



Report on Monitoring and Research on the *Gacaca*

*The Righteous: between oblivion and reconciliation?
Example of the province of Kibuye*

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The information in this document has been gathered by the members of the PRI research team in Rwanda. Many thanks to all of them for their work.

Summary

This report continues the analysis of the context of reconciliation in the province of Kibuye, but proposes to limit the research to some social actors, in this case the Righteous, or “*intwali mu butabazi*”. These are people who chose to rescue Tutsis during a period when the dominant social norm was to kill, which in those days resulted in their marginalisation.

To carry out this research meant dealing with the issue of the profile of the Righteous. Former social relations did not appear to be the defining criteria for helping persecuted Tutsis. Therefore the answer had to be found elsewhere. All the Righteous persons we met had two things in common: their belief in values that affirm the humanity of the victims, creating a deep empathy with them and determining the way they acted, as well as the existence within their social environment, particularly within the family, of positive examples of interethnic coexistence.

Then there was also the question about their place within Rwandan society today as a result. This appears to be highly ambiguous, given that the independent spirit which sustained them during the genocide is precisely what creates problems for them nowadays, due to the tendency of social groups to develop a group protection mentality, making the Righteous at best “troublemakers”.

The place of the Righteous therefore falls short of what could be expected. Their integrity and impartiality in the past could make them useful positive references for the *gacaca* trials, for reconciliation and for democratic development.

Beyond their motivation to participate, greater involvement of the Righteous in the *gacaca* trials could encourage the development of “good practices”. Yet, to this day, the policy with regard to the Righteous is limited to symbolical recognition alone, at a time when their potential to set an example could be highly positive and still remains very much underused.

In fact, it would seem that a policy to honour and encourage independence of mind, as well as a critical attitude, would oblige Rwandans to reflect on the real nature of their own positions during the genocide. The Righteous are living proof that a choice was possible. To hold them up as an example would oblige the genocide killers to reflect on their actions from the point of view of their own responsibility, showing them that they did have a choice and that this choice still exists today. It can be exercised by acknowledging their actions and thus starting the process of reconciliation. For the survivors, to value the actions of the Righteous would make it possible to humanise the social links between the two groups, by negating the belief that the Hutus were collectively responsible, a belief that restricts any attempts to close the gap between them due to the climate of fear and mistrust that it creates. Finally, within a highly hierarchical Rwandan society, in which deep respect for authority constitutes a strong cultural tendency, the sensitisation of the population to the value of autonomy and independence of mind, making them reflect on notions of obedience and submission to authority, cannot be achieved *ex-nihilo*. In this way, the promotion of the Righteous could be politically exploited so that blind and systematic obedience to authority could be replaced by an acknowledgement of individual responsibility. This would include acquiring a sense of responsibility that could lead to civic disobedience.

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Introduction

As highlighted in our previous report¹, among the declared goals of the *gacaca* are the strengthening of unity and reconciliation. With the aim likewise of analysing the context of reconciliation, we have in this report targeted social actors who, because of their stance during the genocide, could play a role in reconciliation.

Indeed, although the Hutu population of Kibuye for the most part appears to have taken part in the genocide, we cannot generalise and affirm that all without exception were active participants. At the same time as the planned genocide was executed rapidly and in cold blood, the province of Kibuye also offered examples of resistance to the genocidal policy set in place in April 1994. Among the most heroic was the resistance of the Tutsis in Bisesero², but there are also many other less well-known cases of persons who said “No” to the socially approved norm³ of the time, namely, to kill all the Tutsis.

The analysis of this issue meant that our research would focus on two questions: first of all, who are these persons, and then, what is their place today within Rwandan society and more generally in the reconciliation process.

With a view to offering them due recognition, this third report proposes to describe the actions of some Hutus in the province to rescue Tutsis during the genocide. We believe that these experiences are valuable as examples and could be useful in many ways for the process of reconciliation.

The current report is based on research work carried out by PRI’s team in the province of Kibuye over the period of June to August 2004, as well as earlier research. On this occasion, our researchers carried out interviews with fifteen of the Righteous, seventeen survivors and five witnesses. The main purpose was to cross-check information to carry out case studies and to record what each one felt about the subject under study. Although the work was carried out only in the province of Kibuye, we believe that this study reflects the information gathered earlier on in other provinces in the course of our research work⁴, as well as the observations of African Rights⁵ on the same subject.

¹ PRI, *Gacaca Research Report. Gacaca and reconciliation, the case of Kibuye*, May 2004

² Hills in the Kibuye Province where, over a period of around three months, the Tutsis of Bisesero held out against the soldiers and the *interahamwe*, fighting for their lives. According to estimates by *African Rights* (in *Resting Genocide, Bisesero, April-June 1994*, Kigali, 1994) there were some 50,000 dead but Philip Verwimp estimates around 13,000 died (in *Development and Genocide in Rwanda. A Political Economy Analysis of Peasants and Power under the Habyarimana Regime*, Leuven, KUL, 2003, p.271).

³ Cf. Philip Verwimp, who uses and clarifies this concept of the “*socially approved norm*” (Verwimp, 2003, p. 296)

⁴ Cf. former PRI reports, particularly: *Report III* (The case of the blacksmith) and *Report V* (The case of Célestin)

⁵ Cf. African Rights, *Tribute to Courage*, London, 2002

The term “Righteous”

Taken from Talmudic literature, the term “*Righteous of the Nations*” refers in a more general way to any non-Jew having had positive and friendly relations with Jews⁶. However, this term is also used in a more restricted sense, designating the non-Jews who, during the Second World War and the Shoah, came to the aid of Jews who were in danger, risking their own lives to do so, without seeking any material or other advantage.

We think that the latter definition applies in many ways to the case of non-Tutsis who, during the 1994 genocide, rescued Tutsis and moderate Hutus⁷. In the present report, therefore, we have used both this term and what appears to be its equivalent in Kinyarwanda, the expression “*intwali mu butabazi*”⁸.

In Kinyarwanda, the term *intwali* refers to a “hero”, a “brave person”, someone who does not flinch in the face of obstacles. Nevertheless, to be closer to what is more likely to have been the reality then, we have used the term “*umu tabazi*”⁹, which means a “rescuer”, “a person who comes to someone’s aid”. Therefore, in our view, the Kinyarwanda term which would best qualify these persons would be “*intwali mu butabazi*”, or “heroic rescuer”.

We shall return to the definition of a “Righteous person”, which still needs to be defined for Rwanda, in the third part of this report. We can, however, already mention the name given by the Ibuka president of the District of Ntongwe¹⁰, who was himself rescued by a well-known Righteous person¹¹. He believes that a “Righteous person” can be defined as somebody who:

- decided to rescue people, scorning the threats and aggressions of the genocide killers,
- who did so without expecting anything in return,
- whose actions can be confirmed by witnesses.

⁶ See Appendix 3

⁷ The term “moderate Hutu” means a Hutu who was a member of the political opposition (MDR, PSD, PL or PDC) and opposed to the extremist tendency of “Hutu Power”. It could also be a journalist or human rights activist. These people were persecuted and killed because they were considered to be *ibyitso*, accomplices of the *inyenzi* (FPR), bearing in mind their opposition to the policy set up by the regime of President Habyarimana. Therefore, in the literal sense, the “Righteous” were not moderate Hutus. Many of them could even be partisans or members of the party in power, the MRND, as in the case of the righteous Jean-Bosco.

We should therefore be careful not to use certain terms lightly, implying that any Hutu who was not “moderate” was a partisan of the genocide. Among the Hutus who were not “moderate” and were not partisans of the genocide, there were also the Righteous, as well as those who, if they did not actively oppose it, did not actually participate in the genocide. On this point, cf. particularly Eltringham, Nigel, *Accounting for horror. Post-Genocide Debates in Rwanda*, London, Pluto Press, 2004, pp. 95-99.

⁸ For the purpose of simplification, the term “*intwali*” will be used instead of “*intwali mu butabazi*”.

⁹ For a definition of these terms in Kinyarwanda, cf. Jacob, Irénée, *Dictionnaire Rwandais-Français de L’Institut National de Recherche Scientifique. [Rwandan-French Dictionary of the National Institute of Scientific Research] Third volume*, Kigali, 1983, pp. 242-243 and p. 438

¹⁰ PRI interview with WN, an Ibuka president in the province of Gitarama, 14/09/04

¹¹ She is a traditional doctor, Mrs Sula Karuhimbi of Ntongwe, a seventy-five year old widow. During ceremonies in July 2004, it was publicly recognised that she had saved the lives of many Tutsis. To know more of her story, refer also to the study of African Rights (2002, pp. 33-34).

Finally, we would like to emphasize that the aim of this report is not to determine whether such or such a person was “a Righteous person”, but to give examples of the more or less systematic “righteous actions” of some persons during the period of the genocide. In other words, when we qualify people in this report as being “Righteous” or *intwali*, it is only for easy reference. These terms should be understood as meaning “*candidates for the position of Righteous persons*”, as the work of qualifying them is not ours, but that of the Rwandan authorities and population. We would like above all to highlight acts of resistance and in what way they should be valued.

First part

Who are the Righteous?

1. Coming to aid: an action that goes without saying?

1.1 The shock of genocide

On reading the stories of both the Righteous and the survivors, one finds that the genocide is often presented as a shock to the social relations between Hutus and Tutsis, which on the whole were perceived as being harmonious before the genocide.

“We were also surprised by the massacres of 1994. We thought that things would develop as they did in 1973, when there were no massacres.” [*In the Kibuye region, 1973 was mainly marked by the stealing of cattle and burning of houses, etc.*]

*Righteous man*¹²

“I trusted everybody as I had no dispute with the people.”

*Man Survivor*¹³

“In the sector where I was born and married, there were people who established good relations. It was a region where people were friendly... There are those who did it [*kill*] unwillingly... And in our cell, [...] many people were actually saved.”

*Woman survivor*¹⁴

“I would say that people used to live like brothers, like friends. Of course, there were always some extremists; even now you can find them. But before the war, it was really good. The issue in Rwanda is not ethnicity. But the old government took advantage of the radio and the attacks of the FPR to stir up people’s anger with bad propaganda. I would not say there were no problems at all among the population, but people lived together, married and made each other gifts of cattle.”

*Righteous minister*¹⁵

It is to be noted, however, that this rather idyllic view of relations before the genocide should be qualified. In the first place, it is likely that rather than the existence of great friendships, relations were largely dependent on the need for coexistence between the two groups. In other words, the circumstances and interactions of practical and daily life had a lot to do with community closeness, such as meetings at the well, in the fields, in the bars or even in the church and in the market.

Furthermore, according to Danielle De Lame¹⁶, as from 1990, social relations in rural Rwanda on the whole began deteriorating, as she had occasion to observe on the hill of Murundi, Kibuye,

¹² PRI interview with Jean-Bosco, *intwali*, 17/07/04

¹³ PRI interview with Augustin, survivor, 28/07/04

¹⁴ PRI interview with Sophie, survivor, 23/07/04

¹⁵ PRI interview with a member of a religious community, *intwali*, 16/07/04

¹⁶ De Lame, Danielle: « *Une colline entre mille ou le calme avant la tempête. Transformations et blocages du Rwanda rural* », (One hill among a thousand or calm before the storm. Transformations and limitations in rural Rwanda), Tervuren, *Annales de Sciences Humaines*, vol. 154, 1996, pp. 295-302

where she was carrying out a study. The deterioration was linked to growing social inequality between the majority rural population and minority elite, a struggle for power within a multiparty context, as well as the threat identified by the FPR of restoring a Tutsi regime, and a resurgence of ethnicity.

This positive and lenient view of social relations *before* the genocide, present in most of the interviews, is to be measured by the yardstick of what the reality of social relations were *during* the genocide. Such a paroxysm of horror and inhumanity was reached at that time that by comparison former problems can only be minimised or even swept aside. As Jean-Bosco said “*There were conflicts, but these did not cause human casualties. The trust among people was not guaranteed*”¹⁷.

Be that as it may, contrary to what was said at the time of the genocide and immediately afterwards, genocide in rural areas only very rarely started spontaneously. It was usually only after a few days and because of military intervention that the inhabitants started to kill¹⁸.

Although killing was not spontaneous, was rescuing spontaneous for all that?

1.2 Coming to aid: a marginalising attitude compared to the predominant norm

There were occasions when, at first, Tutsi and Hutu neighbours fought the *interahamwe* together.

“Where we live, the threats only started on the afternoon of 14 April 1994. It should be noted that during the first attack we were with our Hutu neighbours. The attackers were armed with lances, machetes, and stones. We managed to defend ourselves because we were on top of the hill and those who were attacking us were lower down, so that day they did not manage to kill us. We defended ourselves with stones. We had collected stones on the hilltop and that is how we defended ourselves. The attackers left, but returned on the following day, 15 April, at around eight o’clock, together with some policemen. Our Hutu neighbours had left during the night, as they had been warned that if they stayed with us they would be killed. There was a police camp here in Kibuye. They shot at us. In fact, some people died on this hill, while others fled left and right. We separated, dispersed, and we met some *interahamwe* armed with machetes.”

*Man survivor*¹⁹

“It all started with the death of Habyarimana, on 6 April 1994. It was the Mara cell that started to attack the other regions where Tutsis lived. Thus, the Hutus and Tutsis of our region stood together to protect us against the Mara attacks. This continued until the 11th of April. But on the 12th of April, things became really difficult. They beat us. After that the attackers came from Mubuga; they had guns and grenades. We fled to Kabuga. They called out to the well-known Hutus among us to come out and talk with them. These Hutus came back and told us that anybody who wanted to save themselves had to flee, as the attackers had guns. They also said that no Tutsi would remain alive. All we had were stones to throw at them. They immediately started throwing grenades, killing some of us, while the rest of us fled.”

*A survivor*²⁰

¹⁷ Cf. Appendix 2

¹⁸ On the role of the military and the militias in the Rwandan genocide, cf. Des Forges, Alison, *Aucun témoin ne doit survivre. Le génocide au Rwanda* [No witness may survive. Genocide in Rwanda], Paris, Karthala, 1999, as well as PRI, “Compte-rendu de la journée de restitution à Kigali du Séminaire International ‘Le dévoilement du génocide au Rwanda: Témoignages d’après des études de terrain’ [Report on the day of restitution, in Kigali, of the International Seminar ‘Revealing the Genocide in Rwanda: Testimonies according to field studies’, Butare, November 2003”, *Work document*, PRI/Kigali, 21 November 2003

¹⁹ PRI interview with Augustin, survivor, 28/07/04

“I experienced the situation without understanding why it happened. It is here that I stood up to the genocide. I hid a few persons within the limits of what I was able to do. But those whose last hour had come, God let them go. They died. That is how I lived through these events; I had no idea of these massacres. Nobody even dared to talk about what was happening. They stole and killed en masse. They were people who were called ‘Hutus’. We now call them ‘Rwandans’. At the time, they killed the Tutsis.”

*Célestin, a Righteous man*²¹

However, although social relations between people had been good before, fear often took hold of people and made some, who had at first helped and even fought, give up later on. Especially when they realised that the massacres were much more widespread compared to events in the past, which had given rise to massacres that were terrible, of course, but sporadic. A survivor recounts: “*During the recent war, people said that it would be a repeat of the past. Thus they hid in the hope of being rescued. But this is not what happened.*”²²

It is a large step from passive refusal of genocide to concrete acts of active and permanent resistance at the risk of one’s life. This is certainly not what happened for everybody. Thus, E. explained his fear when he hid a child in the following terms: “*I told him to go tell his mother that I was afraid of keeping him here. Because I too was afraid. The child went back home. I did that because they came to my house several times. They searched all over the place, even under the roof. If they had found the child, it would have been the end both for him and for us. I saw that it was really serious.*”²³

According to witnesses, men and women were not persecuted in the same way. It was much more difficult and dangerous to hide a man or a boy than women or girls.

There were also some cases of people who tried everything they could to rescue others, but who unfortunately did not succeed, sometimes becoming victims of reprisals when they were not actually assassinated.

A survivor told the following story²⁴ :

“At the time of the attack [*my wife and my children*] were in the house of my neighbour Emmanuel. He wanted to defend them, but they ended up cutting off his leg. After that, the *interahamwe* made them leave the house. According to the information I was given, they raped my wife. They walked off with her and my three little children. They also took all her money. As some of the *interahamwe* belonged to our sector, they did not want to assassinate them outright. The next day, they were taken to the stadium of Gatwaro. I don’t know if they perished there or if they were killed somewhere else.”

As for Kazimiri, he was killed for helping Tutsis escape:

“There was a man who I remember was called Kazimiri. He lived in Kizimba. He was hacked to death because he rescued people. He had hidden a lot of people whom he took to the island of Idjwi. They hated him very much and killed him. It was on the same day that they wounded me.”

*A Righteous man*²⁵

²⁰ PRI interview with Janvier, survivor, 14/08/04

²¹ PRI interview with Célestin, *intwali*, 13/08/04

²² PRI interview with Consulie, survivor, 13/08/04

²³ E.’s statement during an interview by PRI with Augustin, 28/07/04

²⁴ PRI interview with Augustin, a survivor, 28/07/04

“Kazimiri, a friend of my father’s, helped to hide me on a small island close to the coast. I stayed there with my brother and sister, as well as Kazimiri’s family. Kazimiri was killed during an attack. The *interahamwe*, one of whom was Kazimiri’s brother, came to the island. Kazimiri was killed together with one of his children, as well as my brother and sister. When they attacked the island, I hid among the reeds. Some people were killed on the island. I heard them scream. I remained on the island with a boy from Kazimiri’s family. A Congolese fisherman, a friend of my family, took me to the Congo, but he refused to take the boy as well.”

*A woman survivor*²⁶

One can only grasp the scale of the resistance of the Righteous when one realises the collective dimension and social constraints of the genocide. As a mass phenomenon, participation in the genocide had become the dominant social norm. Thus, refusing to participate meant becoming marginalised, or even becoming a “traitor”.

Involving the population became even more efficient as fear took over from propaganda, given that the strategy of the genocide killers was to intimidate and involve all Rwandans in the genocide by terrifying them. Jean-Bosco recounts²⁷: “*If the genocide killers found a victim in your house, they either killed you or tortured you, or they took all your possessions, or they forced you to kill the victim yourself*”.

“After having fought at the top of the hill, the *interahamwe* came here, to my house. They demanded that I hand over the people I was hiding. I replied that they were not here. They ordered me to sit down on the floor. I sat down and they struck me with an axe, here on my knee. Only two muscles were left. When I tried to walk, my knee collapsed backwards because only the two muscles in the back were left. I could not walk. They said that they had already killed me and that they would hack me up to finish me off. They hacked me with a machete, here on my back, and I fell over. They wanted to cut off my head, but I defended myself with my hand and they cut off my finger. Then they hit me with a club somewhere here on my head. I fell down. They thought I was dead, so they left me and went off. The blood was flowing from my nose. They went up there and the soldiers who were stationed there threw a Strim [*grenade*] on my house. They came back, opened up here, and made the people come out and killed them. In my house, you see my room, there were six people from Augustin’s house. In the other room, up there, there were more families. In all, I was hiding 25 people. They also stole my possessions, among which were two radios, because at that time I worked for some white people. Only one child, Grace, the daughter of a man called Etienne, was saved. The others were killed, but I don’t know where they were taken.”

*Emmanuel*²⁸

From that time on, the more widespread the genocide grew, the more difficult it became to have the courage to oppose it. It was thus that much of the population of Kibuye ended up taking part in one way or another. As one of the Righteous who was interviewed said: “*It is difficult to find a family that did not participate in the massacres. Even the women took part*”²⁹. He did not even exclude his own family.

According to him, “*among one hundred people, only two or three can be found to have resisted*”³⁰. This estimate was corroborated by the Kibuye representatives of Avega³¹, who believe that there were

²⁵ PRI interview with Emmanuel, *intwali*, 22/07/04

²⁶ PRI interview with Anne, a survivor, 13/08/04

²⁷ PRI interview with Jean-Bosco, *intwali*, 17/07/04, cf. Appendix 2

²⁸ PRI interview with Emmanuel, *intwali*, 22/07/04

²⁹ PRI interview with Jean-Bosco, *intwali*, 17/07/04, cf. Appendix 2

³⁰ Ditto

³¹ PRI interview with representatives of Avega, 08/09/04

only a few exceptional cases of persons who rescued others. In fact, they put the figure of those who came to the aid of others at around twenty (among five hundred inhabitants in the cell), i.e., four percent³². It was mostly women and children who were hidden by the Righteous. Also according to them, most of the survivors saved themselves without help, in Bisesero, or by hiding in the forest, especially the men.

This was also observed by Human Rights Watch, who, when speaking of the resistance in Bisesero, thought that they “*appeared to have been self-sufficient on the whole*”, adding however that those “*who survived by fleeing, hiding or buying their safety usually needed the help of Hutus*”³³.

On the issue of participation in the genocide, the formidable effectiveness of fear itself is evident. Although many people did not oppose the genocide for fear of retaliation, in reality, there are relatively few cases of persons brutally punished or killed. Thus, among the people interviewed, the great majority declared that to be found helping the Tutsis meant death on the spot. Yet only two names were mentioned in reply to the question of whether any examples could be given: those of Kazimiri and Emmanuel, who was wounded.

Some of the Righteous even believe that the resort to force to make people participate was not much used³⁴. With regard to Kibuye, this view would agree with several overall data for the province, which have established that many people died during mass killings (as in the stadium of Gatwaro, in the parish of Kibuye, as well as in the hills of Bisesero), which for the most part were carried out by soldiers and the militia, but not by the population. At least to begin with, the population adhered to the movement mostly impelled by the military and the *interahamwe*. Thus Philip Verwimp established that after fifty days (towards the end of May 1994), the genocide had nearly come to an end in Kibuye, having wiped out 50,050 Tutsis. Over the first fifteen days (from 7 to 21 April), three quarters of the victims had already been killed, peaking

³² These numbers match, although they are only personal estimates. If we use this as a basis, as the adult (non-Tutsi) population of Kibuye was 212,500 persons, the number of people who helped would be 6,400 persons in the province of Kibuye alone, and help could vary from a simple isolated gesture to really taking long-term risks. According to recent estimates, based on the statistics of the SNJG (cf. PRI, *Research report on the Gacaca. Gacaca and Reconciliation, the case of Kibuye*, Kigali/Paris, May 2004, Table 2, p. 14), the number of “real” genocide killers (corresponding to categories 1 and 2, persons in exile and those who died since 1994) in this province is around 25,000. This equals 12% of the adult non-Tutsi population of Kibuye in 1994 or nearly a quarter of the male population (assuming that the leaders and killers were mostly men). It means that the great majority of the adult Hutu population, in other words, nearly all the women and three quarters of the adult men neither killed nor raped, but did not help either. There are probably among them many witnesses who sympathized with the genocide and others who only looted (category 3 according to the 2004 law). It can therefore be estimated that if the persons in this group were able to encourage or facilitate the killings, they were not for all that, in the meaning of the law, “real” genocide killers or accomplices. The proportion of three quarters of adult men who did not kill may seem high, especially in the province of Kibuye, where the genocide was at its most violent. This could be explained by the very important role played by the soldiers and *interahamwe* in the massive killings that took place in this province, such as those in the stadium and in the parish, as well as in the hills of Bisesero.

The same assessment can be made at national level. It is therefore estimated that 102,000 persons aided the Tutsis during the genocide, or 3% of the adult Rwandan non-Tutsi population, considered to be around 3.4 million people in 1994. Therefore, based on the data of the SNJG (cf. PRI, report VI, table p. 13) it is estimated that the number of “real” genocide killers (cf. supra) was 459,000 persons, i.e., 13.5% of the adult population in 1994 or more than a quarter of the male population. It can be deducted that although the great majority of the adult Hutu population, i.e., nearly all the women and three quarters of the adult men, did not actually help, they did not for all that take an active part in the crimes of genocide.

³³ Cf. Des Forges, 1999, p.221

³⁴ PRI interview with Jean-Bosco, *intwali*, 17/07/04, cf. Appendix 2

during the massacres by the soldiers and militia in the stadium of Gatwaro and in the parish of Kibuye (both occurred in mid-April 1994). Another peak occurred a few weeks later (mid-May) at the time of the massacres in the hills of Bisesero³⁵.

Approximately 12,000 Tutsis of Kibuye³⁶ managed to escape the genocide, some through their own initiative, but many others probably through the help they received. There were obviously cases in which some persons were helped but did not manage to escape. The following account by Jean-Paul illustrates this³⁷:

“I had ordered a canoe to get them across to the Congo. The canoe came over during the daytime and the killers saw it. Unbeknownst to us they watched it closely. I then went to fetch the people I had hidden and took them to the place where the canoe was waiting not knowing that it was being watched. When they tried to embark, the killers caught them immediately and took them to the barrier. They killed four people.”

2. Who went on resisting, why and how

2.1 Bewildering attitudes

During all one hundred days of the genocide, because of the climate of fear, hate and suspicion that had been created, it was very difficult for the persecuted Tutsis to discover who could help them. Often help would come from quarters which were unexpected, a priori, in other words from the genocide killers themselves³⁸. In fact, there were examples of killers who helped save Tutsis because of old ties of friendship or because they had very good relations with somebody who was trying to rescue these persons. Thus Jean-Bosco, a Righteous man, was helped by his brother-in-law, who was a genocide killer³⁹:

“Among the killers, were my brothers and my usual friends. The fact that I hid victims was kept an absolute secret [...] It was my brother-in-law, Pierre, who helped me. As he also took part in massacres, he would let me know what their programme was so that I could take necessary steps, such as taking them out of the house and guiding them into the bush.”

But conversely, there were cases where the victims did not find the support they expected. It is true that the alliances and antagonisms of the past between individuals and families played an important role during the genocide and immediately thereafter. On the other hand, it could be dangerous to rely on them alone, as the people in whom one placed great trust could suddenly change their behaviour⁴⁰. This was certainly one of the elements that most profoundly affected the social tissue and that to this day makes it very difficult to establish social relations based on trust within Rwandan society.

³⁵ Cf. Verwimp, 2003, Chapter 8

³⁶ Sources: Verwimp, 2003 and PRI, *Research report on the gacaca. Gacaca and reconciliation, the case of Kibuye*, Kigali/Paris, May 2004

³⁷ PRI interview with Jean-Paul, *intwali*, 28/07/04

³⁸ Cf. also on this point African Rights, 2002, p. 10

³⁹ PRI interview with Jean-Bosco, *intwali*, 17/07/04, cf. Appendix 2

⁴⁰ For similar observations relating to the conflict in Bosnia, cf. Broz, Svetlana, *Good People in an Evil Time. Portraits of Complicity and resistance in the Bosnian War*, New York, Other Press, 2004

If we consider that past social relations did not constitute a decisive criterion for the assistance that was offered, the answer must lie elsewhere, and more specifically in the personality of those who dared to help the victims. From the accounts that we managed to collect about persons who carried out righteous actions, some instances stand out, in the first place religion.

2.2 Why they resisted, or the issue of the profile of the Righteous

The humanist and/or religious factor

Whether they were members of the clergy or not, many of the Righteous had very strong humanitarian and humanist ideals, which made them feel a great empathy for the victims. For some of them, these ideas were incarnated in Christian values. However, what distinguished them was that in their eyes these values prevailed above all else⁴¹. As demonstrated by Ervin Staub, the Righteous give us a different definition of reality. They break the uniformity of norms and opinions, and uphold values and norms that are despised by the perpetrators of crimes and passive witnesses. They affirm the humanity of the victims⁴².

Among the genocide killers there were also many believers and religious people. “*Even those we thought were Christians were not real Christians*”⁴³. But they considered humanitarian and Christian values subordinate to the state directives, either out of fear or political conviction, or because of the bait of material gain.

Accounts of *intwalis*:

Jean-Bosco, a Presbyterian⁴⁴

“I cannot say that it was I who rescued the victims. Rather, it was God who did. Nobody but God would have been able to do it. God gave me courage. It was the simple love of God that helped me not to take part in the massacres at the time when my brothers were doing so. I think that what caused the massacres was not believing in God. Even those we thought were Christians were not real Christians.”

Samuel, a Catholic⁴⁵

“Courage is a gift that only God can give someone. I felt that in my life all men were equal. What harms one person can also harm me. I thought that if she and I went on living it would be a good thing, because to shed someone else’s blood is a sin. Besides, I also thought it was stupid. I therefore believe that by the grace of God I had courage and I was protected, as well as she whom I rescued. There is a proverb that says that “the enemy digs a moat for you but God shows you the hole in the palisade” [*the enemy wishes you harm, but God saves you*]. It was thus God who gave me courage.

The fact that many Christians took part in the killings is because Christian faith does not exist in the name or in the church. Christian faith lives in the heart of men.”

⁴¹ Refusal to take part in the genocide could be analysed in the same way as Michel Viewiorka did, seeing in it the refusal of a doubly unacceptable transgression: that of the law and of the State, which should by rights protect its citizens, as well as a moral value established long ago by the sixth commandment: “Thou shalt not kill”. (Cf. Michel Viewiorka, *La violence* [Violence], col. Voies et Regards, Paris, Balland, 2004, p.272)

⁴² Staub, Ervin, *The Roots of Evil. The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, p.166

⁴³ PRI interview with Jean-Bosco, *intwali*, 17/07/04, cf. Appendix 2

⁴⁴ Ditto

⁴⁵ PRI interview with Samuel, *intwali*, 28/07/04

Emmanuel, currently a member of the Seventh Day Adventist Church⁴⁶

“I am somebody who prays because I know how useful prayer is. You can see that God has helped me. Many people were killed in those times, but I survived, although I had given nothing to God for him to save me. It is only through his power and his grace that I was saved. [*Admittedly, I am disabled because of the genocide*], but all those who were killed, do they still have something on this earth? In Kinyarwanda one says, “Akamuga karuta agaturo” [*a cracked pitcher is worth more than a grave*], which means that a disabled person is worth more than a dead one.”

An old woman of 102 years, Cancilide⁴⁷

“God protected this family. God helped me so that I was not afraid when I saw the soldiers. When they came to search the house, that serenity made me leave the house and let them in, saying: ‘Come on in, search the whole house, and if you find a Tutsi, take me with you, put me in prison, ask me anything you wish’. If they had found somebody in my house, I certainly would have run a risk, but God did his part and upheld me.”

Célestin⁴⁸

“It was love that gave me the courage to hide people. To look at people and understand that they are like me. That if they are wounded they will bleed, just as I would. That they were not created of their own volition but are the work of God. To kill them would be to hate God, their creator. When people were killed, it was God they hated. That is why he rescued a considerable number of them.”

Also for the survivors having a religion or holding beliefs appears to have had a role in daring to ask for help:

A woman survivor⁴⁹

“Manase took her family to the minister’s house. I don’t know why. Maybe because he too trusted that minister.”

A young survivor⁵⁰

“I was seriously beaten up and I met Jean-Bosco with a bible in his hand. He asked me: ‘Where are you going my child?’ I answered that I didn’t know where to go. He sent me to his home with a message for his wife: ‘go to this house and tell the woman you will find there that I am sending you so that she can give you food and a wash. Then stay in my house. I shall soon be back.’ Although she did not know me at all, his wife received me well. Some time later, Jean-Bosco arrived.”

It will be noted that at the level of the research we carried out, these people were mostly members of minority religious groups, such as the Presbyterian Church, for instance, and not the Catholic Church. The fact that the latter was the dominant religion, and that consequently those responsible for it were close to the government, certainly mattered and would explain the active role of some Catholic priests of Kibuye who were involved in the massacres of the Churches of Nyange and the town of Kibuye. This situation has not gone unnoticed by some of the survivors: “*I think that the representatives of the Church are Rwandans. They are the same. With the exception of those who were brave enough to denounce evil, the others were in favour of it, or they were afraid of being killed. They kept quiet. But also some representatives of the Church or religious confessions were among the country’s authorities. I would say that to avoid such things happening, representatives and religious men and women should be kept separate from the country’s politics*”⁵¹.

⁴⁶ PRI interview with Emmanuel, *intwali*, 22/07/04

⁴⁷ PRI interview with Cancilide, *intwali*, 29/07/04

⁴⁸ PRI interview with Célestin, *intwali*, 13/08/04

⁴⁹ PRI interview with Xavérine, survivor, 12/07/04

⁵⁰ PRI interview with Fo., survivor, 22/07/04

⁵¹ PRI interview with Augustin, survivor, 28/07/04

Therefore, the Righteous appear to be more attached to values that they hold with conviction than to religious institutions, which is why old Célestin said: “*Before the war I belonged to the Adventist Church. After the war, I left the Church because I realised that even the Christians resembled pagans. They did the same things*”⁵².

Nevertheless, as the two following examples show, some religious people did their utmost to try and help threatened persons.

Antoine, an old Protestant minister⁵³

“On the 10th of April 1994, the wife and two children of my friend Martin took refuge here. He had gone to the town hall with his other children, and from there he went on to Kibuye. His wife and children who were here had refused to go, saying that they were not going anywhere and if they had to die, it would be here. I backed them, explaining to my two children with whom I lived that they did not want to leave and that we should wait because God would do something to save them. And if they had to die, then we would die together. This is what happened. Little by little more people arrived. Two other girls came from the house of a teacher who was our neighbour. We received them as we had the first ones. There was also a girl who had come from Mataba. We put them all together in a small room here, in this house. Later, when my children came from Kirinda, they brought another girl along. They were my son-in-law and my daughter. Five of them arrived together. My son-in-law with his two children, my daughter and a Tutsi girl. I could not leave the latter with them, so I put her in with the others whom I was hiding. Then my son, who was in Kigali, came with his wife. They had brought one of his brother-in-law’s children. I put them together with the first ones. However, I said that I had hidden them somewhere else, so that they would not know that they were here in the house. They all lived here for two and a half months. We expected that when our house was searched they would die. Two different groups [*of interahamwe*] came to search our house, but they left without having found the hiding place. I knew that if they found them here they would kill them and me as well. But God helped me and they did not discover them.

I will show you where I hid them. You can see here there were some toilets where they could relieve themselves. When I close that door and put a cupboard in front of it, nobody can guess that there is anybody here. Fortunately, the *interahamwe* went through the lounge and never behind it. Otherwise they would easily have discovered them.”

The following case study involves a religious community in Rubengera, which at the time of the genocide had thirty Hutu nuns and six other Tutsis who were threatened with death. According to the heads of this community⁵⁴, Georges (a Rwandan minister) and Clarisse (the expatriate nun in charge), it was thanks to the mobilisation and efforts of the whole community that they were saved. The indirect help of some neighbours, who although they knew that the nuns were hidden never reported it, was also decisive.

Georges, the minister:

“Inasmuch as possible, one should save people and try to do everything one can. But why? In my opinion, that is a very complex question. Very complex. Let’s say it is the duty of every Christian. I would say that the first motivation is the love of all Christians [for their neighbours]. Then, as a human being, I would say that it is empathy with those who suffer. Putting oneself in the place of those who suffer motivates one to help them. But how? However, the facts speak for themselves. We managed to save some by various means: by hiding them and by lying too. We even lied! We used all the means available. We paid off people who came round to kill a nun until our money ran out. They came to attack us several times, saying that the next time, if they found any Tutsis with us, they would kill all of us.”

⁵² PRI interview with Célestin, *intwali*, 13/08/04

⁵³ PRI interview with Antoine, *intwali*, 15/07/04

⁵⁴ PRI interview with Georges and Clarisse, *intwali*, 16/07/04

Sister Clarisse:

“Some Tutsi nuns said: ‘You should leave us. Leave so as not to get into trouble.’ They wanted to go to the town of Kibuye, as it was said that it was safe there. But we were not sure. We didn’t quite know what to do. We all went to the commune and spoke to the burgomaster. He said: ‘There are now barriers. If you continue on your way to Kibuye, you will be killed.’”

Georges, the Minister:

“The burgomaster was called Bagilishema Jean-Baptiste, the one who was released in Arusha⁵⁵.”

Sister Clarisse:

“The burgomaster helped us a lot from a security point of view. He even changed the identity card of one of the sisters and sent policemen to protect us.”

Georges, the Minister:

“But it was only temporary and not long-term protection. One was never quite sure. Often, when I asked for police protection, a policeman would arrive but only very late. There was no guarantee.”

Sister Clarisse:

“During the daytime, the sisters remained in a room in the commune and at night they returned home. Nobody saw them except a night watchman who never said anything. When the people from up north came to attack our community, those who saw the nuns leave said: ‘The nuns have already left for Kibuye where they were killed’. They stayed here for a few more weeks until the French arrived.

We all have the same vocation. We tried and we stuck together and prayed. We created a prayer chain and I think that helped us. The sisters stood together, and I too. I remained like a captain on his ship. We live together as a community, like a family.”

Georges, the Minister:

“I collaborated with Sister Clarisse during and before the war. That is why I too was unable to say ‘you stay and I will leave’. She remained behind with the Tutsi and Hutu nuns. That is why I had to move out from where I lived to join her. I believe there is tangible proof because God protected this community. Nobody here was killed. This community helped and rescued a lot of other victims [*at least 14*], who hid here and there in holes, in banana plantations, etc., until the French arrived.”

The existence of positive family references

Although religious or humanistic reasons played an important role, another aspect emerges from the profiles of the various Righteous persons heard during our research. It appears that all of them grew up in a family environment with positive models of interethnic coexistence⁵⁶. This good relationship was apparent in social and friendly relations, and even interethnic marriages, or after showing solidarity at the time of former persecutions of the victims. The following accounts of the Righteous serve to illustrate the above:

⁵⁵ Mayor of Mabanza from 1980 to 1994, Jean-Baptiste Bagilishema, 47, was finally acquitted on 3 July 2002 by the chamber of appeal of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), due to lack of evidence against the accused beyond reasonable doubt. Bagilishema had been acquitted in his first trial, on 7 June 2001. However, the prosecution had appealed against the decision due to procedural error and error in the facts. After considering that the accused had tried to protect Tutsis in 1994 without being selective in his actions, even asking the population for help to protect the persecuted Tutsis, the court concluded that the accused had taken all the necessary measures to re-establish order in Mabanza. It also added that the prosecution had not presented tangible elements to prove that the accused had acted against Tutsis, and that most of the testimonies against the accused were inconsistent and partial. (cf. Hironelle Press Agency at the ICTR, <http://www.hironelle.org>)

⁵⁶ Which shows how the promotion of these righteous actions could be positive, especially for future generations (cf. the third part and the recommendations of this report)

Old Célestin⁵⁷

“It was my grandfather who gave me the strength to resist. My grandfather, Gahara, was a servant in the house of King Rwabugari. It was the king who gave us the small island of Shyute. My grandfather lived on good terms with the Tutsis. Whenever anybody slaughtered a cow, they gave each other gifts of meat. With regard to the wars that preceded the genocide, in 1960 the Hutus took power. After that the Tutsis fled, but it was hardly a war. The one I remember was in 1973, when people’s property was burned. It was during that war that I once hid a man called Bicura, his wife and his children. I kept some money belonging to Bicura [Frw 40,000], which I returned to it him when the situation calmed down. Frw 40,000 was a large amount. It was the price of two cows! I also put out a fire at the house of a man called Minister Pierre, the father of the deputy [MP], which had just been set on fire. But the real war was that of the genocide, which did not spare anyone. The earlier wars were not so violent.

In the recent war, it was during the daytime that people were hunted, not at night. At night they ate the cattle and goats they had stolen. And when they were sated, they slept. They did not work at night. If they had also worked at night, everybody would be dead. We would not have been able to rescue a single one. **As for my sons, they took the people who were hiding at my place over to the Congo by canoe at night, for free.”**

Chrizostome⁵⁸

“My role model was my father’s action in 1973, when the Hutus revolted against the Tutsis and one hundred Tutsis came to our house. All my life I have used this as a model for myself. In 1973, when the one hundred Tutsis of our sector took refuge in our house, my father, with the help of other benefactors, kept a watch all around the house. The aim was to protect these Tutsis. They threw stones at those who tried to attack us. Since then, my heart has been filled with the desire to be charitable. Furthermore, **in 1990,** at the time when they arrested those whom they called “accomplices of the Tutsis” [*ibyitsi by’inyenzi* in Kinyarwanda], **my older brother was the first to testify in defence of people who were in detention.** After drawing our attention to these two cases, I too tried to emulate them. Especially as it is better to be a benefactor than a wrongdoer.

My father used to be a servant of Simeon, the chief of the village. In the same house, Hutus and Tutsis lived together in friendship. Simeon treated them in the same way, paying them the same amount and giving them fields or cattle. It would have been difficult for him to have behaved differently towards a human being of flesh and blood, like himself. Every human being should examine his conscience before undertaking such an act.”

Samuel⁵⁹

“Ever since I reached the age when I could understand such things, I have heard speak of the 1960 war. I experienced the war of 1973, when the people fled to the church. I heard it said that far away, where I couldn’t go, people were dying. Here houses were burned and the cattle eaten. **I saw neighbours flee and come to our house.** They begged for help from friends and families. My parents hid their cattle. Everybody was united to save their loved ones. The ladies, for instance, came here, to our house, with their children and did not go away to hide somewhere else. When the war ended, we helped them rebuild, and their harvests, which we had hidden, were returned to them. This is what I witnessed. Here there were no killings, only burned houses. There were no searches. They burned the houses and ate any cattle they found on their way. Anybody who could not hide their property lost it. I was still young, but I saw that their harvests were returned to them and that they were helped to rebuild their houses. It was they [*the Tutsis*] who were our neighbours and we shared with them.”

Emmanuel⁶⁰

“What gave me such courage was that from the time I was born, I always saw my father being friendly with the Tutsis and exchanging gifts of cattle with them. It was they who in the past employed my father as a servant. I felt that I could not abandon these people just like that, because we

⁵⁷ PRI interview with Célestin, *intwali*, 13/08/04

⁵⁸ PRI interview with Chrizostome, *intwali*, 15/07/04

⁵⁹ PRI interview with Samuel, *intwali*, 28/07/04

⁶⁰ PRI interview with Emmanuel, *intwali*, 22/07/04

loved each other, both the children and the others. I could not bear to abandon them, letting them sleep at night in the bush, both parents and children. I therefore chose to let them stay at my house. I thought it would be like in the past, when they burned houses and ate cattle, and that they would go away afterwards. If I had known well in advance that the intention was to kill them, I would have tried by any means available to help them flee. I went on loving these people because I had no dispute with them. You see, my father was also hacked here. They struck him with a machete for the same reason as they struck me. For the *interahamwe*, we were accomplices because we liked these people. He died. He actually died after the war, as it was not possible to attend to his wound and it got infected.”

Therefore, it is only logical that among the entourage of the Righteous we interviewed, one should find many Tutsi family members, especially wives. Thus, Jean-Bosco explains that his “*parents always admired his wife*” and “*that they never threatened him for having married a Tutsi*”. Also Chrizostome, Jean-Paul, Emmanuel and Dieudonné had Tutsi wives. Georges the Minister himself, in his own words, says that he has “*a family of which you cannot really say that it is either Hutu or Tutsi because everybody in it has become so mixed*”. As for the old woman Léocardie, her two children were married to Tutsis. Canisius also had a Tutsi mother.

Whatever the common traits that can be found in all the Righteous, there is one thing that does not obey any rule: age. Old Léocardie was ninety-two in 1994. Others, on the other hand, were very young, such as Alice, who was only fifteen years old at the time of these events.

Alice (26 years, married)⁶¹

“At the time of the war, I was fifteen years old. This girl [*Marie*] was my neighbour. What is more, we were in the same prayer and choir groups. In short, we were friends. The girl was Tutsi. After her parents and brothers were killed, she came to us for protection. We also hid other persons, but the *interahamwe* discovered them little by little. Finally, we were left with only this girl. She sometimes spent the night inside the house and at other times, she spent it in the bush. Whenever she managed to stay in the house, we would share the night. One of us would sleep until midnight, and the other the rest of the night. We did this because the *interahamwe* often came to search the whole house. As we did not know at what time the attacks would take place, one of us would stay awake to follow the movements of the *interahamwe* while the other slept. As we were staunch Christians, they thought that we were harbouring victims. My family was therefore threatened during the whole of that period. When I heard that the attacks were close by, I would warn her so that she could change her hiding place. Often, I was afraid deep down. It was really a very difficult time.”

2.3 How people were rescued, or the means employed

Means employed

Any help was given at the risk of one’s own life and became more and more difficult as the genocide became widespread. Many different means were employed, one more ingenious than the other: looking for shelter, false documents, a hiding place, food, clothes, finding a safer place, adopting children, pretending a person was a member of one’s own family, etc. In the best cases, the Righteous tried to get the victims to the Congo. But with the setting up of barriers, drawing up of lists and others, many people found themselves blocked, having to move about incessantly to escape the *interahamwe*.

⁶¹ PRI interview with Alice, *intwali*, 17/07/04

Survivor, president of AVEGA⁶²

“When the massacres started, she fled in the direction of Gizira. There she looked for friendly families of ‘the other group’. First of all she hid in one person’s house for three days. But she had to leave this refuge as she knew that she had been spotted. She did this for three months, frequently changing her hiding place. The longest period of time that she stayed hidden at the same person’s house was fifteen days. That couple helped her a lot, giving her food and clothing. After the war, she gave them a cow to thank them. In all, she hid in twelve different persons’ houses. She says she still sees these people and they are friends. Ever since then, her feelings for them are as if they were her parents or children.”

Thérèse, survivor⁶³

“When the war started, I was on call [*at the Health Centre of Muguba*]. There was so little security that I couldn’t return home. So I stayed and the nuns gave me a room to sleep in. I remained there for seven days without going out. When Dieudonné, a friend of the family, heard that my father had died, he came to fetch me and take me away. I came here on the 17th of April. When I arrived here I met other people who were hiding here. But they ended up finding out that we were there and they came to search the house. They found us and they took this child, Jean-Baptiste, to kill him. I had a false identity card. The *interahamwe* came three times daily. It was often our possessions that stopped them from killing us. They took everything they found. We would hide anywhere. One would take a person and roll them up in metal sheeting, and then one would put the roll somewhere with the person inside. Sometimes we would be concealed between the ceiling and the roof. We would go out into the bush. We would even climb the mango trees to hide. [...] They continued to hide me here and there. When it became unsafe here, they hid me with a family in Ryaruhanga, in the home of a man called André. I spent twenty-one days with that family, and then I came back here. Another time, when it again became too dangerous, I was hidden in the house of someone called Melchior. After that, I returned here. Each time it became too risky, I would be taken somewhere else. And so on and so forth.”

A Righteous person from Budaha⁶⁴

“I had dug a hole inside the house, which we covered so that if they came to search the house they would not suspect anything. They were difficult times. The main thing was to deceive them.”

Samuel, a disabled man from Budaha⁶⁵

“At around 11.00 pm somebody knocked on my door. It was a survivor [Bernadette], who had fled the massacres in the Church of Nyange. Neither my wife nor I knew her. She knocked at our door by chance. She told us where she was coming from and asked for help. We received her in our home and she lived with us normally, as if she were part of our family. It was not advisable to hide her in the house. She went out to work with the others and when they came to search the houses, they didn’t find anybody. But some people recognised her and I had to hide her in another house for four days. She wanted to escape with the others to Zaïre where she had an uncle. I went to get her an identity card with ‘Hutu’ stamped on it and a pass from the assistant burgomaster, who was my friend. He gave them to me and we tried to find a photo of her. We found one on a registration form. He took it and stapled it onto the identity card. He then had it signed together with the pass. I gave them to Bernadette, who then left. She managed to pass the barriers without a hitch and went into exile. She and her husband returned after the war and we became friends. My friend, the assistant burgomaster, was a brave man to have kept the secret. If he had denounced me, they would have taken Bernadette away and killed her. Later, my friend went into exile and has still not returned.”

⁶² Report on a PRI interview with representatives of Avega, 08/09/04

⁶³ PRI interview with Thérèse, survivor, 14/08/04

⁶⁴ PRI interview with Canisius, *intwali*, 27/07/04

⁶⁵ PRI interview with Samuel, *intwali*, 28/07/04

A young bachelor⁶⁶

“Where I lived a lot of people were being killed. After a massacre, such as the one committed in the office of the commune, I would go to see if there was anybody I could help. I would look for living people among the corpses. Sometimes when one arrived one would see somebody lift their head. They could know you or maybe know your parents. They would pretend to be dead because there would be people nearby who were watching and could come to finish them off. I would tell them the meeting place and time. They would then come slowly, and we would go through the bush because nobody would be watching it. The killers spent the whole night roaming the roads. I managed to rescue a few people in this way: two men, four women and two children. [...] I brought all these people to my house. I lived with my mother and she would welcome them willingly. There were some persons in the cell with whom I collaborated and who would inform me about when searches had been scheduled. Thus, during the searches, I hid them in the bush, and once the searches were over, they would come back indoors.”

The support networks of the Righteous

It appears from the accounts that were gathered that if they had been alone, the Righteous would in most cases never have managed to rescue anybody. They were usually supported by a network of friends or family. Help could take many different shapes and often even simply remaining silent was gold. This is certainly what distinguishes “a righteous act”⁶⁷ from other kinds of help: it was given freely, it was active and it was risky.

Old Célestin⁶⁸

“If my wife had not been there they would all be dead. She helped me. Those children whom I told you about, who took people over by canoe, they nearly gave up once. It was that old woman who begged them to continue their work. She said: ‘We have always been friends with their families. It is not now that you will let them die. Take them to the other side’, she begged them. In this way she helped me convince the children to take the victims to the other side, without even paying them a cent.”

Innocent⁶⁹

“There was no way I could take people to the house without my parents’ consent. My mother welcomed the people without demur and would give them food and drink. She even gave them water to wash with, as they had just spent a long time in the bush, in the rain, without washing. My parents really gave me support.”

Jean-Paul⁷⁰

“Yes, we hid them. But at one point, it was discovered that we had them. It was then that I used the following strategy: I would take one person to the house of somebody I trusted, giving this friend

⁶⁶ PRI interview with Innocent, *intwali*, 23/07/04

⁶⁷ Once again, it should be remembered that the aim of this report is not to establish if a person is an *intwali* or not. That is not our task. What’s more, it would be quite difficult. In fact, given the conditions under which the genocide took place, people rescued one or several persons because they knew them or because they had the chance to do so. On the other hand, these same people may not have rescued others even when it was possible. Some people even rescued a few persons but killed others. Because of this, the matter is very complex. Also, at this point in our research, there appeared to be no network, that is, a group of people linked together, working together and structurally organised (such as the resistance networks in Europe during World War II). The “short” period over which the genocide took place certainly would explain this. However, it would be a good idea to develop this point later on.

⁶⁸ PRI interview with Célestin, *intwali*, 13/08/04

⁶⁹ PRI interview with Innocent, *intwali*, 23/07/04

⁷⁰ PRI interview with Jean-Paul, *intwali*, 28/07/04

enough money to hide them. Then in the evening, at ten o'clock, I would go to all the houses where I had left them and bring them back to my house. In this way it was not easy for anybody to find them in my house. I distributed them here and there, avoiding discovery of their whereabouts. Frequently, the very old mother who was my neighbour helped me by putting them underneath the goats' bedding."

Canisius⁷¹

"At one point, things were becoming more and more serious. They were searching day and night and going through everything. [...] I asked for advice from my neighbour, who was a friend. We then tried to think of how we could split them up to rescue them. Those were very difficult times; even finding something to eat was not easy."

Jean-Bosco⁷²

"I wanted to protect Jacques, who was a teacher and a representative of the Liberal Party⁷³. One day, I took him to my younger brother's house to hide him. My brother demanded payment and I gave him 1000 Rwandan francs. After that, each time he moved Jacques in case of an attack, he would demand some more money from me."

The arrival of the French or facilitating the rescue of victims for the Righteous of Kibuye

For many of the Righteous, the arrival of the French soldiers enabled them to rescue victims by putting them in their care. "*If you were hiding somebody in your house, you went to the French to inform them, but in secret because if the interahamwe discovered it, they would immediately come to kill that person.*"⁷⁴ Under Operation Turquoise, a lot of survivors were taken by the French to safe zones (ZPH). However, the impact of this humanitarian operation, which took place from end June to August 2004, was very controversial⁷⁵. Although the French soldiers did in fact shelter some people, many witnesses agree that there were Tutsis who were left alone without protection, waiting for aid which only arrived later on, when most of them were already dead, especially in the case of Bisesero⁷⁶. According to Célestin, "*the French came to deceive us. They said they had come to re-establish*

⁷¹ PRI interview with Canisius, *intwali*, 27/07/04

⁷² PRI interview with Jean-Bosco, *intwali*, 17/07/04

⁷³ Liberal Party

⁷⁴ PRI interview with Innocent, *intwali*, 23/07/04

⁷⁵ Although the objective of Operation Turquoise was officially humanitarian, according to Roméo Dallaire (*J'ai serré la main du Diable. La faillite de l'humanité au Rwanda [I shook hands with the Devil. The failure of humanity in Rwanda]*, Outremont, Libre Expression 2003, p. 561), its forces were extremely underequipped, particularly with regard to the number of trucks, and yet these were essential for the rescue operations. This is one of the reasons why the FPR suspected these troops of having been sent to reinforce the inefficient forces of the interim government (cf. Prunier, Gérard, *The Rwanda Crisis. History of a Genocide*, Kampala, Fountain Publishers, 2nd edition, 2001, p.284). This view was backed by the following words of Roméo Dallaire: some French officers "refused to accept the existence of genocide (...) and did not hide their desire to fight the FPR" (Dallaire, 2003, p. 560).

⁷⁶ On this issue, cf. Roméo Dallaire (2003, pp. 560-561) and Alison des Forges (1999, pp. 679), or even African Rights (1994, pp. 61-64), as well as Gérard Prunier (2001, pp. 292-293).

All of these authors agree that the French failed in the Bisesero operation, while Operation Turquoise really did manage to rescue those who were concentrated at Nyarushishi, a camp of around 10,000 Tutsis in the Province of Cyangugu. According to Roméo Dallaire himself: "In Bisesero, hundreds of Tutsis left their hiding places when the French patrol arrived, to be rescued by them. The soldiers told them to wait while they went to fetch vehicles and left them alone, without protection. When they returned with the trucks, they found the Tutsis had been massacred by the *Interahamwe*." Finally, according to Gérard Prunier, whose testimony is particularly

*peace. They appealed to the survivors to come out of hiding, yet the killing went on in spite of their presence. Nobody responded to the appeal of the French. Nobody knows why!*⁷⁷

Nevertheless, after the French arrived and the number of attacks of the *interahamwe* diminished, security began to be re-established in the zone. The fight for survival became clearly less hard for the survivors, even if some men were still killed after that. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the genocide did not really come to an end for the Tutsis until the *inkotanyi* arrived in Kibuye.

Given the specific role of the Righteous during the genocide, the issue is what their place in Rwandan society was immediately after these events, what it is now, ten years later, and what it could be in the future.

interesting as he was directly involved in Operation Turquoise, nothing really effective was done to save lives. While the authorities went on killing on a large scale around Kibuye, the French forces remained helpless.

⁷⁷ PRI interview with Célestin, *intwali*, 13/08/04

Second Part

What is the place of the Righteous within society and the process of reconciliation?

1. The Righteous under threat after the genocide

Before the arrival of the FPR, thousands of persons, afraid of retaliations, took refuge in the Congo. However, many of the Righteous remained in place, thinking that because of their actions during the genocide they had nothing to fear. They had not yet taken full measure of what the following period would be like. A climate of hate and revenge followed the horrific acts committed during the genocide. This reached such a point that some survivors or FPR soldiers, blinded by such feelings, carried out extrajudicial executions⁷⁸. In this context, “*any Hutu one saw was taken to be an interahamwe*”⁷⁹. From then on, Righteous or not, innocent or not, only ethnicity seemed to count for anything in those times. A large number of the Righteous and innocent were thus arbitrarily imprisoned. Dieudonné explains “*that after the war, one person could have another put in prison, without the other one being able to defend himself*”⁸⁰. Consulie, a survivor, thinks that “*in fact, after the war, anybody [meaning a Hutu] who had not gone into exile was put in prison*”⁸¹.

According to Professor Ervin Staub⁸², a specialist in psychology of genocide, survivors of genocide, such as the Tutsis in Rwanda, are usually subject to deep feelings of vulnerability and insecurity. These feelings cause them to nurture a deep mistrust of “others” and to consider everybody as a potential threat. Their suffering and fear are such that, in order to defend themselves, they may even commit atrocities themselves against those they perceive as a potential threat.

This interpretation could partly explain why acts of revenge were committed by some survivors, as well as the multiple accusations and arrests, including of the Righteous, which took place in the immediate aftermath of the genocide.

In fact, in this climate, many Righteous persons were accused of being responsible for the deaths of people because they had been unable to hide all of the people who turned to them for help.

⁷⁸ PRI interview with Jean-Bosco, *intwali*, 17/07/04, cf. Appendix 2

⁷⁹ PRI interview with Ancile, survivor, 22/08/04

⁸⁰ PRI interview with Dieudonné, *intwali*, 14/08/04

⁸¹ PRI interview with Consulie, survivor, 13/08/04

⁸² Staub, Ervin, “Preventing violence and generating human values: Healing and reconciliation in Rwanda”, RICR, December 2003, vol. 85, n°852, pp. 798-799

Dieudonné⁸³

“Madam [*bis current wife and a survivor, I.*] came here with her colleague from work, accompanied by the child of her older sister. Her sister had been killed after hiding with three families. She was here, but when the situation got worse, she asked me to take her somewhere else. I then took her to the house of a boy called Eliezer. We hid her in a hole covered with boards on top of which the cow spent the night. They looked for her everywhere, but they could not find her. However, life in that place was becoming increasingly difficult, so she left to go to the house of an official in Bikenke. I don’t remember his name. After a few days, the official sent her to Gitesi, to the house of somebody called Naasson, where she was killed.

The two older sisters of the dead girl survived and wanted to know how she had been killed. Unfortunately, without trying to find out what had happened to their sister before she died, they immediately latched onto the fact that she had stayed in my house. They then accused me of having conspired against their sister in order to get hold of her property, assuming that as she had been working a lot, she had perhaps brought her possessions with her. It was difficult to explain to them what the real sequence of events had been. I was thus put in the communal lock-up and then sent to prison on 10 January 1997 for nine months. However, I managed to justify my actions before the court, explaining what had happened to the girl and how she had been killed. They carried out some investigations and I was acquitted. After that I was released.”

However, blindness alone is not the only explanation for the massive numbers put in prison. Denunciations by other Hutu neighbours should also be taken into account. Feeling resentful of the Righteous who had not participated in the genocide like they had, some came to really hate them, considering them to be “traitors” and blaming them for the situation in which they now found themselves. Many of the Righteous were thus falsely accused of having participated in the genocide⁸⁴, or even denounced in the hope of getting rid of troublesome witnesses⁸⁵. Of the fifteen Righteous persons we interviewed, six (Jean-Bosco, Donate, Chrizostome, Dieudonné, Jean-Paul and Samuel) were imprisoned for a relatively long time.

In such a climate of hate and resentment, to accuse somebody of genocide also became an effective means of settling accounts in disputes which had nothing to do with the genocide. This was explained by Janvier⁸⁶: “*After the war there was discord. People were full of hate. Those who had disputes, sometimes from way back, used them as a reason*”, as in the following case:

Dieudonné⁸⁷

“I was also jailed in Gisovu prison, but for another reason. Once, a survivor who was my neighbour had allowed his cows to browse in my field of sweet potatoes, where they ate the cuttings. Following this occurrence, we quarrelled. The affair became so inflamed that this survivor accused me of having killed his younger brother in the church. I was arrested once more and put in the communal lock-up for a short period. Then I was transferred to Gisovu prison. In fact, the younger brother whom he had accused me of killing in the church had been killed in the house of another neighbour, under the bed. This survivor had in fact conspired against me, knowing full well how his younger brother had died.

⁸³ PRI interview with Dieudonné, *intwali*, 14/08/04

⁸⁴ In this respect, cf. the account of Catherine (PRI interview with Catherine, survivor, 03/09/04)

⁸⁵ In every group, whether among the survivors, repatriated Tutsis or even the Hutu population, one can find individuals or small groups of extremists who hate those they consider as enemies. Some tend to think that all Hutus are genocide killers, while others deny the genocide of Tutsis, even speaking of double genocide, or even the need to finish off the “work”. Although these groups are still a minority, their influence appears to be considerable. Both camps use the same methods to try and get rid of their opponents: bribery, intimidation, false witness, illegal arrests, acts of revenge, assassinations, etc.

⁸⁶ PRI interview with Janvier, survivor, 14/08/04

⁸⁷ PRI interview with Dieudonné, *intwali*, 14/08/04

In prison, at the time of the *gacaca*⁸⁸ everybody was asked why they were in detention. I gave the reasons for my imprisonment without forgetting to mention what I had also said to the prosecution. During the course of this *gacaca*, a girl called Sylviane explained how the boy had died, whom I was accused of killing in the church. Thanks to her testimony, investigations were made and I was released. It was therefore because of the dispute about the cattle, and particularly because I had fought with my accuser, that the case against me had been made. For this I spent a year and a half in prison.”

However, it is true that the situation is extremely complex, as some people committed both righteous actions and killings. Thus Gédéon, currently in prison, rescued Janvier, a survivor, but was also responsible for the death of two other persons. Janvier considers Gédéon totally innocent and thinks that the accusations against him are all lies⁸⁹. However, according to Gédéon’s brother⁹⁰, at the initiative of Gédéon, he and his brother both pleaded guilty to killing two persons. First one, and then a second person hidden in his parent’s house, after Calixte, the burgomaster of Gishita, said that all those who hid Tutsis would be killed. As they did not want their parents to be killed, they allegedly took this person to the ruins of a nearby house and assassinated him. Although Jean-Pierre (Gédéon’s brother) admits that it is possible that his brother rescued somebody, he says he never heard of it. Given his situation, it would in fact have been easier for Gédéon to rescue people. Because he was an influential person, a veterinary surgeon and a friend of the burgomaster, nobody searched his house. As for his parents, they were great friends of the Tutsis. The father, to whom they had given a farm and cattle, worked with them as a town crier⁹¹. This case illustrates the complexity of such situations. Thus *“if it is postulated that Jean-Pierre (the brother) and Janvier are saying the truth at the same time, the situation is very paradoxical: thanks to his friendship with the burgomaster, he was able to avoid any searches in his house and could have hidden people, but to continue to receive the protection of the burgomaster, he had to kill. We just don’t have sufficient evidence to make such a statement”*⁹².

Situations such as this one provide support for Ibuka’s position, insisting on the fact that it is very difficult to qualify a person as “Righteous”, as there are very often gaps in the information available and even contradictions⁹³.

2. What is their place in Rwandan society today?

2.1. A position of ambiguity

It appears that the qualities that were the basis for the resistance of the Righteous during the genocide are the same that create problems in their social relations today. This is why there is a certain ambiguity in the relations of the Righteous with the rest of the population. On the one hand they are respected and considered to be persons of integrity, given what their actions were during the genocide, but at the same time, their independence creates a problem. In fact, with social groups that nowadays appear to respond to a mentality of group protection, the

⁸⁸ This refers to the *gacaca* held in prisons by the prisoners themselves, which is separate from the official *gacaca*.

⁸⁹ PRI interview with Janvier, survivor, 14/08/04

⁹⁰ PRI interview with Jean-Pierre, Gédéon’s brother, 09/09/04

⁹¹ In Kinyarwanda, “*umumotsi*”, a person close to the chief, an official who made public proclamations

⁹² M., researcher.

⁹³ Interview with WN, 14/09/04

independence needed to establish the truth, whether or not this is harmful to the collective interest of the group, is often unwelcome.

On the one hand, the respectability of a person of integrity is recognised, both by the authorities and a large part of the population, including the survivors. Signs of this respect can be found in various elements. First and foremost, the fact that among those interviewed, two families of Hutu *intwalis* who were destitute were accepted as beneficiaries of the Assistance Fund for the Survivors of the Genocide⁹⁴. The beneficiaries are Emmanuel, who became disabled as a result of the genocide, and the widow of Kazimiri, a Righteous person who was assassinated.

Emmanuel⁹⁵

“The FARG pays the school fees for my child and gives me a healthcare card. I begged Ibuka⁹⁶ to come and see my destroyed house, or at least that they should give me an artificial leg, but they ignored me. Somebody came last year [*just before the 2003 elections*]; he works for the Japanese project [*One Love Project*]⁹⁷. He took my measurements and told me he would send an artificial leg for me to the prefecture, where we could go and fetch it. But we waited in vain. He was not voted in at the elections and he gave up.”

Augustin⁹⁸

“It was I who intervened so that he should be included among the survivors of the genocide. I defended his case. Even his child gets his school fees paid by the FARG. I believe the FARG has offered to make him an artificial leg.”⁹⁹

The fact that some *intwalis* who we interviewed, such as Jean-Bosco, Jérôme, Célestin, or even Canisius, are actually *inyangamugayo*¹⁰⁰, goes to show how much they are trusted. Besides, what can

⁹⁴ The official title of the FARG is: “*Fonds National pour l’assistance aux victimes les plus nécessiteuses du génocide et des massacres perpétrés au Rwanda entre le 1^{er} octobre 1990 et le 1 décembre 1994*” [National Fund for assistance to the most needy victims of the genocide and the massacres perpetrated in Rwanda between the 1st of October 1990 and the 1st of December 1994]. The 1998 law on the FARG states: “Beneficiaries of assistance from the Fund are survivors of the genocide and the massacres, who are in need, especially orphans, widows and the disabled. [...] The assistance focuses primarily on education, health and housing”. (Cf. Rombouts, Heidy, *Victim Organisations and the Politics of Reparation: A Case-study on Rwanda*, Antwerp, Universiteit Antwerpen, 2004, pp. 306-309)

For information, Organic Law No.16/2004 of 19/6/2004, defines a “victim” as “any person whose family members have been killed, who has been persecuted with intent to kill [*thus being in Rwandan territory in 1994*] but escaped [*survivor*], who has suffered sexual torture or has been raped, who has been wounded or has suffered any other violence, whose property has been looted, whose house has been destroyed or property damaged in any other way [*therefore including physical, material or moral harm*], due to their ethnic group [*Tutsi*] or their opinions opposed to the ideology of genocide [*moderate Hutu and the Righteous mentioned in this report*]”, (in Organic Law No.16/2004 of 19/6/2004, Journal Officiel, special issue of 19 June 2004, p. 69).

⁹⁵ PRI interview with Emmanuel, *intwali*, 22/07/04

⁹⁶ Ibuka (“Remember” in Kinyarwanda) is currently the largest association of victims of genocide in Rwanda. It should be noted that particularly in rural areas, survivors tend to confuse the assistance offered by the FARG with that of Ibuka.

⁹⁷ See Emmanuel’s identity card: “*ID card for the handicapped. Mulindo Japan One Love Project.*” of 8/08/03

⁹⁸ Interview with Augustin, survivor, 28/07/04

⁹⁹ In fact, more than ten years after the attack of the *interahamwe* who cut off his leg, destroyed his house and killed his wife, as well as other members of his family, Emmanuel finally received an artificial leg, not from the Japanese project, but from the FARG.

be perceived from the interviews is a real willingness of all these *intwalis* to participate actively in the *gacaca* trials, and more to the point, to tell the truth. And this is what makes some people afraid, whether they are detained or at liberty.

This is why their position is so ambiguous. On the one hand, the spirit of independence with regard to social groups or the authorities, which was their strength at the time of the genocide, nowadays makes them “troublemakers” in the eyes of some people. Thus, for instance, some Righteous persons do not hesitate to say publicly that the *gacaca* will not achieve its aim of unity and reconciliation if the acts of revenge (committed by some FPR soldiers or survivors) are not debated in the tribunals. And they do not hesitate to publicly oppose survivors who give false witness or claim undue reparation. Sometimes they are made to pay dearly for this, as will be seen in the following account:

Jean-Bosco¹⁰¹

“In fact, from September 1994, after the arrival of the FPR, I was appointed adviser for the Gasura sector. I carried out this function for seven months. Many survivors came to my house to ask me for advice about reparation for the damages suffered. I noticed that some of them wanted to claim too much. For example, a person who had had two cows wanted ten in reparation. Or another one, whose house had had a tile and straw roof, wanted iron sheeting in reparation. I was opposed to this kind of person, and tried to convince them with my Christian faith. This created conflicts between the survivors and myself. They went to see K., the prefect, and accused me of still having a genocidal mentality. I was arrested and detained for twenty-two days. But the population defended me with these words: “the fact that Jean-Bosco, who is such an exemplary man for the whole sector, has been imprisoned proves that very soon all the Hutus will be in prison”. Fulgence, the burgomaster, who hailed from Burundi, held a meeting in Gasura, where he explained to the population that Jean-Bosco was imprisoned for political reasons and not for reasons linked to the genocide. He tried to set the people’s mind at ease, as they wanted to flee.”

2.2. Equivocal relations with other social groups

Relations between the *intwalis* and the survivors, as individuals

If the first approach is adopted, one finds that relations between the Righteous and the survivors they rescued are generally good.

Janvier [a survivor, who was hidden and helped by Théoneste and Gédéon, whom he considers to be Righteous]¹⁰²

“I am friends with Théoneste; I visit him. On the other hand, it is difficult for me to visit Gédéon who is in prison, as Gisovu prison is far from here. But I visit his wife, here in her house. As for Théoneste, he lives here, beside the road. When I go up there, to Mubuga, I meet him and we chat. It was lies and hate that led to Gédéon being accused of genocide. Some people said that Gédéon participated in the attacks of Bisesero. But I never saw him go away. He always refused to leave his house. As we lived in Kigali, my wife and I, we were unable to come and defend him at the presentation of the prisoners in the cell. We were not informed of the date.”

Ancile [a survivor, saved by the Righteous Jean-Paul]¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Name given to the judges of the *gacaca* courts. It should be noted that if they were one of the Righteous at the time of the resistance, they were “*inyangamugayo*” in the literal sense: “an honest, loyal, upright or irreproachable person” (Jacob, Irénée, 1983, Second Tome, p. 453)

¹⁰¹ PRI interview with Jean-Bosco, *intwali*, 17/07/04, cf. Appendix 2

¹⁰² PRI interviews with Janvier, survivor, 14/08/04 and Gédéon, 09/09/04

“Relations between me and Jean-Paul’s family are good. I went there to hide and they welcomed me, and still do to this day. I am the only survivor of my house. If I had anything to give them, I would thank them. But God has already done so. I and other survivors are still his friends because of his good and noteworthy actions towards us. I do not know how to thank him. The main thing for me is to live in peace with him. [...] After the war, Jean-Paul was put in prison. We couldn’t find out why. However, the information finally reached us. We brought him food. We also carried out our own research and went to the prosecution. We asked what the charge against him was, but we could not get a clear reply. We only discovered that there was no problem. After that he was released.”

However, there are cases where, with time, and because of what some of the Righteous experienced after the war, relations with the survivors went sour. On this point, the account of Sophie¹⁰⁴, a survivor, was particularly clarifying. According to this survivor, after the genocide, relations with some of the Righteous were very good. However, later on some of them changed their attitude completely; one of them after refusing to have members of his family arrested and put in prison, who had participated in the genocide, and for another, after his father died in prison.

Furthermore, although most of the survivors entertain good relations with their rescuer on an individual level, it is rare that the whole family, and even less the other survivors, have the same feelings towards each other. Thus Monique¹⁰⁵, a survivor, deplors the fact that her family do not visit Jean-Bosco’s family, of whom she says “*I consider him as my own father*”.

Contrary to all expectation, this state of affairs seems to show that a good number of survivors mistrust the Righteous. Thus, when survivors give individual accounts, they do not hesitate to recognise what such or such a person did for them. However, when one asks other survivors if they know about what happened between a survivor and a Righteous person, or if they know about the actions of such a Righteous person, frequently the only reply is silence, claiming that they know nothing about their behaviour during the genocide. Sometimes this can even become a near denial. It is in fact quite common on such occasions for survivors who are questioned to add, in a generalising way, that many rescuers acted in their own personal interest and that even if they did rescue some people, they also killed others or abandoned them. It would appear that they try to minimise the acts of the *intwali* in this manner.

It is easy to understand how difficult it must be to admit at the same time that some Hutus carried out righteous actions and yet to live in such fear that every Hutu is seen as a potential genocide killer. To be able to cope with these two conflictual views, people set up their own system of justifications. Thus, a survivor¹⁰⁶ explained that with regard to the Righteous, she thinks they are not Hutus, but *imfuras*¹⁰⁷, i.e., Tutsis who are not officially recognised as such. Yet others explain that the Righteous did rescue people, but point out that these were mostly women and girls, who they wanted to take as their own or who they raped, or even that they did rescue them, but killed others.

¹⁰³ PRI interview with Ancile, survivor, 22/08/04

¹⁰⁴ PRI interview with Sophie, survivor, 23/07/04

¹⁰⁵ PRI interviews with Monique, survivor, 22/07/04 and Jean-Bosco, *intwali*, 17/07/04, cf. Appendix 2

¹⁰⁶ PRI interview with Claudine, survivor, June 2004

¹⁰⁷ *Imfura*: in the sense of noble by birth, blood or a person distinguished for spiritual generosity (See Jacob, Irénée, 1983, pp. 541-542)

The distance between survivors and the Righteous is such that when a Righteous person is in prison, the survivors on the whole do not make much of an effort to obtain his release. Even though one should not make generalisations about this, as there are also cases where survivors have done everything possible to obtain a release, after studying the subject, one realizes that “everything possible” is quite often jeopardised by all sorts of things: growing doubts within a situation that remains unclear¹⁰⁸, helplessness before the slowness and malfunctioning of the justice system, particularly in the immediate aftermath of the genocide, or even fear of giving testimony for the defence, thereby reviving a painful past, which is traumatic each time it is revisited. On this point, the account of Didacienne¹⁰⁹ is particularly clarifying:

Didacienne¹¹⁰

“Chrizostome was an ordinary person. At that time, we were in great difficulty. All the time we were hiding in the bush, we had nothing to eat. At one point, we realised that we were a burden to him, as it was difficult to find food. But above all, because the *interahamwe* would often carry out searches. [...] A person, to whom we had given money to help us, led an attack against us. When the attackers arrived, they killed everybody in their path. As usual, we ran to Chrizostome’s house. And it is the same person who had all these people killed who is now incriminating Chrizostome, accusing him of that which he is guilty of himself. I can testify! I am an eye witness! I can testify before God and men! After this, Chrizostome was imprisoned. But I was unable to find out what he was accused of. I don’t know why he spent such a long time in prison. But I think it is because of the long drawn-out procedures of appearing before the prosecution. This is, I believe, why there are still people in prison who are innocent. Personally, I consider Chrizostome to be a person of integrity. I never saw him take part in any killings while we were there. When I see him, I do not ask him why he was accused. Just to see him reminds me so much of tragic events. What’s more, I am not in a fit state to speak to him much. Sometimes, very often in fact, when our paths are about to cross, I avoid him. This means that I don’t have much news about him.”

One of the effects of the silence of these survivors is precisely that some of the Righteous have been arrested and considered to be like any other genocide killer. This creates paradoxical situations with Righteous persons imprisoned for acts of genocide who are visited by survivors. Not having anything to confess because they are innocent, these Righteous persons are left in prison for long periods. It was thus that, thanks to a presentation of prisoners in the hills, Chrizostome was able to obtain his release after spending eight years and six months in prison.

The case of Chrizostome¹¹¹

“In 1994, I worked as a chauffeur for a Swiss project in Kibuye. In fact, the genocide took us by surprise. I managed to save those who had escaped the massacres of the parish and the stadium. They came to my house under cover of night. In this way, I was able to hide them without being suspected. My wife was away. She had gone to study in Cyangugu. I had undertaken to help them without considering the risk I was running, particularly as the people who were being persecuted were innocent. Such a thing could also happen to me one day. Other benefactors did likewise and showed me where the killers went so that I could indicate to them which way to go [*to the persons he hid*].

At any rate, it was becoming daily more difficult to keep these persons in the house and to facilitate their removal to another place during the persecutions of the genocide killers. It was lucky for me that

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Gédéon’s case presented above.

¹⁰⁹ PRI interview with Didacienne, survivor, 12/08/04

¹¹⁰ Married and the mother of two children, at 24 Didacienne still remains deeply traumatised by the genocide. She is Hutu, and had to leave the home of her brother-in-law who was Tutsi. Her journey to Bisesero that took her to the house of Chrizostome, her protector, seems like a journey to the depths of hell. Having lost most of her family, she was pushed naked along the roads by the *interahamwe* who had just killed her two younger brothers under her own eyes. To this day, this woman has never been recognised as a survivor.

¹¹¹ Interview with Chrizostome, *intwali*, 15/07/04, 44, married and the father of three children

the *interahamwe* took me for a chauffeur of white people. As my car bore the Swiss flag, when they saw the red colour they thought it was a car belonging to the Red Cross, and they did not kill the persons transported by the Red Cross. [...] I only bought maize because it was the only food available. They ate poorly and with difficulty, but they took comfort in the Bible, and they were only happy with the word of God. There were eleven persons. They lived in my house for two months until I entrusted some to the French, who took them elsewhere. During the time they stayed in my house, nobody was threatened. I think that of the eleven persons I hid most are still alive. We often meet in our children's schools – primary, secondary or at university. There are also those who work as civil servants. We even exchanged addresses to keep up good relations. We have remained friends. [...]

My detention occurred because at the time the others were fleeing, just after the arrival of the FPR soldiers, I had become the chauffeur of the soldiers. On their return, some jealous person, who saw me driving the FPR soldiers, accused me of having participated in the genocide. You all know that such an accusation was very serious in 1994! In fact, this person, who was a Hutu, had been beaten up by my brother during the genocide and wanted to revenge himself on me. After this denunciation, the soldiers arrested me. [...] It is thanks to the goodness of God that I was lucky enough to have rescued these people and to have held out during my whole detention. I spent eight years and six months in prison. My wife was also imprisoned for one year. My wife was a student. After my detention, she suffered so much that she had to stop studying. She really had a very difficult time with the children.

What I am very happy about is that nearly all the survivors are my friends. These survivors often visited me in prison. Given the large number of prisoners, it looked as if it would be difficult to have all the trials within a reasonable delay. Which is why they preferred to take the prisoners to their hills, to be judged by the population. In October 2002, as there were many of us, around 400 persons, they took us to the stadium. It was there that the people I rescued intervened, declaring that I was innocent. Nobody accused me then. That is how I left prison in January 2003.”

Finally, after having been imprisoned and then unanimously acquitted, Chrizostome was released provisionally in the same way as 20,000 other ex-detainees, among whom there were some genocide killers who had publicly admitted their crime. This is why, in the eyes of some people¹¹², especially other survivors, there is still some doubt about his innocence, and even more about the fact that he could be considered a Righteous Person.

Yet, in the case of Chrizostome, we believe that the lack of knowledge about his past as an *intwali* has had repercussions for his daughter, Umuhoza. She was imprisoned from the end of April until beginning September 2004, in Gisovu prison, and then provisionally released.

¹¹² Remark made by a member of Ibuka in Kibuye (PRI interview with WN, 14/09/04)

The story of Umuhoza, a “divisionist”¹¹³?

Umuhoza, seventeen at the time, was a pupil of a secondary school, the “Institut Presbytérien d’Economie et des Sciences Appliquées” [Presbyterian Institute of Economy and Applied Sciences] of Rubengera, in the province of Kibuye. In February, after a quarrel with some of her friends, who were reproaching her for not being a survivor but the daughter of an ex-detainee, Umuhoza wrote the following words on a slip of paper: “I shall live with those who accept me and I shall walk with those who want me”. Then she slipped the piece of paper into her notebook, and this was later considered to be a pamphlet.

Later, during April, at the time of the commemorations, a pupil found the note and showed it to the director, even though on that same day, some of the pupils had just buried members of their families. In front of her friends, Umuhoza declared to the director that she too had suffered, just as the survivors had, because her father had been imprisoned for nearly nine years. Many of the pupils then started to weep. Some of them who were traumatised had to be taken to hospital. One pupil is said to have tried to attack Umuhoza physically, so that she had to hide and spend the night outside the school.

The police intervened on the next day, taking Umuhoza to the police station to be interrogated. She was then taken to prison on the same day, accused of divisionism because of the words that she had written and spoken. Overcome by terror, she thought that she was going to be sentenced to twenty years in prison for divisionism. During her imprisonment, Umuhoza wrote a letter to beg for pardon to which some of the students of the IPESAR responded favourably.

Her father [*the intwali Chrizostome, cf. above*] was panic-stricken. He became the victim of an attempt to blackmail him, as a deputy demanded Frw 60,000 or a pregnant cow to release his daughter. However, after the intervention of the prosecutor, she was released quite legally.

(PRI, file on Umuhoza)

On this occasion, one could think that things might have taken a different course if anybody had known who Umuhoza’s father really was. Another interpretation of the “pamphlet”¹¹⁴ and of its

¹¹³ To better understand Umuhoza’s arrest, it should be placed in the current context. Since the beginning of 2004, especially with the publishing of the Commission of Deputies’ report on revisionism and divisionism, people are speaking of a “recrudescence of the genocidal ideology”. The attacks or threats against the survivors of the genocide, as well as, among others, the distribution of pamphlets in various provinces of the country, are as many elements used as proof of this recrudescence. The Prosecutor General for the Supreme Court, Jean de Dieu Mucyo, at the Conference on the Ideology of Genocide held on 18 August 2004, gave it as his opinion that there is a link between the setting up of the *gacaca* and this recrudescence, which represents a major challenge to the process of unity and reconciliation. With this in mind, the judiciary has been giving priority to trials involving the ideology of genocide. Within the current context and because of the lack of an exact definition of the term “divisionism”, one should be careful about all the cases brought to trial based on this charge. There is indeed a big risk that these acts of violence (whose materiality is incontestable) could be confused with those whose motive is linked either to the *gacaca* trials under way or to the persistence of a genocidal ideology, whereas they are actually common law crimes or offences.

Cf. also a declaration of the European Union of 6 October 2004, expressing concern about the growing use of the terms *divisionism* and *genocidal ideology*, and requesting clarification of these terms, especially with regard to the laws on *discrimination* and *sectarianism*, as well as the Rwandan government’s response of 13 October 2004.

Law No. 47/2001 of 18/12/2001 *on the suppression of crimes of discrimination and the practice of sectarianism*, (Journal Officiel No. 4 of 15/02/2002), article 3, defines sectarianism as follows: “a crime committed by means of oral or written expression, or any act of division that can create conflicts among the population or start disputes”. A person committing this crime incurs a sentence of up to three years of prison, as well as a fine, and the sentence may be extended to five years if the author “is or was an official within the public administration, an officer of a political party, or a manager in a private administration or non-governmental organisation”.

Furthermore, law No. 33 bis/2003 of 06/09/2003, *against the crime of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes*, (Journal Officiel No. 21 of 01/11/2003), article 4, provides that “anybody who publicly denies the existence of the genocide in writing, images or any other manner, has grossly minimised it, tried to justify it or approved its basis, or anybody who has dissimulated or destroyed proof of the genocide, is punishable by ten to twenty years of imprisonment”. It should be noted that to date, although the notions of “discrimination” and “sectarianism” have been defined in law, the term “divisionism” remains undefined.

“divisionist comments” would then most certainly have been made. As one of the teachers said¹¹⁵, Umuhoza’s letter and her comments would not have been the direct cause of the trauma that took hold of the school. According to him, it is much more likely that the reason lies in the general atmosphere surrounding this event: the context of the fight against the genocidal ideology and the commemorations of the genocide. He also mentioned that nearly every year the school faces similar expressions of trauma.

Position of the survivors’ associations

Individual relations were one thing. The question was how the survivors’ associations perceived the issue of the Righteous, and more specifically that of the Righteous in prison. Their positions on this issue turned out to be very different. The one which was most committed was Avega¹¹⁶ :

According to the president of Avega¹¹⁷, all [*the widows*] recognise that the Righteous were benefactors, are close to them and help them when they have a problem. The organisation itself encourages its members to speak of the benefactors and help them. To date, they do not have any lists of these persons, but say they would be able to draw them up. [...]

The association intervened several times with the Prosecution to defend the accused who were innocent and had saved lives during the genocide. Generally, the sequence of events is as follows: the subject is discussed in a meeting where the members of the association bring up the cases of persons they think are innocent. If everybody concurs, it is agreed that they can go to the Prosecution to testify. The president said she herself had gone about ten times to the Prosecution and gave the names of four persons who were released thanks to the intervention of the association. [...] They did not go there together, but one by one. [...] In some cases, the case files were not ready for a release, but in other cases their intervention was of great help. Often it takes time. The Prosecution has to carry out an investigation, as there are cases of corrupt persons who testify as witnesses for the defence. There was a woman who went three times to the court to defend the same person.

For their part, the attitude of the representatives of Ibuka in Kibuye is very qualified¹¹⁸. The first thing they say when the subject of the Righteous is brought up is that it is very difficult to opine whether someone is *intwali* or not, arguing that many persons rescued some people but also killed others. During an interview with PRI, the president even mentioned that she was rescued by the person who had killed her mother. This does not mean that Ibuka denies the existence of benefactors. However, the idea that some people may have killed without being seen by their neighbours is accepted by many in this organisation, for whom only the *gacaca* will be able to establish if a person is innocent or not.

Very soon they come back to the fact that, although the fate of the prisoners is important, the main victims should not be forgotten, in other words, the survivors. Such an approach tends to show that the association appears to have a split position, opposing any action in favour of one group to that which should be undertaken in favour of the survivors. One also needs to recognise that the survivors are still far from having obtained everything that their status implies.

¹¹⁴ The term “pamphlet” used to qualify the few words of this student, itself very connotative, shows how one interpretation immediately took precedence over all the others.

¹¹⁵ PRI interview with a teacher of IPESAR, 17/07/04

¹¹⁶ PRI interview with representatives of Avega, 08/09/04

¹¹⁷ Created in October 1995 by fifty widows of the genocide, in 2002 Avega had 49 employees and around 25,000 members. For a more detailed description of this organisation, cf. Heidi Rombouts, 2004, p. 138.

¹¹⁸ PRI interview with representatives of Ibuka, Kibuye, 14/09/04

Relations of the Righteous with the rest of the population

Within the population, the group that is most intransigent and critical of the Righteous is that of the extremist Hutus, whose thinking could be summarised by the words of some prisoners in Gisovu¹¹⁹: *“If all the Tutsis had been exterminated, there would be no more problems today”*. These extremist prisoners do not hesitate to say that if there were another genocide, they would be the first to kill again. In their eyes, the Righteous are no more than traitors, and are responsible for the situation in which they find themselves today. After all, if everybody had been killed, there would be nobody left to testify. Although these are the words of an extremist minority, it should be mentioned that in the hills, some attitudes, even if they are not the result of such extremism, are based on more or less the same premise.

Thus, according to Emmanuel¹²⁰, his relations with the survivors are much better than with the other members of his family and Hutu neighbours. He thinks this is a sign of jealousy on their part: *“They tell me that the ones I saved should be giving me that money [the school fees for his child]. There are people who bear a grudge against those who did that [rescued Tutsis]. They say that it is the people who hid others who are at the root of their troubles. If they had allowed all of them to be exterminated, they would not be in prison today”*. At the interview with Emmanuel, a man called Padiri¹²¹ approached. When he heard that we were talking about the righteous actions of Emmanuel, he smiled: *“The only thing he earned was the loss of his leg”*. To which he added: *“What is the use of being moral without one’s leg?”*

The comments of Innocent¹²² are in the same vein: *“The neighbours took us to be traitors, enemies. We had hidden Tutsis when they ought to have died. That is why they persecuted us. At the moment, there is no problem because they can see that what they did did not benefit them and was useless”*.

¹¹⁹ PRI visit to Gisovu Prison, March 2004

¹²⁰ PRI interview with Emmanuel, *intwali*, 22/07/04

¹²¹ He was given the nickname of “priest” due to having attended the Catholic church. PRI interview with Emmanuel, *intwali*, 22/07/04

¹²² Interview with Innocent, *intwali*, 23/07/04

Third part

A policy to enhance the value of the Righteous?

1. Rwandan tributes to the Righteous

Ten years after the genocide, a policy of recognition of the Righteous appears to have begun. Some Rwandan players have in fact paid tribute to the Righteous and their actions during the genocide. However, we believe that this policy of recognition and gratification is only just beginning and should become more widespread.

The President of the Republic himself, Paul Kagamé, at the ceremonies of the tenth commemoration of the genocide, spoke of those Hutus and other persons who rescued Tutsis during the genocide:

“A very special tribute to those men and women who showed enormous courage, risked their lives to rescue their neighbours and friends. You showed the greatest act of human kindness, you risked your own lives to save another. You could have chosen not to do that. But still you did so. You are our reason for hope. There are people alive in Rwanda today - people still alive in this stadium here today - who would have been dead ten years ago, but for your bravery.”

Paul Kagame, Amahoro Stadium, Kigali, 7 April 2004

A tribute was also paid to these Righteous persons by the Ibuka organisation, at the closing ceremony of the period of mourning, on the 19th of July 2004¹²³. During the ceremony, which was held at the Memorial of Gisozi¹²⁴, tribute was paid to “*all those who did their best for human dignity*”. Survivors and their rescuers spoke of their experiences, like Gisimba who sheltered four hundred Tutsis in an orphanage, most of whom are still alive today. On this occasion, the Rwandan Prime Minister, Bernard Makuza, took up what has been the government’s leitmotiv since the end of the genocide: “*Never again*”. He declared that “*the government will not tolerate any genocidal act or any genocidal ideology*”. To which he added that “*such meetings give us hope that acts like these will not happen again*” and that from now on the country has “*laws and political structures to prevent genocide*”.

This tribute paid by Ibuka corroborates the comments of the Executive Secretary of the organisation, in July 2004¹²⁵ :

“It is Ibuka’s duty to recognise and support those who helped the Tutsis in the difficult times of the genocide. All humanity should know that we do not only have genocide killers among us, but that there are also people here who made an effort to protect those who were persecuted.

An important place is kept for these persons, so that each year, at the closing of the period of mourning, some are publicly decorated¹²⁶. Usually, it is one person each year, except for this year

¹²³ Cf. Hironelle News Agency, Actualités, 19 July 2004

¹²⁴ In the suburbs of Kigali

¹²⁵ PRI interview with Egide, Executive Secretary of Ibuka, 30/07/04

¹²⁶ According to Ervin Staub (2003, p.795), it was only in April 2003 that the Righteous were honoured for the first time. The Gisozi Memorial, in Kigali, which was opened in 2004 at the commemorations of the tenth

when there were two. This is only a symbolic gesture, especially to educate future generations about humanism and not to lay the blame on any particular part of the population, as some people think. We do not seek to please or displease, but only to send a message to future generations, showing them that not everybody was bad to the Tutsis.”

This ceremony and the Executive Secretary’s comments significantly contradict what the representative of Ibuka said in the province of Kibuye¹²⁷. But this contradiction could be no more than the expression of internal difficulties encountered by the organisation. In fact, the Executive Secretary is often faulted for more or less adhering to the government’s line, without there necessarily being a consensus at all levels. This was the case in particular with regard to the releases, which Ibuka received favourably when it heard the news¹²⁸, whereas many of the survivors were terrified. On this issue, however, it should be recognised that the survivors’ positions, which arise from their personal experiences, vary a lot from one account to another. Therefore, it is obviously very difficult for the organisation to adopt a position that could be considered consensual nationwide.

In the same tradition, a commissioner of the National Commission for Unity and Reconciliation¹²⁹ believed that the government was showing great recognition for the acts of the Righteous during the genocide. Furthermore, he represented the Righteous as “*role models gifted with a spirit of resilience*”. However, according to this commissioner, the Commission has not yet set up any activity to benefit the *intwalis*.

2. Need for a policy to promote the actions of the Righteous

This is certainly the main weakness of the current policy in Rwanda for the Righteous, which in fact appears to be limited to a merely symbolic recognition. Even though the potential of these Righteous persons to become role models could be very positive, with a view to pacification and reconciliation of the citizens in the long term, this potential still remains mostly unexploited.

In the following developments, we propose to demonstrate in what way the attitude of the Righteous can influence positive behaviour, whether in the field of the *gacaca* or in education for citizenship.

2.1 Within the *gacaca* process

Greater involvement of the Righteous could in many ways promote the development of “good practices” within the *gacaca* process. Quite apart from their motivation in participating, the integrity and impartiality which they have shown through the way they acted in the past could turn them into positive role models. This is a trump card that could be used to advantage in a

anniversary of the genocide, mentions the resistance against the genocide in Bisesero and elsewhere, as well as the Hutus who rescued Tutsis. (Cf. Kigali Memorial Centre, *Jenoside*, Kigali Memorial Centre/ Aegis Trust, 2004, pp. 30-31)

¹²⁷ Cf. the passage on the “Position of survivors’ associations” in the second part of this report

¹²⁸ Cf. on this issue PRI, *Report IV. Research Report on the gacaca: The guilty plea procedure, cornerstone of the Rwandan justice system*, PRI, Kigali/Paris, January 2003, p. 16

¹²⁹ PRI interview with Xavier, CNUR, 06/08/04

province where sixty-five percent of the judges have been dismissed following testimonies against them¹³⁰.

In terms of participation in the *gacaca*, one of the weakest points in this process, the Righteous persons interviewed were unanimous in their willingness to put a lot of effort into these tribunals. Furthermore, for those among them who were elected as *inyangamugayo*, they regard their position as an honour:

“I was chosen by the city of Kibuye as second vice-president for the *gacaca*. For the time being, I have been chosen as President of the court of appeals in the Gasura sector. Although I live in the centre of town, I go to Gasura, where the massacres took place, to render justice. Usually the population trusts me. I can assure you that any activity of the *gacaca* should start with a prayer to ask God to make us impartial. Even when I teach in Church, I support the government, the *gacaca*, as well as unity and reconciliation.”¹³¹

The impartiality they usually display makes them better suited than anybody else to hold this position. Their presence is all the more necessary as this quality is not always present in the work carried out to establish the truth, based on well-founded testimonies. The interviews with the Righteous have revealed a belief that the release of innocent persons, as well as the charging of genocide killers, are two objectives that it would be better to pursue jointly.

“In the *gacaca* we explained the behaviour of the genocide killers. The problem is that many of those who participated went into exile [*in the Congo*] and have not yet returned. Some are in prison, others are free, but are charged by the *gacaca*. [...]

What I can add is that some persons were forced to take part in attacks; they were even beaten up. Their case was explained in the *gacaca*. Their files have been prepared, but after the explanation one understands that what they did was what they were forced to do. However, there are not many.”

Innocent¹³²

“I think the *gacaca* will contribute in some ways. There are people who were put in prison although they were innocent, and through the *gacaca* they have been released. I could give the example of a man called Cyprien. He had just spent five years in prison. But in the *gacaca* he was spoken of, all the good he had done and to whom. After that, it was decided to free him. For the time being he is living with his family. If the *gacaca* continues to work in this way and no lies are told, but only the truth, it will be very good. These jealousies must disappear and people must not be kept in jail just because some evildoers have decided they should. If the population tells the truth and explains what happened, the *gacaca* will be useful to bring justice to many people.”

Samuel¹³³

“Some people will be released by the *gacaca*, and some will be imprisoned by it. There are those who were put into prison in spite of their innocence. [...] There are many who were imprisoned without knowing who accused them. [...] But I trust in the *gacaca*. Above all, I trust the cell in which I am President, as I see that the *gacaca* will work well. [...] Our luck is that the *gacaca* will reconcile Rwandans. Everybody will be punished for their crimes and not for offences they have not

¹³⁰ According to the SNJG, out of 188 honest judges, 122 had to resign after they were accused of participation in the genocide. (Cf. *Document sur l'état d'avancement des activités des juridictions gacaca des cellules opérationnelles et programmes d'activités à venir (Document on the progress of activities in the gacaca tribunals of operational cells and future activity programmes)*, SNJG, 21 January 2004, in PRI, Report VI, Appendix 3)

¹³¹ PRI interview with Jean-Bosco, *intwali*, 17/07/04, cf. Appendix 2

¹³² PRI interview with Innocent, *intwali*, 23/07/04

¹³³ PRI interview with Samuel, *intwali*, 28/07/04

committed. There will be reconciliation. What's more, those who have suffered will know the truth about what happened.”

*Donate*¹³⁴

The Righteous do not advocate impartiality and the search for truth only for others. They do not hesitate to put it in practice themselves, including, as in the case of Jean-Bosco¹³⁵, when it applies to their own family. This attitude has not been without some risk for their safety. Thus, several prisoners have already expressed their disquiet when they learned that Jean-Bosco had been chosen as President of the *gacaca* court of appeal. However, for Donate, the prisoners have no need to fear them, as they will not be a threat to the prisoners in any way:

“Since I have become President, they [*the prisoners*] have been put in prison. They did not kill anybody in my house. They will come and defend themselves before the *gacaca* tribunal. They should not be afraid of me because I am the President of the *gacaca*. There are nine of us to take any decision.”

In this regard, we should mention that the Righteous who were interviewed had only just been elected. Therefore, we do not as yet have tangible figures on what their real influence could be on the other *inyangamugayos*. Nevertheless, given their integrity, they might be able to bring in something positive. Of course, this still has to be verified.

2.2 Reconciliation and the democratic process

Their vision of reconciliation

Without generalising too much about the remaining positions, given the scale of our research and of individual opinions, there is all the same a common vision in all these interviews of the Righteous – quite realistic as it happens¹³⁶ – of what the *gacaca* could be and, from there, what reconciliation could be.

Indeed, although the Righteous persons who were interviewed think that reconciliation is possible, they also suggest that several conditions are essential for the process to continue.

According to them, proof that reconciliation is possible can already be found in daily life, and that it has started in the hills. The most frequently mentioned evidence is the fact that marriages between Hutus and Tutsis are again taking place, and that mutual aid, visits and sharing between persons from different communities have recommenced. Also the fact that in some cases ex-prisoners have begged for forgiveness and the survivors have pardoned them¹³⁷.

¹³⁴ PRI interview with Donate, *intwali*, 29/07/04

¹³⁵ Cf. Appendix 2

¹³⁶ In fact, this view corroborates in many ways the key elements found in our research work in the province of Kibuye, from the very beginning. Cf. especially PRI, *Research Report on the Gacaca. Gacaca and Reconciliation, the case of Kibuye*, Paris/Kigali, May 2004.

¹³⁷ This should however be qualified by explaining that the positive examples mentioned are still exceptions even today. Furthermore, the many mixed marriages that are taking place, for example in the province of Gitarama, do not appear to have had much influence on the scale of the genocide in this province.

“The population has no difficulty in accepting reconciliation because among the population, reconciliation has already started. We recently took part in marriages between Hutus and Tutsis, which occurred without any problem. In the countryside, people help each other out and give each other cattle. When somebody has a problem, people visit them and everybody comes to their aid. [...] Thus the population has made greater advances in terms of reconciliation than one imagines. In fact, reconciliation, when it becomes political, is not always helpful. People should be reconciled without involving politics.”¹³⁸

However, although in some ways they are optimistic, they immediately qualify their comments, explaining that nothing is definite and, as it is a slow process, reconciliation will be difficult to achieve. Among the obstacles mentioned, the three following ones appear again and again: first and foremost, the difficulty of establishing the truth – they consider this to be essential before any reconciliation can be attempted. To which they add that for the population to tell the truth, mention should be made of the “suffering on both sides”, thereby alluding to the acts of revenge committed by some of the FPR soldiers and survivors¹³⁹.

“Let us take the case of the councillor who replaced me. He killed a lot of people. Some were put in the toilets after they were killed; others were simply left on the hillsides after throwing a little earth on their bodies. But if this issue is brought up, they reply that those who killed in revenge will not be sentenced as genocide killers, because it is considered to be a consequence of war. But it is not logical that revenge should continue to this day, in spite of the detention of some persons! It resembles the current situation of released prisoners who still kill survivors! It goes to show that we are all sick. And the proof is there! Nowadays it is hard to find a normal person. Normal people would become reconciled, but this is not possible among madmen.”

*Jean-Bosco*¹⁴⁰

“I think that reconciliation is very difficult when one only speaks of the suffering on one side, without mentioning that on the other side.”

*Intwalis belonging to a religious community*¹⁴¹

They often stress the lack of involvement and participation of the local authorities and “high level persons”. In their eyes the latter are even more to blame, as they should be giving a good example. Finally, particularly for those among them who are ministers, they insist that reconciliation is the domain of the churches, par excellence.

“Even before the politicians, we think of the churches. The churches are best placed to advance on the path towards reconciliation together with the population. [...] For example, the Catholic Church has never before asked for forgiveness, but they have a policy of reconciliation nonetheless.

A distinction should be made between the Church as an institution and the church of the people themselves. Both the Church as an institution and the church at its heart must strive for reconciliation. But reconciliation is not something that can be rushed. It is reached at the level of the

¹³⁸ PRI interview with two *intwalis* of a religious community, 16/07/04

¹³⁹ In its report of May 2004 (cf. Point 4, p. 25), PRI already made similar recommendations, proposing to “make separate lists, during the first sessions of the *gacaca* tribunals, of those who died during the period of 1990-1994, not as a result of the crime of genocide, but for other reasons, such as acts of revenge. These lists could then be handed over to a specific commission [to be created] for further investigation”, or to the Prosecution for investigation and legal action against the perpetrators. It is to be regretted that among the new forms prepared by the SNJG, which have to be filled in by the *gacaca* judges, none requires these lists to be drawn up (cf. SNJG, *Amasomo Azatangwa Mu Mahugurwa Y’Inyangamugayo Z’Inkiko Gacaca*, Kigali, Nyakanga, 2004).

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Appendix 2

¹⁴¹ PRI interview with two *intwalis* of a religious community, 16/07/04

individual. What is more, it is a process. It is not possible to say that we are in reconciliation. Several things are required for reconciliation, but what is necessary is to assist people, to help the population achieve reconciliation. Teachers, priests or intellectuals should be there to give an example. If they do not manage to become reconciled, they cannot ask the population to do so.”

Intwalis belonging to a religious community

A role in the democratic process?

Although submission to authority, as stated by Ervin Staub¹⁴², is essential to the functioning of society, in the case of Rwanda, given the policy implemented by the government at that time, this submission, which was manipulated, led to genocide. We also think that some work should be undertaken on this subject.

After analysing several accounts, both of survivors and of detainees, it appears that deep respect for authority is a cultural tendency within Rwanda's highly hierarchical society: “*When one is Rwandan, one systematically carries out the authorities' requests*”. Internalisation of this norm is such that only very few dared to oppose the genocidal regime and refuse the criminal order of the government to kill their Rwandan countrymen¹⁴³.

In such an environment, to sensitise the population about autonomy and independence of mind cannot be done *ex nihilo*. Thus, the actions of the Righteous at the time of the genocide could be used as a starting point for the population to reflect on the limits of the notion of obedience and submission to authority. Because of their actions, these *intwalis* are tangible proof that one can, and even that one should disobey when a government, even when it is considered legitimate, orders people to follow a policy that is openly discriminatory and anti-democratic. These Righteous persons could therefore, as in the *gacaca*, become positive points of reference within the democratic process under way. There is also the question about how independence of mind and individuality are viewed in the Rwandan political and social landscape of today. In the current social context, such behaviour leads to exposing oneself and being considered, at best, as a “nuisance” by the rest of the community and the authorities. Indeed, although silence is perceived as a defensive strategy in a highly hierarchical society, in which there is very little trust, the fact of opposing an unjust policy implies considerable commitment and undeniable courage.

It appears that the implementation of a policy to honour and encourage independence of mind and a critical attitude would oblige Rwandans to reflect on the real nature of their own attitude during the genocide. Be it for those who, although they did not participate directly, opted for a passive but permissive attitude, or the genocide killers for whom the words of this released detainee are far from being an exception: “*Those who killed did it on the orders of the State which was in place at the time. Nobody was strong enough to oppose it. The State is strong and powerful. It is above everybody else.*”¹⁴⁴ Such thinking implies, and many people do not hide it, that if the State were to order them to kill again, they would do so¹⁴⁵.

¹⁴² Cf. Staub, 2002, p.63

¹⁴³ “Rwanda's past and its recent history show it to be a nation characterised by extreme government centralisation and social control. This centralisation denied the citizens the opportunity to express themselves freely in their own way, and to participate actively and positively in their own governance. It produced a people who were profoundly loyal and timorous towards authority.” [PRI translation] Cf. *A draft policy on civic education in Rwanda*, National civic education workshop, Kabgayi/Gitarama, 17-19 October 2004, p. 1

¹⁴⁴ PRI interview with a released detainee, Ntongwe, February 2004

¹⁴⁵ PRI interviews with detainees in the prison of Kibuye, 2002

Faced with this feeling of individual irresponsibility which is to be found among many of the genocide killers, it is harmful that the lessons of history of the genocide given in the solidarity camps only rarely mention the choice made by some Hutus, not only not to take part in the massacres but also to act by trying to rescue some Tutsis¹⁴⁶. Valuing the actions of the *intwalis* would highlight the undeniable importance of individual choice that was involved when taking part in the genocide, thereby invalidating the ideas of many of the genocide killers, who still reject any responsibility and lay the blame on others: the State, the administration, the *interahamwe*, the Belgian colonial power, etc.

What is more, stressing the individuality of choice would make it possible to fight against a certain prejudice, which is rife among many survivors and repatriates of 1959, according to which all the Hutus should be held collectively responsible for the genocide. Such collective responsibility would in one fell swoop clear all the genocide killers of their individual responsibility, transforming them into simple executants without any real will of their own.

A 1959 repatriate

“I am always concerned about what the government says about the killings. Every day it says that the Tutsis were killed and that the Hutus killed them, forgetting to mention the generosity and compassion of some Hutus who hid Tutsis. Some of these merciful Hutus lost their lives because of their acts of compassion for Tutsis.”

A former authority in Kibuye¹⁴⁷

“At one point, people were generalising, saying all the Hutus were genocide killers. Even nowadays, some persons still say it. I think such people should be discouraged. I was speaking in fact of extremism on both sides. Among the Hutus, there are people who do not want to abandon and get rid of this old culture of discrimination. And then there are also Tutsis who say that they would really like to remain Tutsis; they don’t want to hear of the Hutus. That somehow “*those idiots should be killed* [meaning Hutus]”.”

Therefore, valuing the actions of the Righteous and thereby stressing the notion of individual responsibility would allow reconciliation to be established, as it is above all at the individual level that the authors will be judged and between individuals that reconciliation takes place. What is more, not to say anything about these *intwalis* would imply collective responsibility of the Hutus and would therefore only reinforce the mistrust and ethnic prejudice already existing between the social groups. This could in the long term become an obstacle in the path towards unity and reconciliation.

3. Examples of actions in other countries

The actions of the Righteous during the genocide could be considered no more than the normal manifestation of the humanity that is shared by us all in any circumstances. However, in times of war, and even more so civil war of a genocidal nature, these acts are really heroic¹⁴⁸. In other countries they were valued as such and initiatives were taken to pay tribute to them.

¹⁴⁶ On this point, cf. PRI, *Report VI. From the camp to the hills, the reintegration of the released prisoners*, Kigali/Paris, May 2004, particularly pp. 35-38

¹⁴⁷ PRI interview with E., 23/08/04

¹⁴⁸ On the issue of the Righteous in Bosnia: “*It took courage in this war to follow one’s own mind. The humanity you are looking for, that’s heroism.*” (Broz, 2004, p. 475).

3.1 The case of Burundi

In Burundi, a number of such initiatives can be found. .

The *Réseau des citoyens* (RCN) (Citizens network) set up a project called “Support for the culture of righteous actions”¹⁴⁹. The aim of this project is to “*restore and promote positive cultural values in civil society to harmonise relations between the various components of society [...]*”. It aims more specifically to “*stimulate the rebirth of social and cultural values and their transmission by players within civil society trained in artistic techniques for this purpose: storytellers, singers, actors... Encourage artists to produce symbolic works representing justice and the respect for human rights. Link cultural values [...] with universal human rights*”.

These aims formulated for Burundian society could just as well have been formulated for Rwandan society. Especially as, according to some experts, “*culture, in its artistic, musical or theatrical form, has proved to be an invaluable tool in many countries which have suffered traumatic events*”¹⁵⁰.

In April 2004, a three-day “Summit of Heroes” was held. This summit, held in Bujumbura, brought together 170 “ordinary” persons “who accomplished extraordinary feats at the most difficult and dangerous times of ethnic violence in Burundi”. This summit had the following aims: to share experiences between heroes and local associations working for peace and reconciliation, to strengthen the role of these heroes and draw up a proposal for their future role as peace builders, and their promotion by the authorities and other guests.

3.2 The Yad Vashem Association in Israel

In Jerusalem, the Yad Vashem Memorial set up a procedure to recognise the status of Righteous person for those who acted during the Shoah. This procedure has three stages: constitution of a dossier, which is then examined and, if agreed, the person is awarded a medal.

For this purpose, the association has established several criteria¹⁵¹, which could be transposed to the case of Rwanda as follows. The following would be the requirements for recognition as an “*intvalis mu butabaz?*”:

- The person helped in situations where Tutsis and moderate Hutus were helpless and threatened with death.
- The person was aware that by helping they were risking their lives, security and personal liberty.
- The person did not demand any reward or material compensation for the assistance given.
- The rescue or assistance given is confirmed by the people who were rescued, or vouched for by eyewitnesses or even, whenever possible, by authentic archived documents.

The help given to Tutsis or moderate Hutus by non-Tutsis could be of very different kinds, but may be summarised as follows:

- To have taken in a Tutsi or moderate Hutu in one’s home, in lay or religious institutions, hidden from the outside world.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. RCN-Burundi, *Appui à la culture des actes justes (Support for the culture of righteous actions)*, Bujumbura, 2002

¹⁵⁰ Cf. McGrew, Laura, *Truth, Justice, Reconciliation and Peace in Cambodia: 20 years after the Khmer Rouge*, Phnom Penh, 2000, unpublished, p. 42

¹⁵¹ Cf. Appendix 3

- To have helped a Tutsi pass himself off as a non-Tutsi by obtaining false identity papers, or to have helped a moderate Hutu obtain false identity papers.
- To have helped a Tutsi or moderate Hutu reach a safe place, by helping them cross the border to another country, for instance.
- To have temporarily adopted Tutsi or moderate Hutu children who were being persecuted during the genocide.

Work has already been started on the above, as the *gacaca* judges must now, in the course of the sessions, fill in at least 27 forms, to gather information on the sequence of events during the genocide, one of which is headed: “*those who rescued the persecuted*”¹⁵².

¹⁵² Cf. Appendix 1

Conclusion and Recommendations

Why the Righteous? Why speak of giving an example and promoting the value of their actions? These are as many questions to which this report is trying to bring an answer. If one were to summarise, one could say that, through the empathy they showed towards the victims of genocide at the very time the genocide was taking place, they were the epitome of the quality that Rwandan society would gain much to strive for today, since empathy is exactly what can be considered the ultimate stage of reconciliation¹⁵³. It makes one realise how much they could play a key role in the process of reconciliation and how much this possibility is still, to this day, underexploited.

To practice extreme violence against others harms the perpetrators of these acts themselves. Therefore, as a protective reflex, the perpetrators of crimes tend to reject feelings such as empathy and remorse, preferring to cling to their belief in the ideology of genocide and the accompanying victimisation¹⁵⁴ and its corollaries: the devaluation of the victims and individual irresponsibility or collective responsibility.

In this context, the Righteous are a living example that a choice was possible. To promote their image would, from the point of view of the genocide killers, force them to view their actions from the angle of responsibility, thereby showing them that they had a choice and that the choice still exists today, by assuming responsibility for their own actions and thus starting the work of reconciliation. On the side of the survivors, to value the actions of the Righteous would make it possible to humanize the social link between the two groups, by opposing the idea that all Hutus are collectively responsible, a belief that makes any sort of rapprochement impossible due to the climate of fear and mistrust that it creates.

Therefore, within the context of the following recommendations, we wish to propose some concrete actions that could be undertaken to value these Righteous persons.

- ✓ With the aim of re-establishing social and humanizing links, we believe that a **more important place should be given to the Righteous in the annual commemorations of the genocide**¹⁵⁵. Furthermore, it would be better not to limit this to a single annual event, but

¹⁵³ In fact, based on the idea of creating models for reconciliation, such as that considered by IDEA (cf. PRI, *Research report on the gacaca, Gacaca and Reconciliation, the case of Kibuye*, Paris/Kigali, May 2004), empathy comes as a third phase, following non-violent coexistence and building up of trust. Regarding this notion of empathy, cf. International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), *Reconciliation after a violent conflict. A manual*, Manuals Series, Stockholm, 2003.

¹⁵⁴ According to Ervin Staub, violence is usually the result of past victimisation or of focusing an ideology on a chosen period in the past, represented as having been victimising. (Staub, 2003, pp. 798-799). In the case of the ideology that led to the genocide of 1994, these were the colonial and pre-colonial periods, represented as the peak of Tutsi domination and at the same time the unjust exploitation of the Hutus.

¹⁵⁵ "One aspect of such policies is humanizing "the other", in this case giving Hutus a more human image in the eyes of Tutsis.15Among the various ways discussed, a direct and immediate means of doing so that we repeatedly suggested to groups was that Hutus who had saved the lives of Tutsis during the genocide, and in some cases were killed as a result, be acknowledged and included in the yearly commemoration of those tragic events." (Staub, 2003, p. 795)

to try and give much larger visibility to their actions outside this event, for instance, by organising a **summit of the Righteous**.

- ✓ This could include **the identification and registration of these Righteous persons, after research**, following the example of the Yad Vashem memorial in Israel. Following a predetermined number of testimonies of rescued persons or witnesses, a dossier could be constituted for the persons whose profile matched the **criteria established by the Rwandan authorities for the status of *intwali mu butabazi***¹⁵⁶.

A department of the Righteous, responsible for this activity, **could be created within, for instance, the Directorate of Remembrance of the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture** (Mijespoc).

After acceptance of the dossiers, **specific commemorations could be organised with some media coverage**, with the aim of sensitising the population about the choice these persons made during the genocide.

Granting an official status to these Righteous persons would then make it possible to give them some functions within the community and within education for peace or civic education¹⁵⁷, with the aim of giving them a more active role in the reconstruction of Rwanda after the genocide.

- ✓ Some policies could then be put in place to help them apply for the position, for instance, of **conciliators**¹⁵⁸, for those among them who do not have the education or social profile usually possessed by persons who occupy such a position.

Furthermore, these judges could be encouraged to sit at the *gacaca* trials, with the title of, say, **“Honourable Judge”**. These are only a few ideas, all of which are intended to place the Righteous in socially valued positions, thereby also valuing their behaviour during the genocide.

- ✓ With the much more direct perspective of being seen as examples, these Righteous persons could contribute by telling their stories, either in the solidarity camps or more widely within a policy of civic education, particularly for children.

A more explicit passage on the actions of the Righteous during the genocide could, in particular, be mentioned in the history lessons about the genocide given in the solidarity camps, or even the organisation of **sessions of story-telling / discussions**

In this respect, see also the article of Claudine Vidal, “Les commémorations du génocide au Rwanda” (The commemorations of the genocide in Rwanda), in which she underlines the selective character of the public commemorations in Rwanda of the 1994 genocide.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. pp. 39-40 of this report and Appendix 3

¹⁵⁷ In fact, the Rwandan government is developing a programme of civic education, which aims to be “an education for autonomy, so that citizens will take part actively in their own governance and will not accept doctrines passively or obey the demands of others.” [PRI translation]. Cf., Minaloc, *Civic education handbook. Guidelines for content of civic education activities*, Kigali, September 2004, p. 5

¹⁵⁸ The new constitution of 2003 provides for the setting up at sector level of a “Committee of Conciliators”, made up of persons of integrity and intended to provide a setting for conciliation, which is mandatory for referral to the tribunals of first degree which try certain affairs defined by law. Cf. JO, special issue of 04/06/2003, article 159 (p.160), as well as organic law No. 17/2004 of 20/06/2004 “on the organisation, competence and functioning of the Committee of Conciliators”, JO special issue of 08/07/2004

between these *intwalis* and the ex-prisoners. They would then be considered fully qualified **trainers**.

Furthermore, whether in government programmes or structures, or outside them, within community actions¹⁵⁹, the Righteous could, according to their stories, promote reflection and some degree of commitment. This dimension could also be tackled within civic education programmes for children. Indeed, as highlighted by the Rwandan psychologist Naasson Munyandamutsa¹⁶⁰, children constitute “the most fragile link within groups and societies that are victims of State violence”. And yet, it is these same children who “unite families and perpetuate them”. To undertake such work for them is therefore essential. The Righteous could have a role in part of this education, offering an **alternative point of reference**.

¹⁵⁹ This community dimension, where an involvement of the Righteous could be envisaged within associations, for example, should not be underestimated, as it is so important. As Professor Naasson Munyandamutsa commented, “although the order for reconciliation is launched by the States or by the notables of this world, the victims shut themselves off from the rest of the world as a defensive strategy” (in Munyandamutsa, Naasson, *Question du sens et des repères dans le traumatisme psychique. Réflexions autour de l’observation clinique d’enfants et d’adolescents survivants du génocide rwandais de 1994 (Meaning and reference points in psychic traumatism. Reflections on the clinical observation of children and adolescents who survived the Rwandan genocide of 1994)*, Geneva, Médecine & Hygiène, 2001, p. 91). Yet, this involvement cannot be set in motion without the open promotion of the Righteous and their representation as points of reference.

¹⁶⁰ Munyandamutsa, 2001, p. 37

Glossary

Abashingwe: a group identified as Tutsi; it appears to be the name of a clan

Bahimas: cattle breeders in Northeast Rwanda (Umutara); they were perceived as accomplices of the FPR and were also persecuted during the genocide.

Bazungu: white people, Europeans, white populations (sing. **Muzungu**)

Gacaca: literally “grass”; a meeting to settle a dispute amicably or to try and reconcile persons in dispute; by extension, the name of the place where these people meet and, today, the new tribunals responsible for processing a part of the trials arising from the genocide.

Ibyitso: accomplice

Imfura: noble by birth, by blood; it is also said of persons who distinguish themselves by their generosity of spirit.

Ingando: term used for the “solidarity camps”; it literally means stage (stop or station); camp for many people

Inkotanyi: literally “tireless fighters”, a name given to members of the FPR, which refers to a nineteenth century army. Nowadays, the acronym FPR is always followed by the term Inkotanyi.

Interahamwe: militia of the MRND; it literally means those who work together.

Intwali: refers to a hero, a brave person, who does not retreat before an obstacle.

Intwali mu butabazi: heroic rescuer (a coined term)

Inyamugayo: person of integrity, *gacaca* judge

Inyenzi: literally means “cockroach”. This term was used to qualify the Tutsis who “invaded” Rwanda in 1960 and reappeared in 1990, referring to members of the FPR.

Kinyarwanda: official language of Rwanda, together with French and English.

Acronyms used

AGR/FAR: Armée Gouvernementale Rwandaise (Rwanda Government Army)

APR/RPA: Armée Patriotique Rwandaise/Rwandan Patriotic Army, armée du FPR (FPR army)

AVEGA: Association des Veuves du Génocide *Agaboꝓo* (consolatrice) (Association of Widows of the Genocide *Agaboꝓo* (comforting))

CDR: Coalition pour la Défense de la République (Coalition for the Defence of the Republic), extremist Hutu party created after a split within the MRND

CNUR: Commission Nationale pour l'Unité et la Réconciliation (National Commission for Unity and Reconciliation)

CS: Community Service

FAR/AGR: Forces Armées Rwandaises (Rwandan Armed Forces) (before July 1994)

FARG: Fonds d'Assistance pour les Rescapés du Génocide (Fund for the Assistance of Survivors of the Genocide). [Its full name is Fonds National pour l'assistance aux victimes les plus nécessiteuses du génocide et des massacres perpétrés au Rwanda entre le 1^{er} octobre 1990 et le 1 décembre 1994 (National Fund for the Assistance of the most needy Victims of the Genocide and the Massacres Perpetrated in Rwanda between 1 October 1990 and 1 December 1994)]

FPR/RPF: Front Patriotique Rwandais/Rwandan Patriotic Front

HRW: Human Rights Watch

Ibuka: “Remember” in kinyarwanda, currently the largest association of victims of the genocide in Rwanda.

IPESAR: Institut Presbytérien d'Economie et des Sciences Appliquées de Rubengera (Presbyterian Institute of Economy and Applied Sciences of Rubengera), in the province of Kibuye

MINALOC: Ministère de l'Administration Locale, du Développement Communautaire et des Affaires Sociales (Ministry of Local Governance, Community Development and Social Affairs)

MDR: Mouvement Démocratique Républicain (Democratic Republican Movement), main opposition party to the MNRD, the party of Habyarimana

MNRD: Mouvement National Révolutionnaire pour le Développement (National Revolutionary Movement for Development), which changed its name in 1993 to **MRND**/Mouvement Républicain National pour le Développement et la Démocratie (National Republican Movement for Development and Democracy), the party that was in power under the regime of the former President, (1975-1994)

NGO: Non-governmental Organisation

Opération Turquoise: Operation undertaken in Rwanda by the French from June to August 1994.

PDC: Parti Démocratique Chrétien (Christian Democratic Party), a moderate opposition party firmly supporting the regime of Habyarimana and not recognised by the *Christian Democratic International*

PL: Parti Libéral (Liberal Party), an urban, moderate, centre-right party, whose members included several Tutsi businessmen and persons of mixed parentage (*Hutsis*).

Pouvoir Hutu/Hutu power: Extremist Hutu movement which advocated the “final solution”. Its participants were members not only of the CDR and MRND, but also of more supposedly moderate and opposition political parties, such as the MDR, PDC, PL, and even the PSD. Each of these parties had a “power” group among its members.

PRI: Penal Reform International

PSD: Parti Social Démocrate (Social Democratic Party), a moderate, centre-left party, known as the “party of the intellectuals”

RCN: Réseau des Citoyens/Citizen Network

RPA: see APR

RPF: see FPR

SNJG: Service National des Juridictions Gacaca (National Service Responsible for the *Gacaca*)

UNHCR: United Nations High Commission for Refugees

ZPH: Zone de Protection Humanitaire au Rwanda (Humanitarian Protection Zone in Rwanda), a zone which was protected after Operation Turquoise, also known as “Sector 4”.

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Interviews with the Righteous (15)

Chrizostome, *intwali*, 15/07/04

Célestin, *intwali*, 13/08/04

Religious community, *intwali* (2), 16/07/04

Canisius, *intwali*, 27/07/04

Emmanuel, *intwali*, 22/07/04

Alice, *intwali*, 17/07/04

Jean-Paul, *intwali*, 28/07/04

Donate, *intwali*, 29/07/04

Dieudonné, *intwali*, 14/08/04

Cancelide, *intwali*, 29/07/04

Jean-Bosco, *intwali*, 17/07/04

Antoine, *intwali*, 15/07/04

Innocent, *intwali*, 23/07/04

Samuel, *intwali* 28/07/04

Interviews with the survivors rescued by these Righteous persons (17)

Sophie, survivor, 23/07/04
Anne, survivor, 13/08/04
Téléphore, survivor, 22/07/04
Janvier, survivor, 14/08/04
Monique, survivor, 22/07/04
Thérèse, survivor, 14/08/04
Augustin, survivor, 28/07/04
Ancile, survivor, 22/08/04
Didacienne, survivor, 12/08/04
Consulie, survivor, 13/08/04
Aurore, survivor, 13/08/04
Catherine, survivor 03/09/04
Béata, survivor, 17/07/04
Xavérine, survivor, 12/07/04
Violette, survivor, 9/08/04
Claudine, survivor, June 2004
Gisèle, survivor, 22/07/04

Interviews with witnesses (5)

Joseph, witness, 23/08/04
Teacher, witness, 17/07/04
Eugène, witness, 16/08/04
Christophe, witness, 13/08/04
Charlotte, witness/survivor, Kigali, unknown date

Other interviews (4)

Interview with Xavier, CNUR, 06/08/04
Interview with WN, President of the district Ibuka, Province of Gitarama, 14/09/04
Interview with Egide, Executive Secretary of Ibuka, 30/07/04
Interview with representatives of Avega, 08/09/04

Dossier of Umuhoza, PRI, 24/08/2004

Appendices

Appendix 1 - SNJG, Form for the scientific collection of data, 2004

NATIONAL SERVICE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE GACACA (SNJG)

Those who rescued the persecuted

Cell	Sector	District/Town	Province/Town of Kigali

The rescuer

All the names (first of all the one given by his family, the baptismal name, and then the surname)	Year of birth	Sex	Is he accused of genocide? Yes/no	Is he alive? Yes/no	Did he die in the genocide? Yes/no	Father's names	Mother's names

The rescued

All the names (first of all the one given by his family, the baptismal name, and then the surname)	Year of birth	Sex	Father's names	Mother's names	He was rescued from to (date)	Place of rescue	Did he die there? Yes/no

Names and signatures of magistrates

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	Date.....

Appendix 2

PRI interview with Jean-Bosco, *intwali*, 17 July 2004

Extracts

Jean-Bosco

My name is Jean-Bosco and I come from the sector of Gasura, Nyabihanga cell, from the town of Kibuye. I live in Bwishyura, having left Gasura after the war to move to Kiniha. I work for Rwandatel as a technician. I am married, with four children of my own as well as four other adopted children. I am 53 years old and a member of the Presbyterian Church.

...

My father had four wives, all of them Hutus. He never had an ethnic segregationist mentality. Thus, although he often encouraged me to marry, he didn't care what ethnic group she belonged to, so long as I had a wife. And although my father fought against the "*abashingwe*" or "*ababima*"¹⁶¹, whom everybody considered to be bringers of bad luck, my parents admired my wife. They never threatened me for having married a Tutsi.

...

I am the second son of his first wife, an interesting position, as it makes me the oldest of the whole family. We are all very close, which means that it is I who ask for the hand of my brothers' brides.

Social relations between the ethnic groups before the genocide

Social relations between Hutus and Tutsis before the genocide were very good, at least for my family.

I remember that in 1959, we hid some Tutsis as well as their property and supplies (such as beans, sorghum, etc.) to be returned to them after the war. These Tutsis remained in the banana plantation during the daytime and came to our house at night.

It is true that in 1963 and 1973 their houses were burned down and some of their cows were eaten, but we rescued their property, such as cattle, clothes, etc.

Naturally, it is well known that in any society there are those who are good and those who are bad. Although nearly all the inhabitants of Gasura were good, there were also small groups of evildoers who wanted to appropriate other people's property, such as their fields, their banana plantations, etc. Admittedly there were conflicts, but these did not result in human loss.

...

However, the population's trust was not wholehearted, especially in the cases of serfs, where some said they were badly treated because of their ethnicity.

That would also depend on the chiefs. For instance, S. was a gentle man, whereas K. was really nasty and threatened people because of their ethnicity. S. was a good man who lived in Gasura from 1959 and fled in 1963. To this day he has never returned. His children, however, came back to this country and visit me often.

...

¹⁶¹ These are two groups identified as Tutsis. *Abashingwe* appears to be the name of a clan. As for the *Bahimas*, cattle breeders in the Northeast of Rwanda (Umutara), they were perceived as being accomplices of the FPR and were also persecuted during the genocide.

The conflicts started in 1959, when I was nine years old, and continued in 1963, when they spoke of attacks by the *inyenzi*¹⁶². They then continued in 1973 and 1990, at the time of the attacks by the *inkotanyi*. But here, in Gasura, we did not have massacres, or even at Gitesi. On the other hand, in Gishyita, they burned down houses, and stole and ate the Tutsis' cattle.

In 1959, our sector did not have any victims, just as in 1963 and 1973. In 1990 nobody was massacred, they only put a few people in prison, considered to be accomplices of the *inkotanyi*¹⁶³. Except in 1992, when Tutsis were killed, above all in the ex-commune of Rwamatamu and in Gishyita. When the massacres in our sector started, I immediately alerted the authorities, as I was second-in-command of the cell. Of course some houses were burned down, but we were unable to stop the killing of Tutsis.

...

I was a true member of the MRND¹⁶⁴; I even had photographs of President Habyarimana in my home. Even on the day of my arrest, when they said I was a member of the MRND, I never disowned the party. I defended myself by saying that in the statutes of the MRND, there was no clause that authorised the massacres.

In Gasura, there were several political parties¹⁶⁵: MRND, PL, PSD, PDC and MDR, but the CDR was excluded in that sector. The flags of all these parties were assembled, in such a way that if it rained, a member of any one of the parties would shelter them all. All the parties complemented each other. In fact, even the persons from outside Gasura said that Gasura was an embassy of the parties. In Gasura it was extraordinary.

The shock of genocide

We were also very surprised by the massacres of 1994. We thought events would develop as they had in 1973. We did not know that they had prepared the soldiers to massacre Tutsis with their weapons. It was thanks to modern weaponry that many people were massacred. It was really incredible to kill an innocent person! It was a shocking year. We did not imagine that the killings could take place even inside the churches. To this day, I ask myself what was the origin of the massacres in Gasura! It is a question that still has no answer.

...

In my opinion, I believe that it is the absence or lack of faith in God, while Satan too is very powerful. He has the power to deceive anybody, in spite of their intelligence.

The situation was aggravated because even those who were considered to be Christians were not really true Christians. The churches also played a role.

I remember very well that in 1980, when we were preparing the wedding, a priest from Nyundo, Sibomana, asked my wife if she was sure that she wanted to marry a Hutu. This priest was a Tutsi who was killed during the genocide, in the parish of Biruyi. I wanted to be married in the Christian manner, but as this priest persevered in not wanting to marry us, I decided to cohabit

¹⁶² *Inyenzi*: literally, this means “cockroach”. This term was used to qualify Tutsis who had “invaded” Rwanda in 1960, and reappeared in 1990 with reference to the members of the FPR.

¹⁶³ *Inkotanyi*: literally, this means “tireless fighters”, the name the FPR adopted which referred to a nineteenth century army. Today, the acronym of the FPR is always followed by the term *Inkotanyi*.

¹⁶⁴ MRND: *Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement (National Revolutionary Movement for Development)*, a single party created by Juvénal Habyarimana in 1975 and renamed in 1991, at the beginning of multiparty politics, to *National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development*, the dominant government party.

¹⁶⁵ PL: *Parti Libéral (Liberal Party)*; PSD: *Parti Social Démocrate (Social Democratic Party)*, MDR: *Mouvement Démocratique Républicain (Republican Democratic Movement)*; PDC: *Parti Démocrate Chrétien (Christian Democratic Party)*; CDR: *Coalition pour la Défense de la République (Coalition for the Defence of the Republic)* (an extremist anti-Tutsi party which collaborated with the MNRD).

with her without a religious wedding. I then took my wife to the Presbyterian Church. In retaliation, my father-in-law was deprived by the priest of some sacraments, as he was happy to give me his daughter in marriage. However, in the end, some other priests intervened to re-establish his rights. I remember that one day, my wife told him that she was ready to leave me if the priest would marry her¹⁶⁶. That very same day I left with her.

...

There is also a bad ideology among the population which has been prevalent for a long time. Ethnicity has been taught in schools, at all levels. I did not study, but I know it all the same, as I went to primary school for six years. To better instruct children in this subject, they would set up different teams, one Hutu and one Tutsi. This was around 1963.

I also condemn the people, such as the Belgians, who introduced ethnicity on identity cards.

...

Although during the wars of 1963, 1969 and 1973, my family had managed to save the Tutsis' property, it was far beyond our means to do so during the massacres of 1994.

The genocide in Gasura:

The war of 1994 was a terrible war. People were killing each other without respite. In Gasura, where we lived, the killings started on 12 April 1994 and went on until June. It was only when the French arrived that the killings stopped.

...

It is difficult to find a family that did not take part in the massacres. Even the women took part. Very few persons were forced to participate in the massacres. However, not far from here, in Rusenyi, in the ex-commune of Gishyita, the authorities forced everybody to take part. This was not the case in Gasura, where each one acted according to his or her wishes. We saw this as a miracle, but the situation got even worse after the arrival of the gendarmes.

...

I can neither deny nor affirm that the authorities held meetings to raise awareness, as I never took part in such meetings. And my brothers did not tell me the truth. Sometimes they said that these meetings did take place, but at other times they denied it.

...

On the whole, here, none of the authorities sensitised the people, except for a few officials and one man called Cyimana, of Nyabihanga, who would urge people to participate. I can only remember one case, when the gendarmes told people who were burning houses that they should kill instead of burn. In fact, I can confirm that the killers took courage from them to carry out the massacres.

One day, during a meeting, I asked what the real reasons were for persecuting the Tutsis [...], but they did not answer my question. In fact, my words often annoyed them, which is why they did not admire me.

Indeed, to this day, nobody has found an answer to the question of why the genocide was so widespread. I cannot understand it either...

Participation in and resistance against the genocide

I cannot claim that it was I who rescued the victims. It was God who did. Nobody but God would have been able to do it.

...

There were other people in my family who accepted my advice and did not follow the killers. Thus my maternal brothers did not take part, they are all here. However, most of my brothers did take part in the massacres. They were mostly the brothers born of my father's second wife who

¹⁶⁶ By this she meant that nothing could stop her from living with the man she had chosen.

participated actively. What amazed me was their sudden change of attitude. My family in Biryu¹⁶⁷ was rather large, and currently more than ten members of my family are in prison. Although one cannot deduce from this that the whole population committed massacres, nonetheless the majority did take part in them.

...

One should not ignore the existence of those persons who resisted, even if there were fewer of them. In one hundred persons, two or three only could be found who did. Particularly as this meant you were risking your life.

...

I remember the day when my brothers came to my house together with other killers to ask me to go to the camp and ask for weapons for them. I asked them what they needed these weapons for and they told me it was to fight the Tutsis. I replied that I was unable to obtain these weapons as I was neither a soldier, nor was I someone in authority. I also added that I knew very well that they wanted weapons to kill the Tutsis rather than fight them. I refused categorically because I was afraid that I would be forced after that to take part in the killings. Thanks to God, they left my house without damaging it. I even refused to eat the meat they had brought for me.

...

The killers also suggested that I should take part in the patrols. But when I discovered that their aim was to go around killing, I never accepted to take part in patrols or man a barrier. I spent all my time at home.

...

One day the mayor [*after the genocide*] asked me why I did not go into exile, as I had family ties with Kayishema¹⁶⁸. I replied that everybody had their own way of thinking!

...

What was a pity was that nearly all the killers were Christian. Although all of us are baptised, we do not have the same faith. It all comes down to each one's humanity. I even tried sensitising them, but I did not succeed. They replied that they wanted to become rich or get hold of the cattle. I could mention the case of Maurice, Moïse and Bertrand¹⁶⁹ who took an active part in the massacres and only demanded money from me instead of following my advice.

...

I remember one day, when Cyamatare demanded a large share of the banana plantations because he had killed several persons. If the war had continued, the killers would probably have killed each other for the riches they had stolen. For instance, in July, they fought each other, even using grenades. This was because they couldn't agree on how to share out the fields of the Tutsis who had been killed, as well as other property.

...

Our luck was that the war ended without my wife or my other brothers being killed. Personally, I had a major problem, because I too had a Tutsi wife. I thank God that here in Kibuye, the *interahamwe* did not kill the Tutsi women who were married to Hutus, whereas they killed them in Gishyita, Rusenyi and Rwamatumu, and everywhere. Even though they said that our wives would be their dessert when Habyarimana was buried, God protected them. They failed in the name of Christ.

¹⁶⁷ Family on his father's side

¹⁶⁸ Kayishema, Clément: former mayor of Kibuye, was sentenced on 21 May 1999 to life in prison by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (TPIR), for participating in the massacres of Tutsis in the Catholic church and in the Home Saint-Jean of Kibuye, in the stadium of Gatwaro, in the church of Mubuga, and in Bisesero. (Cf. Hirondelle Press Agency at the TPIR : <http://www.hirondelle.org/>)

¹⁶⁹ His brothers

My brothers respected me because it was I who would settle family conflicts and maybe also because of my position. They even believed in the word of God, as they would admit that my reasoning was right. I think this was the only reason that stopped them from killing my wife. Although their views changed somewhat during the war, they never targeted my wife, nor did they demand money to spare her. None of my brothers ever threatened my wife. She did not even have to go into hiding. She stayed at home, without any problem, even at the time of the attacks.

...

Among the killers were my brothers and my usual friends. The fact that I was hiding victims was an absolute secret. I could not even tell my child for fear that he would tell some other person about it. My one and only confidante was my wife. I only trusted my brothers and not even they were aware of it. I did it secretly.

It was my brother-in-law Pierre who helped me. As he also took part in the massacres, he would always let me know their schedule so that I could take the necessary steps, such as taking them out of the house to hide in the bush. At any rate, it was difficult to protect a person up to the end of the war, especially at the time when the killings were at their peak.

It was difficult. Especially because once you had been identified as having hid a victim, you were persecuted to death. However, there were some Christians who sacrificed themselves for others. Even though it is said that all the Hutus participated in the massacres, this was not the case. Some were even tortured in order to save other people.

If the killers found a victim in your house, they could kill you, torture you or take all your property, or even oblige you to kill the victim yourself. For instance, somebody here in Gasura who refused to participate in the massacres had his leg cut off. He lives in Gafurugutu cell. He hid Tutsis, as well as their property, including that of the mayor. The *interahamwe* came to get them and he refused to hand them over. So, to punish him, they cut off his leg. He is a Hutu. He wanted to protect the persons and their property, but finally he not only lost his own property, but also his leg. Currently, he is receiving help from the FARG. He remained silent and did not tell them where Nickel was. Nickel was thus able to take the boat that helped him flee to the Congo. He used to be a teacher before, but now he stands in for the mayor.

...

I cannot boast of having rescued these victims myself. It was God who did, because it is God who ordains everybody's lives.

In fact, people were killing each other to such an extent, that a person could even kill his wife, his child, his mother-in-law, his grandchildren, or conspire against them.

To hide a person was really difficult. But we still managed to hide some victims. They spent the day in the bush and returned to the house only at night, as in Gasura the killers only killed during the daytime. In order not to die of hunger, they left with food in their bags, as they spent all day in the bush or under the bridges because of the persecution. Every day the killers carried out attacks and searches.

...

That was how Nahimana, an intercommunal¹⁷⁰, disappeared and to this day not a trace of him has been found! He was particularly targeted by the *interahamwe*, which is why they decided to search everywhere to find him. They carried out an attack with one hundred persons to search every bit of the bush. It was then that they killed a lot of victims, including Bonaventure. They knew that he had hidden in my house because he was wearing my clothes. To taunt me they brought him to my house to kill him.

¹⁷⁰ Intercommunal: An agent of the Ministry of Finance, seconded to the prefecture as controller of the commune's finances.

Success and failure

Apart from the little girl called Umutoni, from Rubengera, who came to my house on 19 April 1994, after the massacres in the stadium on 18 April 1994, all the other victims only arrived after the 20th of April.¹⁷¹

Umutoni was very small and was in the fourth year of primary school. She was covered in blood and we took her in. Thanks to God's miracles, she resembled my wife. The killers came to my house, but they never touched her. However, they killed all of her family. We took care of this child until the end of the year. I took her to school with my own children and then here to the factory. Then in December, towards the end of the quarter, she found somebody in town from the hill she had come from and followed her unthinkingly. She was from Mabanza. I made several appeals over the radio and finally, after a month, she came back to my house accompanied by the husband of her aunt. They had brought a lot of juice as a thank you gift. Today she studies at the IPESAR in Rubengera. During the period of mourning in April 2004, she became traumatised and sent somebody to let me know. I went to the hospital and spent two days with her. She was not eating and I managed to make her eat, as well as drink milk. We spoke for a long time until the trauma disappeared.

I would never leave the house and I used money to bribe the killers. That is how I acted. However, some people were killed after having spent about a week in my house. At first, I would pay for them to be spared, but finally the killers came back to kill them. Among them were Thadde and Bonaventure. They forced them out of their hiding place next to where I lived; it was really horrible.

In reality, the massacres continued in Gasura, in the Nyabihanga cell. Some of my younger brothers participated in the massacres. I tried to stop them, I even offered to pay them, but they refused.

I paid for Thadde, for Bonaventure, as well as for the girl, Umutoni, whom I told you about, and said that she lived with me. My wife paid 500 Rwandan francs for her. I also paid for a child who was my shepherd and whose name I didn't know. It was not a lot of money. In most cases, it was not more than 2,000 Rwandan francs, or even a few hundred Rwandan francs. Only on the day they beat me up, I had to pay a lot – 7,600 Rwandan francs¹⁷². They would even accept 100 Rwandan francs. But for my part, the smallest sum I was made to give was 200 Rwandan francs, for the girl I left at the hospital.

...

As **Taddhe** had spent a long time in my house, the first time I had to pay 1,000 Rwandan francs, and then 700 Rwandan francs. They brought her out of my house to take her to be killed close by, in Kabuga. I think it was around the 20th of May.

In fact, they knew very well that she was in my house. I would often try to reason with them, saying that she was old and couldn't do anything. It was after they searched my neighbour's

¹⁷¹ The dates given by the interviewee do not always appear to be correct, which seems understandable ten years after the events. For reference purposes, we mention to follow some dates of important events which marked the genocide:

- 06/04/94: Assassination attempt against the airplane of President Habyarimana

- 07/04/94: Beginning of the massacres of political opponents and resumption of the fighting between the FPR and the AGR (Rwandan governmental army); beginning of the genocide of Tutsis and the massacres among the population

- 16-17/04/94: Killings in the Gatwaro Stadium in the Parish of Kibuye

- April - June 1994: Resistance in the mountains of Bisesero with massive killings on 28-29 April and 13 May 1994

- End June - August 1994: Kibuye becomes part of the zone of Operation Turquoise

¹⁷² See the case of F. below.

house, Nehemi, who was an intercommunal, that she was killed. In fact, Nehemi was already dead, but they didn't know it because they had not found his corpse. The search for him led to the death of many victims, as they searched everywhere, even in the bush. They were even angrier because they thought that Bonaventure came from my house, as he was wearing my clothes at the time of this death. That is why they also killed Taddhe, in part to discourage me.

The same day I therefore paid 2,000 Rwandan francs for **Bonaventure**. They took the money but left with the victim. I offered to pay up to 3,000 Rwandan francs, but they refused categorically. They gave me back 1,000 Rwandan francs and left with 2,000 Rwandan francs. Bonaventure had taken refuge in my house after the massacres in the stadium, after the 20th of April. He was killed in May. I had even been to the hospital of Kibuye myself to find medication for him, as he suffered from asthma. The French arrived just after his death. The massacres came to an end just after Bonaventure's death, in June.

...

I did the best I could, and thanks to God some persons managed to escape death. This was the case of the son of **Erneste**. I defended him during a meeting of the councillor of Gasura sector, who wanted to destroy all the Tutsis' houses before the imminent arrival of the French. With regard to the Tutsi children, he also wanted to keep the girls who were in hiding, but wanted all the boys to be killed. I asked them why they would take away the life of this child. They said it would be better to kill him if only because if he remained alive, he might claim his family's property and would put his neighbours at risk [*as they had appropriated it*].

They thought that the child came from Kayove, in the province of Gisenyi, as did my wife. I insisted that in the end we would be condemned for our actions, but they didn't want to know. I was not afraid of opposing their decisions, as I was very angry. As they had decided to keep the girls alive, I imposed my view that the boy should also be allowed to live, saying that he could later on take care of our cattle or be our servant. They insulted me, saying that I would bring them bad luck. At that moment, I suffered enormously morally. But God gave me courage and they did not persecute the boy. Nobody dared attack me at home. Yet, at the time, I had three persons in my house who the killers thought were members of my wife's family.

This boy spent a month in my house. He went back and forth. Sometimes he spent the night at home, at other times in the bush or in the toilet.

Today he is still alive. I thank God who saved him. He lives in Kigali in the house of the sector councillor, Daniel. He visits me frequently. He left my house after the French arrived. It was my children who took him to the place where the French were. He and Umutoni are the two persons who lived in my house for a long time.

...

There is also the child of KE, who lives in Gasura, and is called **Paulin**. He lived in my house for a long time, after Charles, the younger brother of K., the former burgomaster brought him here. He also left my house after the French arrived. We took him to the French.

...

There was also the child of NF, **Pierre**, of Gasura. He would spend some time in my house and some in the bush. We took care that he should not die of hunger. Thanks to God he was rescued by the French.

...

One could also mention the case of **Grace**, of Nzanana, the sister of S., sector councillor of Gasura. She spent two weeks in my house, then left after finding a boat to take her to the Congo. She is still alive today and is back in this country.

...

One day I was asked to go to Rwandatel in Kibuye, which had been looted. On the way I met a granddaughter of Sen., in the sanitary region where the killers were massacring people. All her

brothers and sisters were already dead and the family had six children. I managed to negotiate the girl's freedom, by paying 200 Rwandan francs. These killers were young boys of her age. They had thrown the girl in a ditch after taking off her dress. Thanks to my intervention, they allowed her to be released. She knew some people in Gasura, where her mother had been born. As it was difficult to take the child to those hills, I left her in the care of some trader boys who were at the hospital. I also left them some money as well as five pieces of bread for the child. Finally, after the war, she fled with these boys to the Congo. She is now still alive and is studying in school in Rubengera. Unfortunately, I cannot remember her name, but she testified about all the things I did for her.

The case of Jacques

I wanted to protect Jacques who was a teacher and a representative of the LP¹⁷³. One day, I took him to my younger brother's house to hide him. My brother demanded money and I gave him 1,000 Rwandan francs. After that, each time he took Jacques somewhere else in case of an attack, he would demand some more money from me.

All the preparatory meetings for massacres were held in the house of my younger brother. Therefore, Jacques, who remained hidden above the ceiling, felt threatened and wanted to leave the house. After leaving, he came back to me, and then we made him circulate from one family to another. In the end he was killed when he went to see his father-in-law.

His wife was my Hutu cousin, who belonged to the same family as the prefect Kayishema of Kibuye. One day, I went to visit Kayishema, to ask him to hide Jacques. I proposed to hide him in the toilets to protect both the lives of Jacques and Kayishema's aunt [*Jacques' wife*]. But the prefect replied that all the Tutsis had to die.

On the 12th of April 2004, I accompanied Jacques to his father-in-law's house to find out if his children were still alive. When we arrived in Nzoga¹⁷⁴, we met the *interahamwe* who beat me up seriously, and we were only allowed to leave after paying 7,600 Rwandan francs. That day, I paid for my life and for Jacques'.

But what you should understand is that I was beaten up for what I had done in 1992. In fact, in 1992, Rwandans were fighting each other because of political parties. But this became confused with ethnic fighting. One day, I stopped some people from burning the house of an elderly mother, as well as Jacques'. I had submitted the problem to the former burgomaster K., as he had put me in charge of following the situation closely in order to stop the massacres in time. After that, K. sent some soldiers to Gasura, who put a stop to these vile acts. In fact, K. had given me this mission because he knew that I collaborated with all the sectors of the population, Tutsi and Hutu. But the *interahamwe* resented me for it and on that day they had the opportunity of hitting back at me. They beat me up saying that I had stopped them from eating the Tutsis' cattle in 1992, but that today they were authorised to kill Tutsis. They knew Jacques was a Tutsi. He was even their neighbour. But they didn't kill him that day. It was the money that saved him.

After visiting his children who were living there [*in his brother-in-law's house*], he came back to my house. Then he again left my house to go to his father-in-law's. It was one of my brothers who went with him. I don't know if it was he who caused Jacques' death, but one day after he left he was killed. It was in May.

Relations between the Righteous and the survivors after the genocide

I have never been threatened by the families of persons whom I concealed and who died in my house. I would like to stress that I am still very friendly with Thadde's brother, the person who lived in my house and ended up being killed by Cyamatare. He often calls me up. He now lives in

¹⁷³ Liberal Party

¹⁷⁴ Kagabiro Sector

Canada. He is the owner of a Business Centre. I think you know him. He is called JM and used to live in Kigali. Between us everything is fine. Even more so, as it was I who gave him information about the death of his mother and brothers. All this goes to show that I don't have any trouble with these families, particularly as I could not work miracles to rescue people. I did not even have arms or other means to rescue them. The only soldier I have ever had is Jesus Christ. He guides me. This is why, even during the trials, I shall be guided by the power of God. I shall never count on the power or knowledge of men. I shall be impartial towards everybody, regardless of parental or fraternal links. The same applies to the family of Bonaventure who do not in any way blame me for his death. They know it was not my fault. Usually, a person who has such problems is one who has concealed the truth. What's more, during my imprisonment, it was often the families of survivors who came to help me. I didn't have any problem, as I told the whole truth, which is admirable in the eyes of the survivors. Even before, they knew me as a good and honest man.

...

But I was nonetheless imprisoned twice. In fact, as from September 1994, after the arrival of the FPR, I was appointed councillor of the Gasura sector. I carried out this function for seven months. Many survivors came to my house to ask for my advice in cases of claims for damages. I noticed that some of them were demanding too much. For instance, a person who had two cows wanted ten in reparation. Another, whose roof had been made of tiles and straw, demanded iron sheeting in reparation. I was opposed to this kind of person, and I convinced them with my Christian faith. But this created conflicts between myself and the survivors. They went to see the prefect K. and accused me of still having a genocidal attitude. I was arrested and detained for twenty-two days. But the population defended me with these words: "the fact of imprisoning an exemplary man for the whole sector such as Jean-Bosco proves that very soon all the Hutus will be in prison". Fulgence, the burgomaster, who came from Burundi, held a meeting in Gasura, where he explained to the population that Jean-Bosco had been imprisoned for political reasons and not for reasons related to the genocide. He calmed down the people who wanted to flee.

...

After I left the position of councillor, I was again arrested following the affair of my nephew JA, who after finishing the sixth year of primary school, left for the Congo. Following the death of his parents, he had fled with his six brothers. One day, I learned that they were in the Congo. My nephew returned through the intermediary of the UNHCR and I sent him there to bring back his brothers. This information reached the authorities, who accused me of being an accomplice of the killers who were still outside the country. At that time, I had committed the error of not advising the authorities of his arrival. For explanation, I pledged myself as guarantor for his return. I accepted that if he did not return within a specific delay, I would be sentenced for that act. But my nephew disappointed me. To this day I have never again seen him. After the agreed delay had passed, I was again put in prison for three months in 1996. When he found out that I was in prison, my nephew came back to steal my property. He took my solar panels, my bikes, the sheeting and my chairs. He took all of that to the Congo. Finally, the investigations proved that I was innocent, mainly because there was a colonel, whose name I don't know, who defended me, saying that I was a good man, at the time when other people thought that I wanted to betray the country. Many times I explained that it was impossible for me to give support to evildoers and that, quite on the contrary, I was a real patriot. To release me, they made me sign a document stating that I accepted to leave Gasura for good and that if I ever returned, I would be shot. The church gave my wife a house in the town to protect her. That is where we live.

Relations of the Righteous with prisoners and their families

Nobody in my family was killed in the Congo. All my brothers returned to Rwanda. My brother Maurice never went into exile. He lived hidden away for a long time, here in this country. But he was caught in the end and put in prison. Those who took part in the massacres are in prison.

Only my nephews remain in the Congo. There were six of them, but I heard that one of them died and that another, a soldier, is now in prison.

...

My wife lost a lot of her family. She works in the house of Béthanie¹⁷⁵. She is not among the persons who are aided by the FARG, as I am here and am able to provide for her. Even her two younger sisters, as well as her nieces are here, without any aid. Usually, the FARG helps orphans and paupers. Their funding comes from contributions from all those who work in the country, and they pay the school fees and materials for these children. But they don't provide for other essentials.

...

I help my brothers who are in prison, as well as their families. I bring them food and often visit them. I even help when they are sick. I have also sensitised one of them, Maurice, of great fame, to plead guilty and ask for a pardon. But in the end he went back to prison, as he had not confessed to raping a woman, which put him in the first category.

By nature, I love justice and do not conceal the truth. I would even charge my brothers if necessary. How could I, for instance, hide the fact that Maurice had eight people drowned in my presence? I say that to prove that even in the course of the trial, I shall be impartial. I shall never invent anything. But I will never take part in the trials of my brothers.

Apart from the friendship with our neighbours, what differentiated me from my brothers and made me refrain from taking part in the massacres? It is simply the love of God that helped me. Even Adam and Eve had two children, and in the end Cain killed his brother. The same happened to Jesus' apostles. They were twelve and only one became an accomplice.

...

One day the prosecutor came to tell me that some of the prisoners were conspiring against me. I went to the prison to charge the prisoners who were beginning to give false witness, saying that I was present at the time when they were committing crimes. I testified in the presence of the director of the prison. After that they asked me to pardon them, as I had confessed everything.

The release of some innocent persons

I would like to give you some good news. One day, the prosecution contacted me to come and testify regarding the case of one Bertrand, accused of genocide, even though he was innocent and even had a Tutsi wife. I testified that he was innocent. To be sure of this, the prosecutor asked me to indicate witnesses for the defence. I mentioned the councillor and burgomaster, as both were from Gasura originally. The prosecutor hesitated, but finally asked them for information and discovered that this person was innocent. The witnesses explained that sometimes Bertrand had not obeyed their orders. He spent four years in jail. Another witness for the prosecution said he had killed Nahimana, whereas it was my younger brother who had had him drowned in my presence. I informed the prosecution about this who were amazed that someone would accuse their own brother. They then ordered his release [*Bertrand's*].

...

Of course this is a problem for me, but I have decided never to be partial to anybody. I must be full of the meaning of the Bible, because the truth always wins in the end. In my life, I am always brave and unafraid, so I have a good conscience.

...

I also brought about the release of a neighbour, Raymond, who also has a Tutsi wife from Biseseero. He was unjustly imprisoned. I defended him to the prosecutor, explaining that during the massacres we had stayed together to protect our wives. So much so, that we had decided to pool all our money if our wives were killed to take revenge on their aggressors. I testified in the stadium and Raymond was acquitted on the spot.

¹⁷⁵ A hotel in Kibuye

He had been accused by Christian, the councillor and survivor. This is because Raymond, who was a policeman after 1994, in agreement with me who was also a councillor, had forbidden Christian to appropriate the Hutus' property. After that, Christian put Raymond in prison by accusing him of genocide.

...

I have a suggestion to make. You are carrying out a research and you will discover various cases of justice and injustice. You must have the will to render justice to the innocent persons who are still in prison. The persons who were victims at the time when they were trying to rescue Tutsis must also be recognised. The existence of such persons must not be ignored, even if there are not many of them.

Gacaca and reconciliation

With regard to the *gacaca*, I was chosen by the town of Kibuye to be their second vice-president. For the time being, I have been elected President of the Court of Appeal of the Gasura sector. Even though I live in the centre of town, I travel to Gasura, the site of the massacres, to render justice. The population usually trusts me.

I can assure you that any *gacaca* activity should start with a prayer, so that God can make us impartial. Even through me teachings in the Church, I support the government, the *gacaca*, as well as unity and reconciliation.

...

Unity and reconciliation? It's difficult! I insist first and foremost on the fact that everybody is different by nature. Tolerance is a tool, even for the family. If you are intolerant, you will never manage to cohabit with your wife. Tolerance and love do not exist among Rwandans. If Rwandans ever admit love, truth and forgiveness, we will have unity and reconciliation. The problem is that some people are still hiding. The only solution is to come to God, and little by little we would have better results.

This is possible for me, as I know the value of unity and therefore I ask for forgiveness when I err. But everybody is different. There are the primary and secondary emotional persons, there are also choleric and other types. Currently, it can be noticed that a step towards reconciliation is being made, as people of different ethnic groups are beginning to intermarry, and some survivors have pardoned some of the killers. But this should be strengthened through prayer.

...

Acts of revenge are a problem for unity and reconciliation. It could work if the persons who committed acts of revenge also came to the *gacaca*. But perhaps with the sensitisation, that will happen. Some people have acted in this way.

Let us take the case of the councillor who replaced me. He killed a lot of people, some of whom were put in the toilets after they died, others were simply left in the hills after throwing a little earth on their corpses. Except that if one brings up this issue, they reply that those who killed in revenge will not be condemned in the same way as the genocide killers, because this is one of the consequences of war. But it is not logical that revenge should continue to this day, in spite of the detention of some people! It resembles the situation of the released prisoners who still kill survivors! It shows that we are all sick. And the proof is there! Nowadays, it is difficult to find a normal person. Normal people would become reconciled, which is impossible for madmen.

...

The recent elections of *inyangamugayo* went well in our sector of Gasura. People had free choice and the population was careful to avoid any scandals. If, for instance, somebody proposed a person who was well-known for having participated in the massacres, the others shouted or laughed. Some prisoners expressed concern that they would never be able to leave prison after hearing that I was elected president of the court of appeal, whereas this is not at all my aim.

...

The *Gacaca* may bring a solution to the conflicts of Rwandans, but it is very difficult. Maybe the *gacaca* will manage to relieve the congestion in the prisons and alleviate the work of the courts. As the prisoners come before the population, they will be unable to hide the truth. Only, we have to redouble our efforts, as the solution is still far off. We shall need at least another fifty years to wipe out the vision of the massacres from the minds of Rwandans, otherwise the trauma will persist. If we remember the massacres and see how people died like little fish in a bowl, our conclusion is that there is still a long way to go before peace can be achieved.

Appendix 3

The Yad Vashem Association

Copied from their website:

www//perso.wanadoo.fr/d-d.natanson/justes_definition.htm (02/11/04)

The concept of "Righteous of the Nations" is taken from Talmudic literature. For many generations, it has been used to designate *any non-Jew who has maintained positive and friendly relations with the Jews*. The Yad Vashem Memorial grants the title of Righteous of the Nations to the non-Jews who, during World War II and the Shoah, helped the Jews at risk, in circumstances that involved risks to themselves, even risk of death, without exacting any material or other compensation.

"The new bearer of the title Righteous of the Nations is invited to a ceremony at which he or she receives a medal and a certificate of honour. The ceremony is held either at Yad Vashem or it is organised by the diplomatic mission of Israel in the country of residence of the Righteous Person. The Righteous Persons or their representatives have planted trees in the avenue of the Righteous on the site of the Yad Vashem Memorial. Nowadays, for lack of space, the name of the Righteous is added to those on the Wall of Honour built for this purpose along the perimeter of the Memorial.

"The rescuers can be counted in their thousands, even if one includes those who remain unknown, whereas millions of Jews would have needed help under the German occupation. Up to end 1999, Yad Vashem had granted the title of Righteous of the Nations to more than 17,000 persons. This demonstrates indisputably that, in spite of the implacable tragedy that fell on the Jewish people, there were men and women who did not remain passive and took risks to fulfil the precept: "Love thy neighbour as thyself". The Righteous of the Nations not only saved the lives of Jews, but also the human dignity and honour of their fellow-countrymen and women. (Introduction to the *Dictionnaire des Justes de France* [Dictionary of the Righteous of France] by Lucien LAZARE; Yad Vashem, Jerusalem/ Fayard, Paris 2003).

The following table has been taken from "What is a Righteous Person?":

Number of survivors (Jews) per country

Country	Approximate number of survivors
Albania	1,800
Germany and Austria	5,000 to 15,000
Belgium	26,000
Denmark	7,200
France	more than 200,000
Greece	3,000 to 5,000
Hungary	more than 200,000
Italy	35,000
Lithuania	1,000

Norway	900
Netherlands	16,000
Poland	25,000 to 45,000
Yugoslavia	5,000

A large proportion of these Jews owe their life to "Righteous Persons".

Criteria to define a "Righteous Person"

The requirements to be a Righteous Person are:

- To have helped in situations where the Jews were helpless and threatened with death or deportation to concentration camps.
- The rescuer was aware that in coming to aid, he was risking his life, his safety and his personal freedom (the Nazis considered that helping Jews was a capital crime).
- The rescuer did not exact any reward or material compensation in exchange for the help given.
- The rescue or help is confirmed by the persons saved or witnessed by direct witnesses and, whenever possible, backed by authentic archive documents.

Assistance to Jews by non-Jews took on various very different forms, which can be classified as follows:

- Harboring a Jew in one's house, or in lay or religious institutions, hidden from the outside world and invisible to the public.
- Helping Jews to pass themselves off as non-Jews by obtaining false identity cards or certificates of baptism (issued by the clergy in order to obtain authentic papers).
- Helping Jews reach a safe place or cross a border to a safer country, in particular accompanying adults and children on clandestine journeys in occupied territory and getting them across borders.
- Temporary adoption of Jewish children (for the duration of the war).

How are dossiers constituted?

The nomination of a "Righteous person" goes through three stages

- Constitution of a dossier

The role of the Department of the Righteous, also created in 1963 in France, is to constitute the dossiers of these "Righteous persons" by gathering written and certified accounts from two Jewish persons saved.

These accounts should stress that the person for whom the dossier is being constituted risked their life and acted altruistically.

- Examination of the dossier

The dossier is sent to YAD VASHEM in Jerusalem, where it is examined by a commission made up of personalities and representatives of resistance and survivor organisations of the Shoah, presided by a Supreme Court judge.

The Commission examines the accounts and the documents sent to them in detail and may request additional information.

This is the only instance qualified to grant the title of "Righteous of the Nations", the highest distinction granted by the State of Israel to a civilian.

- Award of a medal

After a dossier has been accepted by Yad Vashem, the French Committee organises official ceremonies during which medals and diplomas are awarded to the Righteous or their beneficiaries by the Ambassador of Israel in France or by a representative of the Embassy in the presence of civil and political authorities, etc.

Addresses:

- French Committee of Yad Vashem: <http://www.col.fr/yadvashem/comite.html>
- Site of Yad Vashem: <http://www.yad-vashem.org.il/>