They think that people "know" that they are orphans when they look at them in the street; this troubles them because they think people's 'knowledge' of them as orphans prevents people from wanting to engage with them and offer them support. The

centrality of orphanhood to their self-identification and sense of social (dis)integration provides a stark contrast to the lives of the orphans in Kaganza.

For most youth, their orphanhood presented them with such an array of social, familial and material problems that the lack of their parents had become central not just to their lives but to their social status and self-perceptions. Although orphans employed a variety of strategies to overcome their problems and status of orphans, the fact that they themselves had to take responsibility for this 'overcoming' only sought to reinforce their sense of being orphans. Their impressive efforts in making do with very little and getting by on extremely limited resources may, according to Shih, in fact contribute to their marginalisation. Shih argues

> "Many researchers caution that successful coping at the individual level can sometimes come at the expense of collective efforts because individuals are able to ward off the negative consequences of stigma with individual-level behaviours. This seems to be true when considering individuals who adopt a coping model."   (2004:183)

Mwiza orphans show an abundance of (forced) agency and behavioural independence (Veale 1999) yet this goes beyond the agency that Rwandan social structures normally allow even young people. Thus, Mwiza children and youths' meticulous and elaborate attempts at unorphaning their selves may thus serve to further embody their orphan status, thus essentialising their orphanhood.

In a recent review of adversity, a distinction is made between static adversity and episodes of adversity (CES 2016). Episodes of adversity are experienced by most people at some point in their lives. These are transient events that are confined in time, be it a short spell of poverty that is quickly overcome, the death of a close friend or family member, or stand-alone, bad experiences in childcare or school. Many Kaganzan orphans experienced transient adverse events but their carers and communities employed a variety of strategies to confine these moments in time and to 'hide' the cumulative effects of such events on children through additional love and resources. Thus many orphans in Kaganza may identify momentarily as orphans but deny an orphan status, what I, drawing on CES' distinction, term transient orphanhood. Static adversity, on the other hand, is harm that cumulates over time and is neither confined in space nor time. Chronic poverty, child neglect and abuse within the home, social exclusion and poor integration within, for example, a school setting are some of the forms of harm that cumulate over time and manifest themselves in static adversity (ibid.). Mwiza orphans' lives are best described as such static adversity, and thus, I suggest here, as leading to a static, or chronic, orphan status, an intimately embodied and essentialised experience. Children and young people in Mwiza seemed to physically embody their orphanhood and never quite felt able

to escape it, despite their most meticulous attempts. This is best termed existential orphanhood – being embodied and essentialised it is of truly existential quality.

A key difference between the experiences of children and youth without parents in Kaganza and those without parents in Mwiza lies in who takes responsibility for trying to reduce such difficulties. In Kaganza grandparents, aunts and other carers of orphans worked hard to "hide" children's orphanhood. They partly did so through material strategies – providing orphans with sufficient resources that they would not be reminded of their orphanhood. For Pauline this meant getting new shoes, for Claire it meant new body lotion. This facilitated the confinement of orphanhood to transient moments of awkward social encounters or transient feelings of being an orphan. In Mwiza, there were much fewer examples of such attempts to materially hide the signs of orphanhood by relatives. Rather, Isabelle and Mutesi frequently felt reminded of their lack of parents, their consequent marginal status and difficult circumstances. Isabelle felt reminded of her orphanhood simply by being looked at; she felt people looked at her in a judgemental way because of how she looked. For girls like Jeneti and Isabelle, early responsibility for improving their conditions and standing in the community had been a difficult experience. The responsibility meant that it was difficult to forget about their orphanhood and caused children and youth to worry a lot more than children who had their parents or had carers who took on the parenting role. They felt constantly reminded of their orphanhood by their neighbours. According to one of the CYP *nkundabanas*, orphans' worrying often left them in such a preoccupied state of mind that they did not greet people in the street and isolated themselves "in solitude". When the *nkundabana* described this, she imitated an orphan's body posture: with a closed face and eyes downcast leaving an impression of "leave me alone!". Thus, orphans who wanted to improve their lives and social standing had to make an extra, constant effort to work on a positive image of themselves in the community so that they would not be perceived as orphans and thus exclude themselves from vital social networks. That they had to make such an effort meant that it became impossible to forget their situation as orphans. The physical labour of *unorphaning* their lives and bodies made their identity-formation a truly "embodied event", or rather a series of everyday moments in which orphanhood was being physically imprinted on their bodies. In Mwiza the efforts to appear normal were so great that they physically consecrated the experience and feeling of orphanhood as an embodied status and therefore 'chronic'.

Conclusion

The Politics of Orphanhood

Perpetuating Political-Ethnic Differentiation through Development Aid

The thesis set out to examine how orphanhood as an international development category influences children's experiences as a particular kind of (suffering) child. As a specifically post-genocide, international development category, I have traced *imfubyi*'s quality of fusion and friction between global and local understandings, expectations and realities, through an understanding of orphanhood as creating hopes in friction by simultaneously representing a desiring machine ('an orphan industry') and an ostracised status. In the thesis, we have understood orphanhood as context- and person-dependent: sometimes a desired instrumental and productive category, at other times an intensely social, moral and political status, at yet others a derogatory label. Orphanhood has become a particularly post-genocide, 'modern' language of childhood suffering, used by different actors for diverse purposes and with significantly different meanings and intentions. The simultaneous colliding and merging of old meanings and new associations of the term orphan has created a new category of childhood suffering that is not only used to denote the actual lived experience of children but has also become a useful instrument for moral and political critique and, indeed, regulation. Its diverse meanings exist in constant tension, making it a socially powerful category.

From Transient to Chronic Orphanhood

Children's experiences of orphanhood appear to revolve around existential insecurities instigated by parental loss rather than the structural incompletion (vulnerabilities of education, poverty etc. due to parental death) suggested by the orphan literature. Orphanhood as an experience in childhood is best described as existential incompletion, caused by the lack of composite love that includes material provision and moral guidance. Parental absence – through physical presence and through love – renders children incomplete and this incompletion makes children feel inherently different from other children. This difference does not a priori arise from stigma as assumed by the literature but from 'nostalgia' for deceased parents and a belief that biological, maternal love is incredibly hard to replace. The grounding of incompletion in composite love, often experienced

materially, means that poverty is threatening the basis of child-parent relationships by making it increasingly difficult for parents to parent and thus for children to develop integrity (*agaciro*). With *agaciro* becoming more difficult, claims to orphanhood are becoming more frequent and social orphanhood is replacing biological orphanhood. New kinship ethics, partly promoted by the state and partly appropriated by children from global culture, are conflating biological and social orphanhood – some parents are rendered so neglectful to be wished dead. Their presence denied, the feeling of social orphanhood becomes that of biological orphanhood: existential incompletion due to parental physical absence, physical presence defined by material and moral provision rather than geographical proximity. Thus, children feel complete when they have high quality relationships with their parents through which the sharing of advice and ideas can make up for any potential lack of resources. "Complete" children are by implication children who are helped to overcome difficult situations and who are guided through life by responsible, caring adults.

When children feel incomplete, they employ a variety of strategies to attempt to complete themselves. One such strategy is to attempt to register on the (in)famous orphan list, and thus to officially seek the status that they in most other circumstances seek to conceal. Another strategy is to seek a benefactor, an orphan mentor, in order to reinsert themselves into socially and culturally esteemed relations of dependence. This desiring of orphanhood stands in contrast to its normal association with stigmatisation and something that is best 'hidden' and 'forgotten'. The desire turns out to be short-term and instrumental of its opposite: children desire orphanhood because they *undesire* it and so they seek to officially become orphans so they can socially unbecome orphans. The desire for orphanhood thus arises from the desire to be 'normal'. Through the bureaucratic orphan list and the high number of orphan-focused NGOs in Rwanda, orphanhood has become associated with much-needed and desired resources. In turn, NGO support has become associated with a bureaucratic, and thus social and political, recognition of suffering and hardship. As such, orphanhood becomes desired because it may provide children and youth with the resources to improve their situations and with a recognition from their neighbours and families that they are worthy of sympathy and support.

While the desire is near-universal, the process instigated by 'becoming' an orphan is only fully completed by a small fraction of those desiring orphanhood. Information extracted from the orphan list suggests that infiltration war orphans face significant challenges in registering on the list. Such children need parents to vouch for them. Children's perceptions of rights within the two ethnic-politically different communities suggest that the lack of access to the orphan list is associated with a lack of access to a children's rights language. In Mwiza, children continue to be perceived through

the family unit, rather than having individual rights. It follows that upon parental death they hold few entitlements as their rights remain traditionally bound by their patriarch. As the patriline is in decline, they fall between old patrilineal guarantees and a new rights language that asserts a child's entitlements regardless of the family. In Kaganza, in contrast, children hold rights regardless of their family situation, as rights-bearing individuals.

The children and young people who have a realistic chance of properly 'unbecoming' orphans are a narrowly defined category of children, whose definition renders orphanhood an intrinsically post-genocide, political category. The moral dynamics at play in the different 'need narratives' that frequently arose in Kaganza, cast the deservingness of genocide orphans in similar terms to 'the deserving poor' historically with similar moral dynamics at play: the misfortue of genocide survivors is believed to be incurred by the violences of the genocide and those responsible for it – Hutu genocidaires – that is through no fault of their own. By implication, society becomes responsible for alleviating their suffering, which is deemed so significant that they cannot be expected to go on with life without support from their communities. Their trauma and poverty are intrinsically linked and thus survivors see a flow of resources to their households not experienced by non-survivors. As the new language of suffering, it appears that trauma has become a precondition for deservingness. Such trauma has been directly linked to the genocide, thus excluding the majority of Rwandans from the sympathy and compassion perceived by people as implied in external material support. Murakami suggests that poor people are often deprived "not only of economic and time capital but also the discursive capital that is needed to participate actively in politics" (2014:181). This lack of discursive capital is the unique challenge of the 'undeserving' poor. In present-day Rwanda, the undeserving are those whose poverty is not directly derived from genocide survivorhood. For Nancy Fraser, because 'needs talk' is political, it necessarily demands that all interested parties participate in defining need. This needs talk is easier for people whose need has created the very foundation of their state.

Through this process, the discourse on the deserving genocide orphan has become so strong as to hide the suffering of other orphans. While in Kaganza orphanhood is hidden from children, in Mwiza orphans hide from the world around them. Registration on the list is associated with another trend. In Mwiza, children and young people were themselves responsible for seeking registration; in Kaganza, it was grandparents who sought registration. This speaks to a broader trend of different perceptions of responsibility towards orphans that in turn imply different orphan care practices. In Kaganza, orphan carers, primarily grandparents, employed strategies of 'hiding orphanhood' from children by distracting children when sad, buying them shoes and clothes when they felt they had less

than others, pretending to be the child's parent – all in order that a child would not "know" that he or she is an orphan and therefore "know" a difficult life. Orphan carers also sought to hide the differential access to resources implied in the strong discourse on the suffering and deserving genocide orphan by similarly 'hiding' the culture of remembering the genocide that dominated in the community.

The result of these strategies is that the majority of children do not identify as orphans but rather refute orphan claims on the basis that they are well-cared for by their families. Moments of orphanhood arise when peers tease a child for not having parents, when a teacher asks about a parent's name or whereabouts, or when a child has to spend the school term in a different household where he or she feels stigmatised. Yet through the strategies employed by their carers, these brief experiences of orphanhood were confined to temporary moments that passed, slowly evaporating, as loving family members distracted a child towards more positive experiences. This transient orphanhood meant that children who were by their communities cast as deserving were so well-supported that the language of orphanhood suffering appears as irrelevant. In Mwiza on the other hand, orphans were not cast as deserving but were ostracised and seen as the responsibility of the state through local NGOs and authorities. Rather than employing strategies of 'hiding' orphanhood and genocide talk from children and youth, orphans daily felt reminded of their orphanhood and its main instigator, the infiltration war. For many children and young people this led to an essentialised and embodied status and experience as orphans. The strategies and techniques to 'manage' this stigma often led orphans to further remove themselves from their communities and families, thereby consecrating self-understandings as orphans. Orphanhood turns from transient to permanent and chronic.

Political Orphanhood

Pottier writes that "Rwandan leaders won the mind war over reality construction" (2002:170). According to Lemarchand, this 'thought control' is "antithetical to any kind of interethnic dialogue aimed at recognition and forgiveness" (2009:30). A new topography of memory has emerged that becomes inscribed on children's bodies and in their existential predicaments. The centrality of a genocide victim ideology in local constructions of orphanhood renders orphanhood an expression of political suffering. Youth and adults' discursive debate on the deservingness of genocide orphans 'by proxy' points to the significance of the sphere of orphanhood as a means through which otherwise silenced political-ethnic tensions can be expressed and negotiated. The national genocide-structured hierarchy that has put Ugandan Tutsi in power and seen genocide survivors and Hutu marginalised from positions of power, has been renegotiated and restructured in Kaganza through people's access

to NGOs and state resources. Thus, the social dynamics and politics that now dominate in Kaganza are heavily influenced by people's proximal relation to the genocide. In the words of Gramling and Forsyth (1987), orphanhood has become a means of stigma exploitation, through which survivors can turn their diverse stigmas into material and social support. Registering children on the orphan list, getting them included in NGO projects, or simply have their suffering acknowledged by fellow community members is an important domain through which local politics are fought out and status gets socially expressed, contested and exploited. The discourse on the deserving genocide orphan becomes both a result and expression of and an important player in local politics.

Karnik (2001) uses the term categories of control to denote the disciplining effect of labels and diagnoses. The category of orphan has gained significant multifaceted regulatory value, inscribed and enacted differently by its agents. As with other development and humanitarian categories, the bureaucracy of orphanhood tends to depoliticise the category orphan and "to construct in that depoliticised space an ahistorical, universal humanitarian subject" (Malkki1996:378). That subject is however through the depoliticising act being deeply politicised. The state has a strong say in where NGOs start projects, which beneficiaries they include and what kinds of projects they can start. By facilitating some orphan categories to gain access to more support than others, the state, whether intentionally or not, has turned the term orphan into one of its instruments of political coercion and power structuring through the ethnic hierarchy that is implicitly communicated to people by casting some children as deserving orphans and others as undeserving delinquents. As literature on the "deserving poor" also strongly suggests, notions of deservingness and entitlement to welfare are often used by state agencies to regulate the population.

For local communities, in turn, orphanhood has become an instrument for moral-political regulation as well as a means of expressing discontent with state bodies and charities. Community members use the term to denounce young neighbours of whose behaviour they disapprove. Many community members see it as the responsibility of the state, through local authorities, and of NGOs to solve their "problem of orphans". By labelling them orphans, and thus as socially disrupting delinquents, they are distancing themselves from such youth and make a very clear statement about whose responsibility they are: not theirs but the state's. Community members thus simultaneously moralise children and youths' behaviour and politicise it. Orphanhood has also become a way for children, young people, their families and communities to express their dissatisfaction with state policies, the actions of local authorities and NGOs. For children and young people themselves, the orphan category is primarily and significantly a moral category through which is being strongly

expressed a new ethics of kinship and affective economy in which parents and substitute parents hold very specific responsibilities of material and moral love: material provision, respectful dialogue, compassion and nuanced understandings of children's lived realities. As this composite love is becoming increasingly difficult to provide for the disaffected poor, moralising claims to orphanhood are becoming ever more frequent and consequential.

Communal Orphan Discourses

Orphan care practices are part of local social processes (Jones 2005). One of the key differences between Kaganza and Mwiza was their significantly different ideas about children and childhood adversity. These differences hinge on the notion of children as a window of hope, as the embodiment of future opportunities (Bornstein 2001; Cheney 2007; Meinert 2009), as the country's brighter future, and the notion of children and youth as burdens and obstacles to peace. In Kaganza, the public discourse regards modernity and development as morally desirable (Meinert 2009:144) and emanates of hope for better futures for the village's children through education and employment. The national campaigns of children's rights and appropriate care and protection are evident in intergenerational relationships. In Mwiza, on the other hand, the public discourse sees present-day Rwanda as in a state of perpetual decline from their past access to wealth and prosperity during Habyarimana's time as president. Without proper access to education and to current politically valued and socially salient attributes of prosperity – such as capacity in the English language, access to knowledge and jobs as well as status as Tutsi, northwestern Hutu in particular lack access to the hope for prosperity and future unity that is so central to current sociality and political life. Thus, in contrast to Kaganza, a large number of people in Mwiza live in nostalgia for the past and struggle to rebuild their lives after the devastating infiltration war – people here speak of each other as dying from pain and poverty, of being unable to look after and discipline their young, and "parents not valuing education because they do not know development". While obviously a proportion of people in Mwiza work hard to improve their lives and have great hopes for their futures, the overriding public discourse in many ways represented Sommers' description of "stuck youth", a sense of paralysis and an always-present risk of sliding down the social order[86].

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[86] A significant symbol of this fear was the very real danger of physically sliding down the hill in the heavy rains of 2011, which caused mudslides, thunder and lightning that killed several people in Mwiza during my research there.

In Kaganza, categorical targeting and correspondent resource allocation facilitated local adoptions of state-endorsed categories. The concerted efforts to improve Kaganza reflected the perception that its inhabitants are vulnerable people in need of support, an image that people drew on in their self-identifications. Many inhabitants identified with the government-promoted categories of vulnerability and associated ideas of entitlements. Especially for survivors of the genocide, their community's development represented a new national order in which all people were respected and had the same rights, unlike in pre-genocide Rwanda where they had felt treated as lower subjects. One could argue that the category of the suffering, and thus deserving, genocide orphan gave expression to and relief from their own suffering induced by genocide and ethnic discrimination. The intense focus on their community was a source of pride for many and made them appreciative of the new government, empowered to help improve their own conditions and work hard to achieve its continuous development. The development of their community symbolised that they had regained their status. The emphasis on the proper treatment of particularly disadvantaged children such as orphans was an obvious symbol of this for many residents. Thus, not only in order to attract resources but to assert their own position within broader national politics, the village leader and her council promoted the deservingness of a particular kind of vulnerable children, genocide orphans, whose suffering symbolised many of the council members' and villagers' own suffering.

In Mwiza, the socio-political landscape that surrounded orphanhood looked significantly different. Giving life to some categories necessarily affects those sectors of the population who remain 'non-labelled' (Moncrieffe 2007:3). Such 'non-categories' gain their own life. While Mwiza children and young people felt entitled to certain 'rights', many Mwiza adults emphasised children's duties and own responsibility, to an extent that went beyond traditional notions of obligation and arose from community members' perception of the government. The general lack of government attention to orphans symbolised for people a broader governmental neglect and condemnation, their 'non-labelling', in the broader political project of addressing the needs of vulnerable people. Many of the community's orphans were orphaned in the infiltration war, creating a link between this war and large-scale orphanhood as the instigators and symbols of decline of the community. Through radio programmes, in town and through neighbouring communities and schools people in Mwiza observed the plethora of orphan-focused NGOs present in Rwanda and felt that their community's orphans should receive some of this support. As such, it can be argued that Mwiza's rejection of responsibility for ensuring children's rights represents their rejection of the current national political hierarchy in which they have lost status, rejecting their status as perpetrators along with the

responsibilities imposed on them by the Tutsi-dominated regime. They justify this rejection by framing orphans as neglecting their duties towards the community, by acting outside cultural norms. As an extension of the community's non-labelling, orphans became a non-category of vulnerable children, which gave new life to old notions of orphans as being 'difficult' and disruptive to social order. In this process, people are unwittingly transmitting unalleviated trauma to the next generation.

Labelling People for Aid

"Labels are the way in which people, conceived as objects of policy are defined in convenient images" (Wood quoted in Gupte and Mehta 2007:66). International development has throughout its history, been intricately guided and structured by what Eyben terms a categorical approach where charity, aid and development initiatives have been targeted at particular categories of people. Processes of labelling have been used to manage scarcity and structure redistribution, "labelling people for aid" (2007:33). Such labelling has intense political power and implications, it becomes a politics of needs (Fraser 1990). Situations and contexts such as poverty, genocide, gender inequality are framed in particular ways and these frames produce different labels. Such frames also produce different policy responses. Moncrieffe gives the example of a woman who may in one context be a liberated 'sex worker' but in another social context an exploited 'prostitute'. Policy responses are guided by these particular frames and labels. Two trends in international development in Africa are important to consider: the targeting of particular kinds of children for aid and aid's role in conflict.

There has been significant debate as to the appropriateness of targeting orphans and vulnerable children, in particular AIDS orphans (Richter and Desmond 2008), partly due to the inherent difficulties in defining vulnerability and orphanhood (Schenk et al 2008). Sherr et al suggest that

> "The term OVC [orphans and vulnerable children] was invoked from a policy perspective to ensure the inclusion of all vulnerable children regardless of involvement of AIDS into programmes, and to underline the varied needs of children over time prior to parental death. The term OVC also allowed for the avoidance of potentially stigmatising labelling (orphan) while ensuring the inclusion of this group in needs and provision. From a programmatic point of view, this has made enormous sense. There are, however, those who may also argue, with some cynicism, that there was a donor appeal associated with orphans and this could be capitalized in order to generate resources for all affected children" (2008:527-528).

Although normally stigmatised, orphanhood can also be capitalised in meagre hopes for better lives. Many children and young people therefore chase a desired orphan label. It becomes socially dangerous when only a small fragment of the targeted group of children can properly capitalise on that categorisation. Thus, Spitzer and Twikirize warn:

> "Although particular groups of children, such as former child combatants, require special attention because of their unique experiences, singling out particular categories of children has dangerous implications, too." (2012:74-5)

The history of development aid in post-colonial Africa testify to some of these dangers. In Rwanda, Uvin and others have evidenced the vital role of development aid in "shaping the processes that lead to violence" (1998:3). Thus, Uvin writes: "The way development was defined, managed, and implemented was a crucial element in the creation and evolution of many of the processes that led to genocide" (ibid.; see also Andersen 2000 and Hayman 2011). Due to the lack of industry, de Lame suggests that the penetration of the state happened primarily through salaries paid to civil servants and development project workers (2005:18), thus intrinsically implicating development and political agendas. In extension hereof, Pottier points to the immense power of narratives (2002:47) such as are entailed in the context of collectively labelling people in Rwanda according to a particular national myth and 'healing truth' that renders Tutsi victims and Hutu perpetrators. 'True' victim status requires innocence. Thus, McEvoy and McConnachie argue that "incorporating blame in the calibration of human suffering results in the morally corrosive language of a 'hierarchy of victims' (2012:527). This collective guilt, I have shown here, is being reinforced by the development industry (specifically here orphan support) – and the way in which it affords access to resources and hope for better future. Such a trend inevitably warrants concern when, as Pottier poignantly observes, such collective guilt has "become an important cog in the mechanism that perpetuates violence in the Great Lakes" (ibid.:130), a process historically reinforced through development aid (Uvin 1998). A long-standing 'development darling' (ibid.), Rwanda at one point had more aid projects per square kilometer than any other country in the world (Willame 1990, quoted in Taylor 1999:37). As Taylor observes "These projects often did well […] because of the country's hard-working population, relatively high number of educated people, and until the mid-1980s, relatively little corruption by local standards. […] development analysts have pointed to the country's psychological and economic dependence on these projects and to the possibility that they may have been doing more long-term harm to Rwanda than good" (ibid.). According to Zorbas, reconciliation efforts, one of the new foci of development displays the same tendency (2004:51).

In the past, formal education functioned as an instrument for political-ethnic segregation and exclusionary politics by only allowing a small proportion of Tutsi to attend school (de Lame 2005:62). Today, as evidenced in this thesis, access to the bureaucracy of child-focused development programmes, such as orphan projects, serves a similar purpose, albeit 'hidden' by the pretenses of bureaucracy and reconciliatory policies. 'Targeted support,' although not openly or intendedly targeted by most NGOs, is bringing the national political 'myth' of Tutsi victimhood on which the new Rwanda is founded into the most intimate spheres of family life by affecting very particular orphan understandings, appropriations and complicit orphan care practices. Childhood suffering and different categories of children have often been approached through a victim-offender dyad – constructed categories that are at odds with people's self-understandings (McAlinden 2014). The range of categories of difficult childhoods, such as street children, sexually abused children and orphans are approached through this dichotomy (Panter-Brick 2002), as either innocent victims in need of protection or convicted as offenders (McCallum 2015). When a similar dichotomy is imposed on the adult population, rendered in 'fictive' but essentialising ethnic terms, the implications for discourses on childhood suffering and consequential treatment of 'vulnerable' children are significant. Thus, not only is the discourse on the deserving genocide orphan perpetuating political-ethnic differentiation of children and their communities' access to prosperous futures, and thus an unequal distribution of hope fundamental to recovery from past suffering, the targeted categorical approach to the alleviation of child suffering is bringing the effects of ethnic differentiation into the most intimate spheres of life by disabling large fractions of communities such as Mwiza from ensuring appropriate orphan care practices. Family practices, historically undifferentiated by ethnicity, are becoming political-ethnic in nature. In this sense orphanhood can be understood as a reflection on the broader post-genocide politics and hierarchy of newly created categories and complicit modes of identification, as well as one of the domains in which such politics are more subtly created, understood and (dis)appropriated.

Towards an Anthropology of Childhood Suffering

This thesis makes two overriding contributions. The first is to the still burgeoning literature on identity politics in post-genocide Rwanda. Here it adds a new perspective that has of yet only been little examined: how such identity politics influence children's self-perceptions, representations and categories of identification. This influence is happening through surprising processes, namely through the intimacies and ethics of care for children experiencing hardships. Not only does this have

profound implications for children's present wellbeing and self-identification, it will influence their future perceptions of being a person with 'integrity' and 'respect' in Rwanda. In this sense, rather than being the 'window of hope', Rwandan childhoods as they are currently experienced by some 'kinds' of children bear little hope and much fear and cause for concern. Present identity-politics act to ethnicise, culturally and politically, the most intimate aspects of people's lives. The research thus adds to understandings of how violence is both prevented and perpetuated through the kinds of affiliations and intimacies it affects and effects. As children are increasingly targeted in conflicts and warfare, such knowledge is crucial.

This leads me to consider the thesis's second contribution, namely to the anthropology of childhood, and perhaps specifically to new anthropologies of childhood suffering and childhood subjectivities. By foregrounding some of the ways in which children negotiate the categories and global ideals that are imposed on their local contexts, I show how "children and youth offer such potentially rich generational categories of ethnographic inquiry in which to explore how broader forces shape local subjective experiences" (Williams 2016:334). Theorising subjectivity of children and young people is a way to situate and approach children's experience sin relation to overarching structures and relations (ibid.) but such subjectivities have not been widely studied within African contexts, at least that take sufficient stock of the complex field of conflicting, colluding and colliding categories and ideals and consider how children negotiate these in their everyday lives and moral worlds. From the anthropology of experience, that has focused on pain and suffering in diverse and interesting ways, we have learned a lot about how different people in different cultures rely on a variety of implicit and explicit, social and personal, strategies to deal with pain and suffering. We have also gained crucial insights into how these strategies for recovery affect people's perceptions of the world and their self-understandings. These important nuances in understanding the effects of war, conflict and inhumane suffering on people's inner worlds and self-perceptions have as of yet not been fully explored in children's lives. This is particularly the case in Rwanda where research has focused on the psychiatric discourses of genocide trauma. Yet even across the world, we have little insight into how 'critical events' that have the potential to create entirely new social categories, status and modes of identifications influence children's perceptions of their lives and their place in the worlds in which they live – although there are of course notable exceptions. In Rwanda, Pells has begun this investigation, as has Mann in Tanzania and Reynolds in South Africa in the context of apartheid. But much remains to be learned. I have here begun an investigation of how community-wide coping mechanisms affect experiences of childhood and children's self-understandings. I have made the first

meagre attempt at understanding the transmission of transgenerational trauma as well as the transmission of hope. I have begun an investigation of how state policies, rhetoric and ideals get translated, transposed and distorted in the most intimate family practices. These could all benefit from a greater attuned and nuanced anthropology not only of childhood but of childhood suffering.

Such an anthropology needs to pay specific attention to the relationship between the methods through which we seek to approach children's social, moral and inner worlds and the kinds of insights we gain. The diversity of methods I used helped me to bring together a diversity of practices, patterns, claims, categories, modes of identification, sentiments and expressed emotions that often seemed completely contradictory and as obfuscating any kind of detectable coherence. In particular the combination of child-friendly methods and 'witness bearing' opportunities, enriched by multiple generations' insights through interviews and ordinary everyday conversations, helped me to uncover that what appears in one form at one level, becomes its complete opposite on another level. These processes became apparent only by attending to children's perspectives from as many angles as possible and by recognising that different conceptions and consequent treatment of children require profoundly different methods and approaches (cf. Brosnan 2016). It is through attending to this relationship in particular, I contend, that we can begin to understand the kinds of experiences, and thus suffering, the categorical approach to childhood 'vulnerability' expresses, affects and effects.

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Appendix 1

Spiderweb

This worksheet was very adaptable as the face could be filled in by the child and thus made either happy, sad, angry etc. The theme could also be changed according to necessity, such as 'important people in my life', people who make me sad/happy, places I go when I am sad etc.
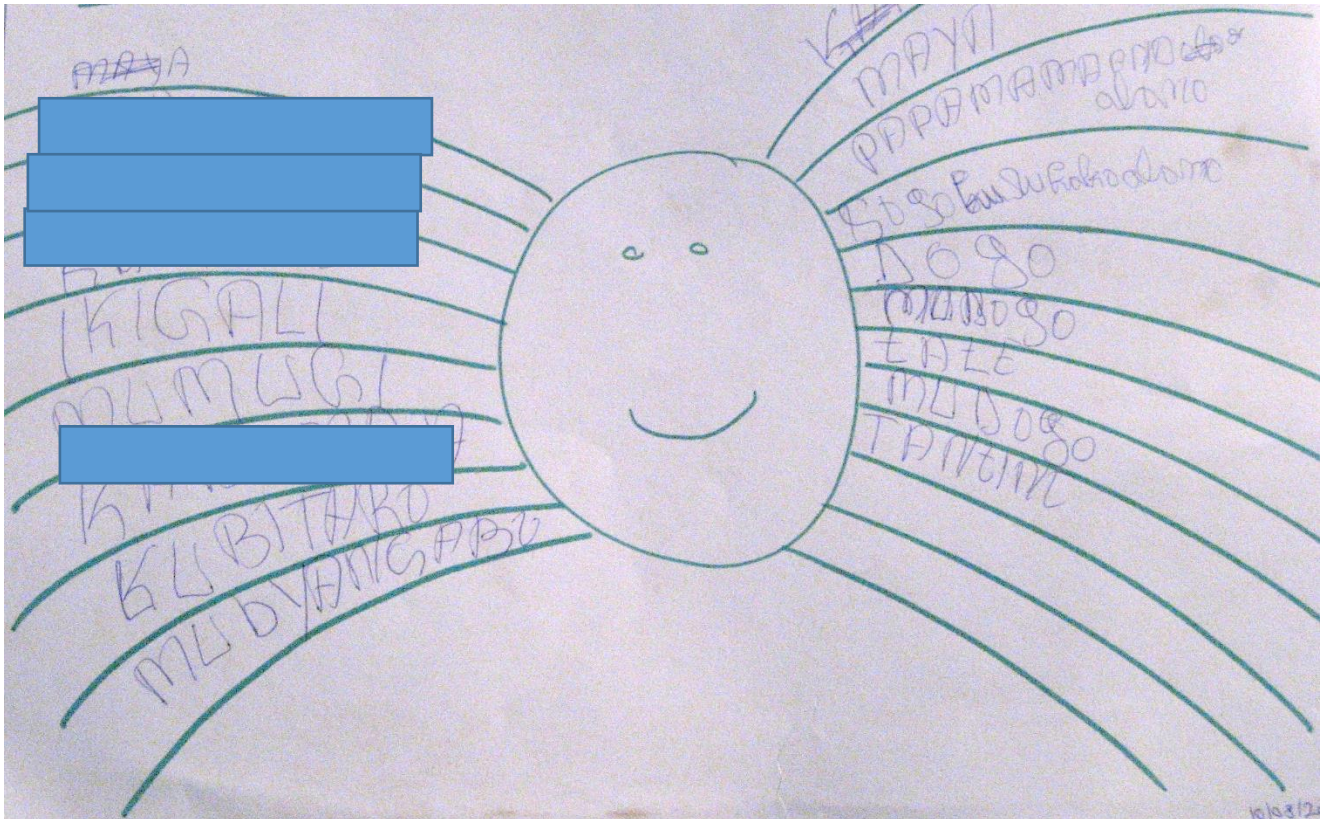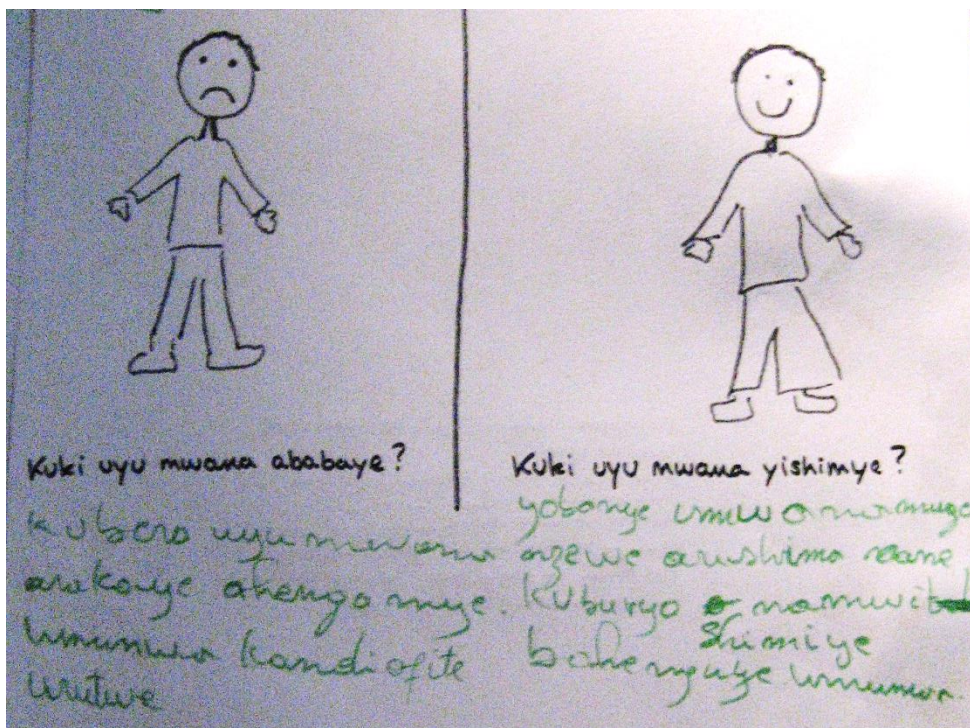
Appendix 2

Examples of worksheets / assignments

2.1 Happy / Sad Child

The text asks 'Why is this child sad?' / 'Why is this child happy?'.

2.2 Good/Bad Families

In this worksheet, I had only drawn two houses and asked children in the first house to depict in words or pictures a good family and in the second a bad family. I chose the house as the location for the family, as it is within the walls of a house that Rwandan children primarily spend time with their families *as a family*. This however had to be contextualised with *activities* that children liked to do with their families, which emerged from other worksheets such as spiderwebs of places and people that make children happy, and good/bad experiences (2.3) as well as children's time lines / life stories (2.6).

2.3 What makes you happy?

In this worksheet children were asked to draw in their face, whether they were happy, sad, angry or any other emotion and then draw the things that made them feel that way. When Chadarake filled it in a happy face and drew the things that made him happy: helicopters, being in school, on safari, tending cattle and 'men', probably a reference to spending time with his father and father's friends as his father was rarely home. Chadarake had never been on safari but hoped to go some day, nor did he have to tend to cattle as his family had no cows. This worksheet could also be adapted to good or bad experiences or thoughts.
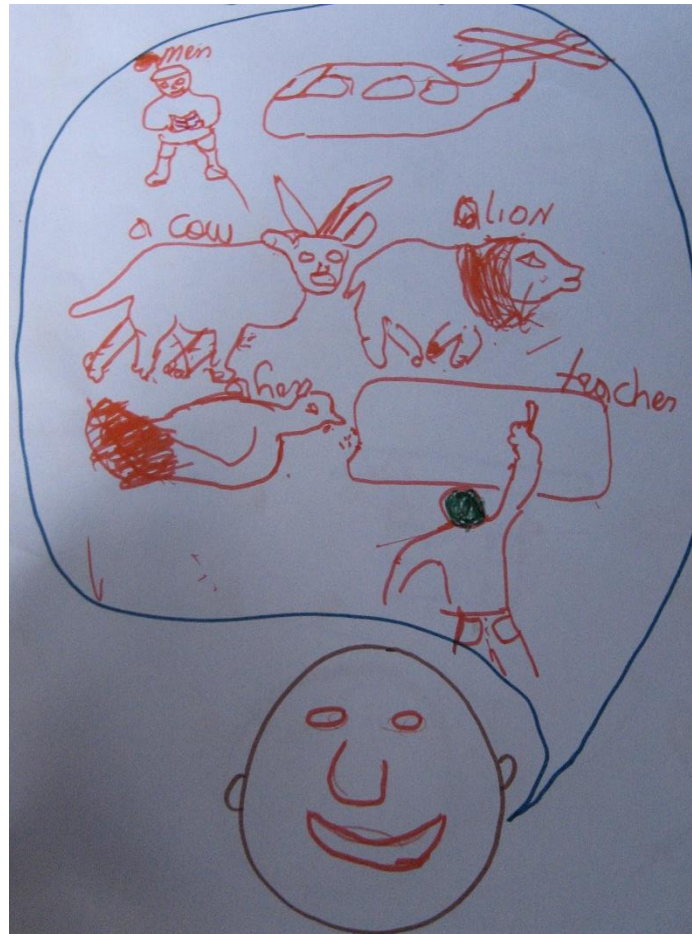
2.4 Love / Hate

In this worksheet children are asked to write what they think love is and what they think hate is. I designed this worksheet together with the children who suggested that we it draw it like this. One of the ways hate is often defined is by what it is not: love, hence the cross through the heart.
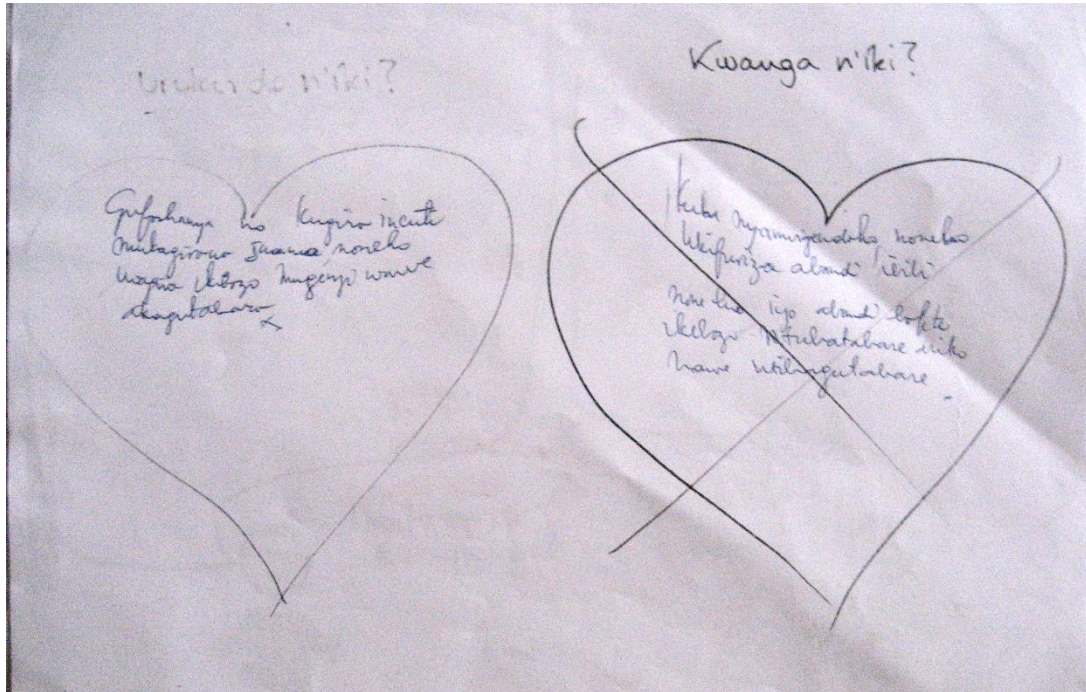
2.5 What are they talking about?

In this type of worksheet, children were asked to depict a conversation with a particular family member. In this worksheet, it is 'kaka' (grandmother), but the child could pick whichever family member they wanted. The text reads: "The child and grandmother are together. Why? They are at home. What are they doing? What are they talking about?" Grandmothers often had a very special role in children's lives and this version of it became a standard worksheet that most children filled in. The worksheet was also done with both parents, one parent, a sibling, aunts and uncles and one worksheet left the titles blank for the child to fill in.
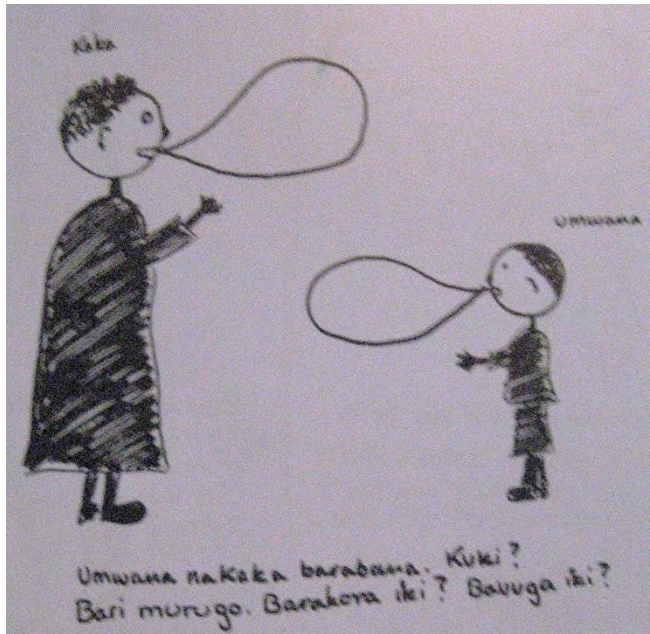
2.6 My Life Timeline

Children often remembered events in their lives by their age or year in school. I therefore designed this timeline sheet to depict what they remembered in their lives.
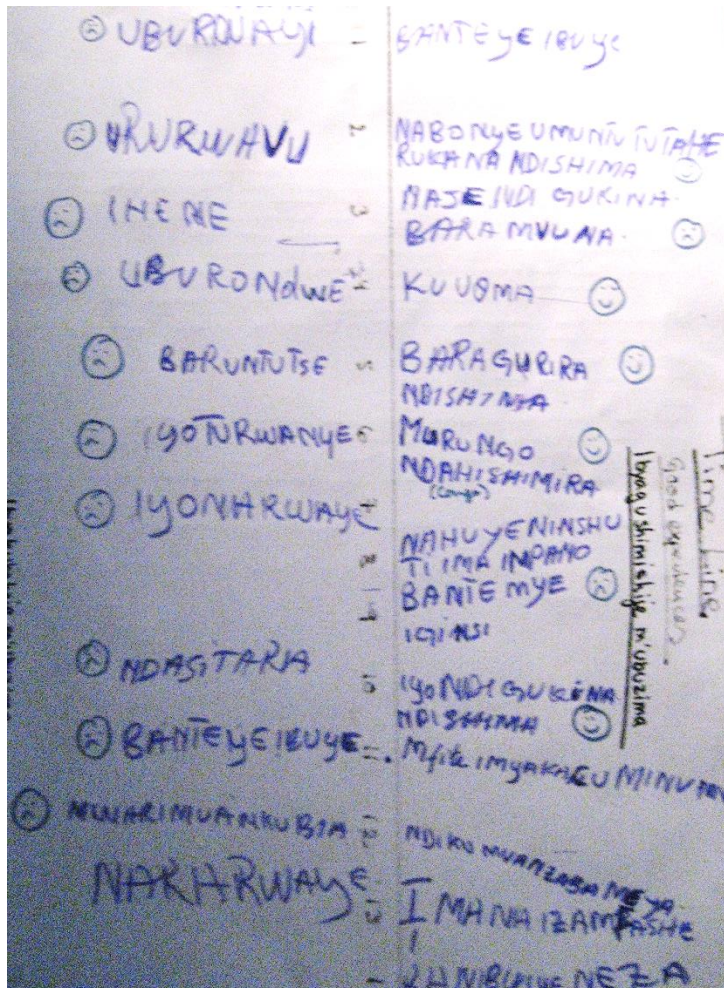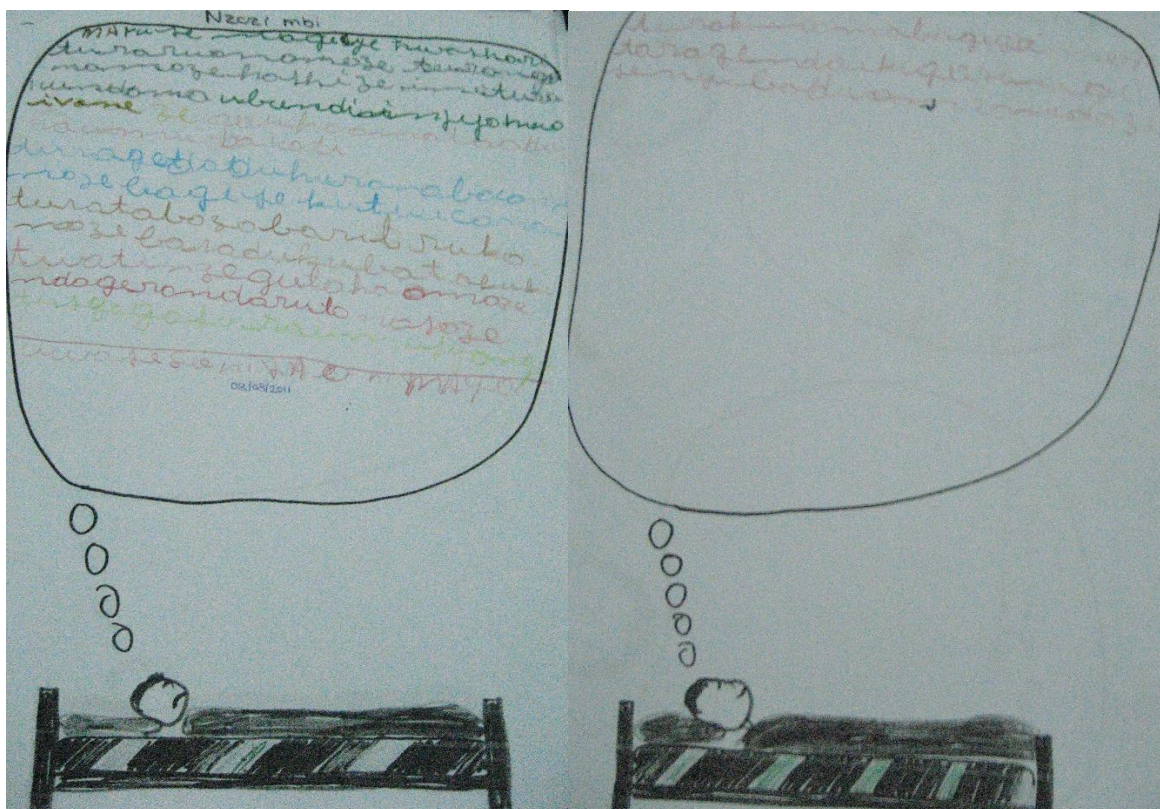
2.7 When you pray to god, what do you pray for?

Praying to god was an important aspect of being a 'good person'. It is also an expression of hope. By asking what children pray for, it was intended as a way of asking what they hope for.
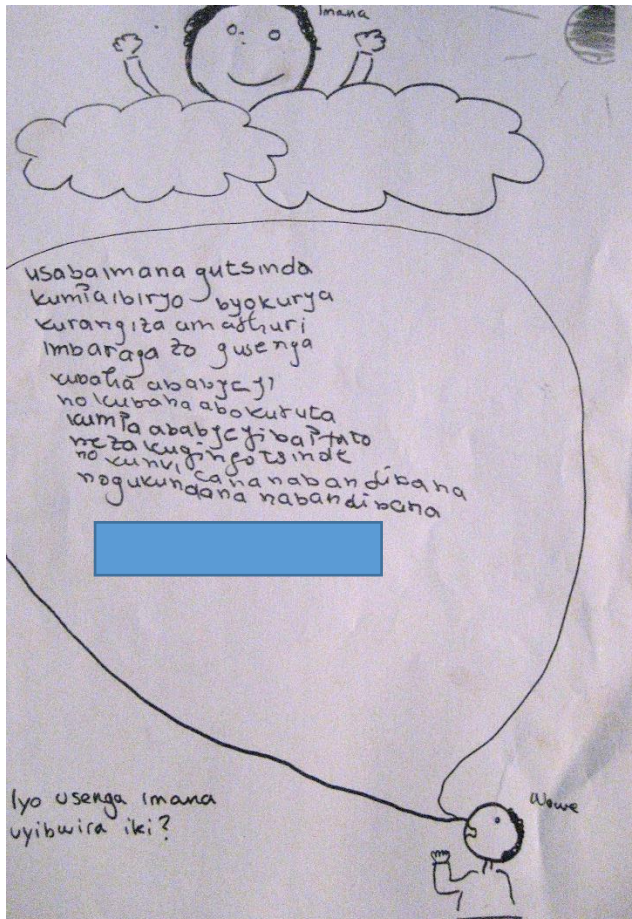
2.8 Bad dream / Good dream

In these two worksheets, children were asked to describe or draw a bad dream they had had and a good dream.


2.9 Thematic drawings

I gave children various themes to draw – if they wanted. My Family became a very popular theme. Interestingly, Emmanuel has here depicted 'his family', which he explained to be a mother and father and there is love (symbolised by the flower). As Emmanuel had neither a mother or a father, nor experienced love, in his view at least, in his household (grandmother and two cousins), he obviously depicted the family he hoped for rather than what he had.

Appendix 3

Feeling Tree / Problem Tree
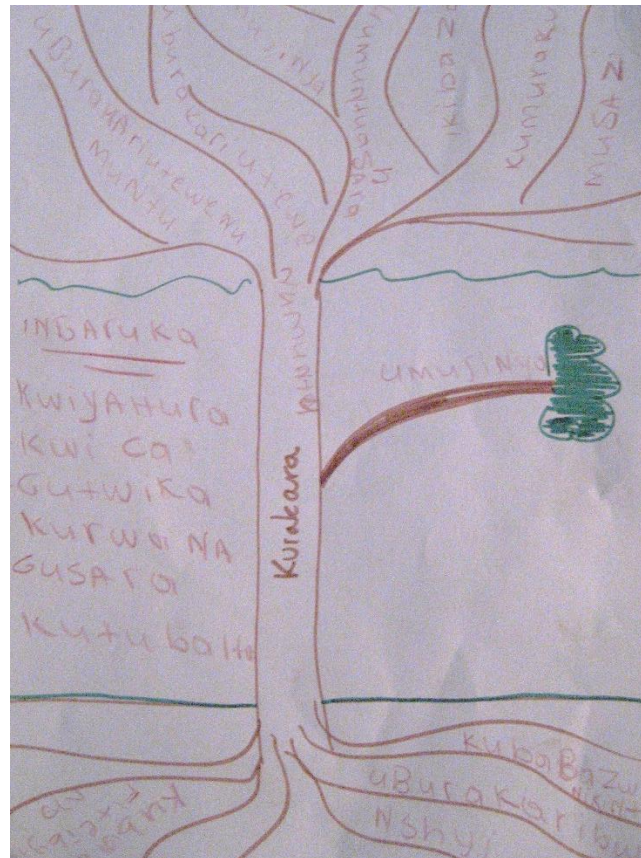
Appendix 4

Categories of Orphans and Vulnerable Children

The 15 categories of orphans and vulnerable children as set out in the Policy on Orphans and Vulnerable Children (RoR 2003:9):

1) Children living in households headed by children

2) Children in fostering care

3) Street children

4) Children living in centres

5) Children in conflict with the law

6) Children with disabilities

7) Children affected by armed conflict

8) Children who are sexually exploited and/or abused

9) Working children

10) Children affected/infected by HIV/AIDS

11) Infants with their mothers in prison

12) Children in very poor households

13) Refugee and displaced children

14) Children of single mothers

15) Children who are married before their majority

Appendix 5

Statistical Information

5.1 Demographic Data

	Kaganza (population: 4500)	**Mwiza** (population: 5000)
Male/female ratio (%)	44 / 56	45 / 55
Male/female ration, 56+ (%)	43 / 57	41 / 59
Children and Youth (0-25 years)	60 %	50 %
Elderly (above 56 years)	13 %	11 %
Infants (in actual numbers)	300	50
Women 15-38	29 %	37 %
Women 16-45	45 %	57 %

Table 1: Demographic Data

5.2: Statistics extracted from the OVC List

	Kaganza OVC List **Child Population: 2824**	**Mwiza OVC LIST** **Child Population: 2528**
Registered children/youth (below 25)	269 (9.5 % of Kaganza's child population)	158 (6.3 % of Mwiza's child population)
Orphans	118 (of 269 registered children) = 43.8 % The 118 orphans breaks down into: **Double orphans:** 39 (33.1 % of child population / 14.5 % of registered children) **Paternal orphans:** 71 (60.2 % of child population / 26.4% of registered children) **Maternal orphans:** 8 (6.7 % of child population / 2.9 % of registered children)	76 (of 158 registered children) = 48.1 % The 76 orphans breaks down into: **Double orphans:** 23 (30,3% of child population / 14,6% of registered children) **Paternal orphans:** 42 (55,3% of child population / 26,6% of registered children) **Maternal orphans:** 11 (14,4% of child population / 7% of registered children)
Live with both parents	12 (of 269) = 4.5 %	40 (of 158) = 25.3 %
Average no. of OVC registered pr. *Umudugudu*	43	20

*Table 2: Statistics extracted from the OVC List*

5.3: Research Sample – Key Figures

	Kaganza – Research Sample	Mwiza – Research Sample
Orphans	35	20
Double orphans	11	11
Paternal orphans	12	5
Maternal orphans	6	4
Non-orphans living with non-parent carer	6	0
Living in C/YHH	0	18
Education drop-out	1	2010: 14 -> 2011: 16
Eat less than 1-2 times/day	2 (siblings)	6 (3 sibling groups)
2 sets of clothes or less	0	8
Lack health insurance	1	19
Registered on list	13	0
Receiving NGO support	11 (6 of whom were not on the list)	2010: 3 -> 2011: 0
Children's age in years	10 (17%), 12 (17%) and 13 (14.7%) and 15 (20,6%)	12-15 (20%), 16-18 (70%), 24 (10%)
Cause of parental death *Where available*	Migration to/from Congo (13), infiltration war (4), AIDS (3), 'poisoning' (6), traffic accident (1)	Infiltration war (20), sickness (2)

Table 3: Research Sample - Key Figures

5.4 Children's Rights Exercise Sheet

On the left side of the paper children were asked to list all the rights they knew of. On the right side of the paper, they were asked to list the ones that were not identified in their lives.
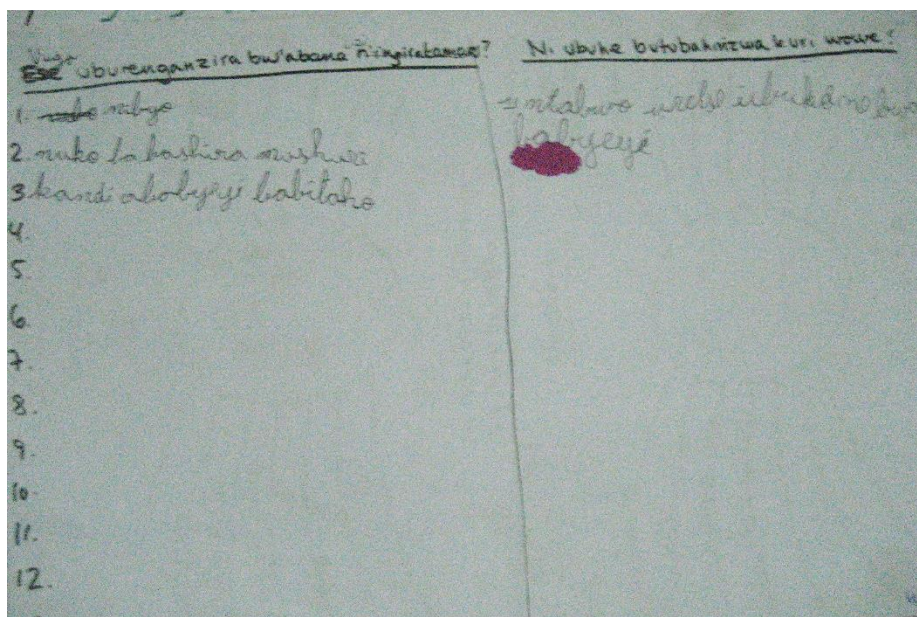
5.5 Children's Rights Answers

The children's worksheets were compiled into one with a breakdown of all the rights they identified, how many identified them and which rights were not identified.

Which rights do you know?	Which rights are not respected in your life?
Study / school materials (14)	Parents/family (6)
Food (11) Clothes (8) Shelter (1)	Food (5)
Access to hospital (5)	Clothes (4)
To be cared for (kuvuza) / to be a child in the home (5)	Study (4)
Parents/family (4)	Satisfaction of needs (3)
Respect adults (incl help parents/love others) (4)	Followed by parents (1)
Be respected/loved and parents who follow the child (4)	Participation in burial (1)
Sleep well (4)	To be cared for (1)
To play/be happy with others (3)	Not being free in family (1)
To walk (gutembera) (3)	Respect (for oneself and/or others) (1)
Protection/Not be violated/beaten/experience violence (3)	Access to hospital (1)
To be treated well (gufata neza) (2)	Free from grief (1)
Satisfaction of needs (2)	To have an advisor (1)
Be free in front of the family/explain oneself (2)	Free from poverty (1)
Know family/have name (2)	
Pray/know God (2)	
To have leader/advisor (1)	
To avoid sinners (1)	
Peace (1)	
To work for Rwanda (1)	
No work during school times (1)	