

Major Research Paper: Radio and the Rwandan Genocide

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Abstract

1994 marked a dark period in Rwanda's history, as it saw the near extermination of the Tutsi minority at the hands of Rwanda's Hutu majority. But what mobilized an entire ethnic majority to commit such heinous crimes? The role of media has attracted a lot of attention and research in relation to this question. Media, especially in the form of radio, is noted to have played a persuasive as well as logistical role in the incitement of violence. However, further study reveals that it did so in the context of other local factors such as reinforcing government messages and the rhetoric of genocide that had already been introduced by other sources. In this way, radio operated in a pre-existing framework and further promoted the genocide but it did not instigate it on its own. Furthermore, as interviews with listeners of the radio reveal, radio broadcasts were actively debated and reflected upon by their audiences, meaning that the audience was not always convinced by the messages they were receiving. However, drawing on the pre-existing framework, the radio broadcasts' genocide propaganda was able to form the norm, and while resisting the propaganda may not have been impossible, it certainly was hard. It is through this role of routinization and normalization of the genocide, therefore, that the media made its greatest mark.

Introduction

The Rwandan genocide started almost immediately after a plane carrying Hutu President, Juvenal Habyarimana, and Burundi's Hutu President, Cyprien Ntaryaira, was shot down near Kigali's airport on April 6, 1994. Within hours, extremist Hutu militias began targeting Tutsis with machetes, clubs and guns. Ordinary Hutus were encouraged to take part in the killings, which eventually led to the death of around 800, 000 people, mostly ethnic Tutsis and moderate

Hutus.¹ As Rwandans struggle to overcome the events of the past and move towards building a more stable future for their country, the genocide has also left many looking to the past and wondering: how was an entire segment of the population mobilized to commit so many mass atrocities in the first place? More importantly, what has the international community learned in these twenty years since the genocide to prevent such mass mobilization in the future?

As any study on the Rwandan genocide will reveal, media, and more specifically radio, played a significant role in inciting violence against the Tutsi minority. Indeed, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) has also tried and convicted some media personnel for the charge of incitement to genocide. But to what degree was the media exactly responsible for instigating the violence? This paper will examine the media's exact role in the mass mobilization of Hutus in the perpetration of the genocide. It will be argued that radio, in particular, served as a persuasive as well as logistical mechanism of genocide; however, it worked within a pre-existing framework to further promote the genocide. In this way, it contributed to and routinized the violence but it certainly did not instigate the genocide on its own. Furthermore, it will be argued that it cannot be assumed that the radio's messages were interpreted by the audience the same way in which they were disseminated. But rather, what the radio did do was make the rhetoric of genocide a part of the dominant discourse and one among society's norms, which made the option of taking part in the genocide hard to resist, but certainly not impossible. The options of media monitoring in countries at risk of internal conflict, along with media intervention in countries where media as well as other local factors are actively promoting communal violence, will then be discussed.

¹ Sudarsan Raghavan, "Rwandans mark 20th anniversary of genocide amid reminders that justice has yet to be done," *Washington Post*, April 7th, 2014, accessed June 10th, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/rwandans-mark-20th-anniversary-of-genocide-amid-reminders-that-justice-has-yet-to-be-done/2014/04/07/ecfbd4c4-be75-11e3-b574-f8748871856a_story.html.

Background

Lead-up to Genocide

At the end of the 1980, Juvenal Habyarimana saw his power decline after nearly 20 years of holding presidency in Rwanda. Even though he was a member of the Hutu ethnic group, who formed some 90 percent of the total population, he had lost much of his support base, which was now calling for an end to the monopoly of power held by the president's political party, Mouvement Republicain National pour la Democratie et le Developpement.²

Many years later, in 1990, Rwanda was attacked by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF)--a movement that consisted mostly of refugees and children of refugees of the Tutsi ethnic minority. While they had once made up the ruling elite in Rwanda, the Tutsi had been overthrown in a revolution in 1959 and many had fled the country. The 1990 attack by the RPF provided President Habyarimana and his party members the opportunity to stop the erosion of their popularity by promoting Hutu solidarity, and turning against the Tutsi minority of the country and labelling them traitors and supporters of RPF attackers. Within days of the first RPF attack, the government rounded up thousands of Tutsis and Hutus opposed to the president's rule; many were kept in inhumane conditions without even undergoing a trial. Two weeks after the RPF attack, government officials carried out the first of a series of massacres of Tutsi civilians at the commune of Kibilira. Over the next three years, another 15 such massacres would go on to take place before the commencement of the Rwandan genocide in April, 1994.³

Once the genocide began, ordinary Hutus rose to take part in the violence and used farm tools, knives, acid, or boiling water and hacked, mutilated and tortured their victims to death. In search-and-destroy missions, they moved from house to house and searched every corner to

² Alison Des Forges, "Call to Genocide: Radio in Rwanda, 1994" in *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, ed. Allan Thompson (London: Pluto Press, 2007), 41.

³ Des Forges, "Call to Genocide: Radio in Rwanda, 1994," 41-42.

ensure they had not missed any Tutsi. If Tutsis were found hiding, the killers dragged them onto the streets and publicly clubbed or stabbed them to death. Roadblocks further littered the land, as townspeople made it their mission to ensure that no Tutsi escaped the violence. Those Tutsis who were able to flee, tried to seek refuge in churches and other public places, only to find that these places had not been immune to the violence and death by torture was rampant here, too. In just over three months, most Hutus had taken part in the genocide and exterminated three-quarters of Rwanda's Tutsi population. Some Hutus were also killed as they either resembled the Tutsis, had helped a Tutsi escape, or they had refused to kill. Most of the genocide perpetrators were people who had not committed violence in the past.

Although there had been periods of ethnic rivalries in the past among extremists, most Tutsis and Hutu had lived side by side, intermarried, and attended the same schools and churches. But in a matter of weeks, Hutus from all walks of life rose to destroy their neighbours, co-workers, fellow church and school goers from among the Tutsi population. This normality that became associated with the genocide is what makes it such a unique case and begs the question: what drove so many moderate Hutus who had never before committed violence to kill and torture so rampantly?⁴

The Role of Radio

From the start of the conflict between the ruling Hutu government and the RPF forces, media was used by the ruling party as a ploy to rally Rwandans in support of the ruling regime. While print media, particularly the bimonthly newspaper *Kangura*, was also notorious in spreading hate propaganda and calls of extermination of Tutsis, it was the role of the radio that was particularly important. This is for two reasons:

⁴ Maria Armoudian, *Kill the Messenger* (New York: Prometheus Books, 2011), 38-39.

- 1) The general census of the population conducted on August 15, 1991 indicated that the section of the population that could neither read nor write represented 44 percent of the population that was above the age of six. In other words, only 56 percent of the population above the age of six was capable of reading and writing and newspapers remained inaccessible for much of the population that was illiterate.⁵
- 2) Buying a newspaper was also expensive. The cost of a newspaper was 100 Rwandan francs before April 6, 1994 or the average day's salary of a migrant worker in the rural areas of Rwanda. Jean Marie Higiroy, who was appointed the director of the Rwandan Information Office on July 31, 1993, has noted that potential consumers, who were not just from among the poor but also the urban middle class, also did not have money to spend on print media. Higiroy has stated, "Reading a newspaper became very expensive even for me, the director of a state agency."⁶

Given this context, radio was the most effective way in which the government could deliver messages to the population. In addition to broadcasting news, the radio also broadcasted official notifications of appointments to and dismissals from government posts, as well as announcements of government meetings.⁷

As a result, Des Forges has noted that listening to the radio became a popular distraction among the poor as well as the elite. In 1991, approximately 58.7 percent of all households in urban areas had radios while in rural areas 27.3 percent of the households owned radios. By the time the genocide started in April, 1994, moreover, the number of radio sets was presumably much higher. In some areas, the government distributed free radios to local authorities before the

⁵ Jean-Marie Vianney Higiroy, "Rwandan Private Print Media on the Eve of the Genocide," in *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, ed. Allan Thompson (London: Pluto Press, 2007), 81.

⁶ Higiroy, "Rwandan Private Print Media on the Eve of the Genocide," 81.

⁷ Des Forges, "Call to Genocide: Radio in Rwanda, 1994," 42.

start of the genocide. Those who did not own radios listened to broadcasts in the local bars or got information from friends and neighbours.⁸

Prior to the RPF attack in 1990, which instigated the civil war between the Hutu-led government and RPF, Rwanda had only one radio station: the national Radio Rwanda, which sometimes broadcast false information, particularly about the progress of the war. In March 1992, for example, Radio Rwanda spread rumours that Hutu leaders in Bugesera were going to be killed by Tutsi, which spurred Hutu massacres of Tutsis. After Jean-Marie Higiroy was appointed the director of the Office of Information, the national radio's broadcasts took on a more non-partisan approach, however. By December 1993, Radio Rwanda agreed to include the RPF among political parties that participated in its broadcasts, although this decision was not enforced by the time the genocide started in April 1994. Soon after the start of the war, the RPF also established its own station which was called Radio Muhabura. Although Radio Muhabura praised the RPF, it did so in a nationalist as opposed to an ethnic context. However, as it turned out, Radio Muhabura's signal did not reach all throughout the country.⁹

As a result of the newly declared non-partisan approach of Radio Rwanda, along with facing some pressure from Radio Muhabura, Hutu hard-liners also decided to introduce a new station of their own. The planning for Radio Television Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) began in 1992 and its first broadcast aired in August 1993.¹⁰ RTLM reached out to ordinary citizens in its programming. It played the latest music, especially popular Congolese songs, while Radio Rwanda was still broadcasting older tunes. RTLM was also informal and lively. The station introduced the concept of interactive broadcasting in Rwanda, as it invited listeners to call and express their opinions. In this way, RTLM also departed from the formal tone of Radio Rwanda.

⁸ Alison Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1999), 77-78.

⁹ Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 77-79.

¹⁰ Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 80.

Des Forges has noted that according to many Rwandans who listened to RTLM, the station won an immediate audience exactly for this reason. As Des Forges has further noted, RTLM drew on the same topics and themes and even the same rhetoric that had already been introduced by the written press, especially Kangura. And before long, RTLM, with its greater reach to audiences, replaced Kangura and other journals as the voice of extremism.¹¹ It is in this context that this paper will address the role that radio and, more specifically RTLM, played in the genocide.

Content Analysis of RTLM Broadcasts

Content analysis of the RTLM broadcasts reveals that the broadcasts were used as a persuasive as well as logistical weapon of genocide against the Tutsi minority. The persuasive and logistical roles of the radio broadcasts can be separated by two time periods: before the assassination of Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana which took place on April 6, 1994 and the period following the President's assassination until the end of the genocide in July 1994, which occurred as Tutsi forces advanced through to the Rwandan capital of Kigali and caused the broadcasters of RTLM to flee across the border into what was then Zaire.¹² More specifically, it can be said that before the President's assassination, RTLM served as a persuasive weapon of genocide as it spread hatred and fear of the Tutsi minority among the Hutu majority. In the period following the assassination, however, RTLM broadcasts not only continued to persuade all Hutus to commit genocide but also played a logistical role of planning out the events of the genocide. In what follows below, the persuasive as well as logistical roles of the RTLM broadcasts will be discussed.

However, first and foremost, it ought to be noted that the transcripts of the RTLM radio broadcasts that were used to conduct content analysis were provided by the Montreal Institute of

¹¹ Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 82-84.

¹² Russell Smith, "The Impact of Hate Media in Rwanda," *BBC*, December 3, 2003, accessed May 21, 2014, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3257748.stm>.

Genocide and Human Rights Studies (MIGS). According to the Director of the Institute, Frank Chalk, the transcripts may not be complete and were received in cooperation with the ICTR and the Rwandan government. On the MIGS website, it has been further mentioned that RTLM disseminated propaganda from October 1993 through to July 1994, and the transcripts are in fact available from October 25, 1993 through to July 3, 1994, which indicates that an attempt has been made to capture the full picture of the propaganda from start to finish.

Furthermore, the transcripts are available in English, French and Rwanda's local language of Kinyarwanda, with most of them being in Kinyarwanda and some of them having been translated into English and French. As a result, only the transcripts that are made available in English and French were examined. Moreover, most of the transcripts that were made available in English and French are those that had been translated for the ICTR. This in turn may pose a potential bias to the content analysis of the RTLM broadcasts as most of the broadcasts that are available in English and French are those that were used to file charges against RTLM broadcasters in the media trial conducted by the ICTR. In this way, one could run the risk of exaggerating the role of RTLM in perpetrating the genocide. In order to counter this problem, this paper has further relied on secondary sources that provide a deeper analysis of RTLM's content in order to give a better understanding of the persuasive as well as logistical techniques applied by RTLM broadcasters to incite violence.

RTLM as a Persuasive Tool of Genocide:

In order to analyze the persuasive role of RTLM in the genocide, the way in which this analysis will take place ought to first be understood and discussed. Since an examination of the transcripts revealed a variety of propaganda speech that was used against the Tutsis, only speech that came up repeatedly will be discussed below. Moreover, it will be argued that persuasion

took place in two forms: Firstly, Hutus were convinced that Hutu and Tutsi were two very distinct identities and ethnicity was therefore turned into the supreme principle of democracy and the determining factor of who should rule over whom at all costs. Secondly, Hutus were made to fear potential Tutsi atrocities, and were in turn persuaded to attack Tutsis pre-emptively.

First of all, distinctions were made between Hutu and Tutsi populations in a number of ways by RTLM broadcasters. Various derogatory terms were used to refer to Tutsis, the most common of which was *Inyenzi*. As Jean Marie Higiroy, who served as the director of the Rwandan Information Office, has noted, *Inyenzi* was originally used to refer to the Tutsi rebel movement that took hold of Rwanda throughout the 1960s and 1970s.¹³ The *Inyenzi* then went on to be known for attacking at night and killing innocent civilians, after which they would disappear into the countryside or retreat into Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda or Zaire. The *Inyenzi* therefore came to be associated with their ability to hide and spread terror, and the term was then used generically for all Tutsis to imply that they had conniving tendencies. Furthermore, as Jean Marie Higiroy has noted, the term *Inyenzi* itself translates into cockroach in Kinyarwanda, the local language of Rwanda. Higiroy has noted that the purpose behind using this term could likely be to imply that cockroaches are annoying insects and the only way to get rid of them is to kill them altogether. Given the volatile political climate of the time, labelling a group of people cockroaches was similar to sentencing them to death.¹⁴

It is also interesting to note that *Inyenzi* was a term that was not only used to refer to the RPF, the political party that sought to represent the interests of Tutsi refugees. But rather, *Inyenzi* was a term used to refer to all Tutsis regardless of their association with and opinion of RPF.¹⁵ Moreover, while the use of the term *Inyenzi* was made even prior to the assassination of Hutu

¹³ Higiroy, "Rwandan Private Print Media on the Eve of the Genocide," 84.

¹⁴ Higiroy, "Rwandan Private Print Media on the Eve of the Genocide," 85.

¹⁵ Higiroy, "Rwandan Private Print Media on the Eve of the Genocide," 83-85.

President Habyarimana, it was not as frequently used as it was after his assassination at which point it became synonymous with the title *Tutsi*. Prior to the assassination, the term that was most often used was *Inkotanyi*, which was used to refer to the armed wing of the RPF, and was a term that the RPF had taken on themselves. After the assassination, however, *Inyenzi* was either used alongside the term *Inkotanyi* or it was used on its own, in which case, it was used to refer to Tutsis in general, as Mary Kimani has pointed out.¹⁶

All in all, *Inyenzi* had the effect of stereotyping the behaviour of all Tutsis, regardless of their political affiliations. Moreover, it had the de-humanizing effect of not only distinguishing the Tutsis as a completely separate ethnic population, but also distinguishing them as completely separate beings altogether, from whom normal human behaviour could not be expected and to whom treatment that is normally extended to other human beings could not be given, i.e. one could not get rid of them without killing them, as is the case with cockroaches.

Another term that was frequently used to refer to Tutsis was "wicked." In the broadcasts that followed the death of President Habyarimana, it was noted that every time the leader of the RPF, Paul Kagame was referred to, the broadcaster would specifically say "Kagame alias *Kagome*." In Kinyarwanda, the term *kagome* means "the wicked one."¹⁷ In the transcripts from mid-May, 1994, Tutsis were further referred to as "sooth sayers" and "sorcerers" in different contexts. In one context in particular, attack on a Tutsi was described as the burning of a "sorcerer", or in more standard terms, as a witch hunt.¹⁸ All in all, the attachment of the label of wickedness and

¹⁶ Mary Kimani, "RTLTM: the Medium that Became a Tool for Mass Murder," in *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, ed. Allan Thompson (London: Pluto Press, 2007), 115.

¹⁷ "RTLTM Transcript: June 20th, 1994" Montreal Institute of Genocide and Human Rights Studies, accessed June 1st, 2014, http://migs.concordia.ca/links/documents/RTLTM_20Jun94_eng_tape0035.pdf.

¹⁸ "RTLTM Transcript: May 17-18, 1994," Montreal Institute of Genocide and Human Rights Studies, accessed June 1, 2014, http://migs.concordia.ca/links/documents/RTLTM_17-18May94_tape0009.pdf.

sorcery were used to disseminate misgivings and create a sense of suspicion about the activities of the Tutsi population. Altogether, these words further portrayed the Tutsis as inherently evil.

Aside from the imagery of cockroaches and evil doers, moreover, a power-hungry image was also tied to the Tutsis. From the earlier broadcasts through to the end, listeners were reminded about the ill intentions of the Tutsis in wanting to obtain the favourable position they held in society under Belgian colonizers up until 1959. As Darryl Li has explained, the discourse of history in Rwanda that was understood by most Hutus saw Hutus as being the victims of the colonial era who were then emancipated in 1959, as the Tutsi monarchy that was supported by the Belgian colonizers was dissolved and replaced by a Hutu-led republic. The Hutu revolution of 1959 that caused the sudden end of the elite Tutsi and Belgian colonizers' monopolization over power came to represent the *raison d'être* of the post-colonial Rwandan society that had defined itself in strict opposition to its colonial past. RTLM broadcasters, however, portrayed the progress achieved in 1959 as being under threat from the RPF as listeners were repeatedly reminded that Tutsis had ill intentions of returning Rwanda to the pre-1959 state.¹⁹

Li has noted that Georges Ruggiu, the only Belgian foreign national to have presented on RTLM and who was later tried and pled guilty to charges of incitement to commit genocide in the ICTR, recalled that RTLM's management issued specific instructions to make such historical comparisons. Ruggiu further said on air that the "1959 revolution ought to be completed in order to preserve its achievements."²⁰ But perhaps one of the most extreme examples of drawing comparisons between the Tutsis of the past and the Tutsis of the present was exhibited on March 23, 1994. It was claimed by a RTLM broadcaster:

¹⁹ Darryl Li, "Echoes of Violence: Considerations on Radio and Genocide in Rwanda" in *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, ed. Allan Thompson (London: Pluto Press, 2007), 94.

²⁰ Li, "Echoes of Violence: Considerations on Radio and Genocide in Rwanda," 94.

The thirst for power and blood for which the Tutsis of Burundi are known has just resurfaced...Soldiers invaded Kamenge (neighbourhood) and killed over 200 people... Most of the victims were intellectuals or eminent Hutus...The Tutsis are still blood thirsty. In fact, they are used to shedding blood and they continue to do so. Today, as they are still planning a coup, it means they still want to shed blood, this time around, on a large scale.²¹

Most importantly, he then went on to say:

What lesson can be drawn from what is happening in Burundi? Whatever the case may be, we must draw a lesson from the events of Burundi. Tutsi grandchildren who fled Rwanda gave themselves the name *Inkotanyi* and attacked Rwanda in 1990. They claimed they wanted to install democracy, but to date, it is obvious they want to take back power seized from them by the Hutus in 1959.²²

In the first quote, not only was the image of the Tutsi portrayed as a people that wanted to re-claim their power, but the image was also drawn of a people who were willing to take back their power at any cost, as references were also made to the Tutsis being "blood thirsty." Li has noted that evoking such constant historical references did more than just bring up negative historical memories of colonial rule. It created a widespread sense of panic and crisis as the Rwandan nation was portrayed as having been de-railed from its path towards progress and prosperity. The fear was created that the post-colonial Rwandan state that sought its legitimacy in having removed its oppressors from power was going to be no more.²³

All in all, from the imagery that was portrayed in the broadcasts of the Tutsis--be it as cockroaches, wicked persons, sorcerers, sooth sayers, or be it as power-hungry oppressors--one thing was made clear: the Tutsi was "the other." The image of the Tutsi that was displayed was not of a person that could share similar goals in the improvement of the Rwandan nation; he or she wanted to oppress, to terrorize, to do evil, and most importantly, he or she was not to be

²¹ "RTLM Transcript: March 23, 1994," Montreal Institute of Genocide and Human Rights Studies, accessed June 2, 2014, http://migs.concordia.ca/links/documents/RTML_23Mar94_eng_K026-8048-K026-8066.pdf.

²² "RTLM Transcript: March 23, 1994."

²³ Li, "Echoes of Violence: Considerations on Radio and Genocide in Rwanda," 94.

trusted. Again and again, Hutus were reminded of the Tutsis' hidden schemes and evil habits as if their ethnicity inherently defined their behavioural characteristics.

But then the question arises: in what way did building an extremely negative image and portraying the Tutsi as "the other" who did not want to take part in the progress of the nation serve as a persuasive mechanism in the perpetration of the Rwandan genocide, if it did at all? As Li has argued, the entrenchment of the idea that the Tutsi identity was completely different from the Hutu identity was significant in that it contributed to the discourse on democracy and who should rule over whom. As Li has noted, the discourse that subsequently followed was one of ethnic majoritarianism, in which the president's rule was deemed legitimate as a result of his membership in and representation of an ethnic (Hutu) majority which was deemed to be legitimately entitled to rule on account of its numerical preponderance.²⁴ An example from the broadcasts of the promotion of ethnic majoritarianism occurred when a broadcaster named George claimed:

The West is forcing to negotiate and share power with people who massacre the populace and are a weak minority because they now do not even represent over 10% though they have been given, in some areas, up to 50% of the posts in the army and key posts within the government... The West have succeeded in forcing the Rwandan government to practically reward murderers. Thus, even if they claim that they are in favour of democracy, in fact, both in Rwanda and in Burundi, they have favoured the minority to the extent that they can dominate the majority both politically and socially.²⁵

An important point to notice here is that the genocide was in fact preceded by a period of multipartyism that witnessed intense and even sometimes violent opposition by various Hutu parties. Li has argued that it was for this reason that the regime began to prioritize splitting the opposition and promoting ethnic majoritarianism. In his research, Li has included an interview of a Hutu opposition activist called Ngerageze who "heard on RTLM that you had to forget

²⁴ Li, "Echoes of Violence: Considerations on Radio and Genocide in Rwanda," 94.

²⁵ "RTLM Transcript: March 23, 1994."

about parties and think only of ethnicity" and who then went on to become a local militia leader during the genocide.²⁶ Of course, this example alone cannot be used to settle upon the link between the genocide and the ethnic majoritarianism that was promoted, as the listeners' perspectives on what they heard and how much they were in fact convinced by it will be addressed in another section of this paper. The point to note here, however, is that there was at least a power struggle that came about as a result of highlighting the Tutsi identity as being separate from the Hutu identity and promoting the concept of ethnic majoritarianism. Indeed, as the RTLM broadcaster exclaimed on December 12, 1993:

We have already confirmed that the ethnic groups exist and even tried to see their characteristics over the years in the history of Rwanda. Charles therefore tells us that the fundamental issue, and even Mrs. Mbonampeka had also hinted at it, is the struggle of power.²⁷

It can thus further be hypothesized that while mistrust and suspicion about Tutsis had lingered prior to the assassination of Hutu President Habyarimana, his assassination seemed to have confirmed to many Hutus that they were progressing backwards and that Tutsis were making greater strides in restoring the power that they had lost in 1959. As a result, acts of genocide against Tutsis by the Hutu majority were committed within hours of the assassination.²⁸ Furthermore, within a few days of the President's assassination, the power struggle was further revived as Hutus were fed the propaganda that it was the RPF that had shot down their Hutu President's plane. President Theodore Sindikubwabo, who was sworn in as the interim president from April 9, 1994 to July 19, 1994 said during a speech that was broadcasted on RTLM that, "Peace and security were already undermined mainly in the town of Kigali due principally to

²⁶ Li, "Echoes of Violence: Considerations on Radio and Genocide in Rwanda," 95.

²⁷ "RTLM Transcript: December 12, 1993," Montreal Institute of Genocide and Human Rights Studies, accessed June 1, 2014, http://migs.concordia.ca/links/documents/RTLM_12Dec93_eng_tape0101.pdf.

²⁸ Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, trans. Linda Coverdale (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), 57.

anger and sorrow that Rwandans got because of their enemies RPF that had made them orphans."²⁹

In short, the persuasive role of RTLM broadcasts lay in their ability to emphasize the different ethnicities of Rwanda, and project the concept of ethnic majoritarianism, which in turn led to a strong power struggle between the two ethnicities. The second important role of persuasion that RTLM played, moreover, was that of building fear of potential RPF and Tutsi atrocities and creating an environment in which Hutus were convinced to attack pre-emptively in order to protect themselves and their families from potential harm.

Mary Kimani has conducted a content analysis of 72 transcripts of RTLM broadcasts, relying on the database created by the International Monitor Group along with the database used by the ICTR. Her findings have revealed that 16.32 percent of the broadcasts studied contained statements alleging atrocities committed by the armed wing of the RPF, including indiscriminate bombing of civilians, hospitals and orphanages, indiscriminate killings of civilians, and lastly, extermination of Hutus in areas occupied by the militant wing of the RPF. Other allegations including statements that Tutsi civilians were involved in the RPF's plan to take over power, or that they were actively helping the RPF in this cause and would benefit from it made up 3.16 percent of the broadcasts studied. Allegations that Tutsi civilians were exterminating Hutus, making such plans, or supporting them made up 2.17 percent, while the allegations that the armed wing of the RPF killed President Habyarimana made up 2.78 percent.³⁰

But it could always be argued that allegations of such atrocities on their own did nothing more than demonize the RPF and the Tutsis in general. What is more important to mention here, therefore, is the context in which these allegations were made and how altogether that may have

²⁹ "RTLM Transcript: April 11, 1994," Montreal Institute of Genocide and Human Rights Studies, accessed June 1st, 2014, http://migs.concordia.ca/links/documents/RTLM_11Apr94_eng_K014-6083-K014-6089.pdf.

³⁰ Kimani, "RTLM: the Medium that Became a Tool for Mass Murder," 117-119.

served as a persuasive mechanism of genocide. A study of the context in which inflammatory statements were used to rouse the Hutu population to actively participate in the genocide revealed that 33.33 percent of such statements were accompanied by allegations of RPF atrocities--claims of indiscriminate bombing, massacres and extermination of Hutus.³¹ It is not surprising, therefore, that many Hutu civilians became actively involved in the genocide as they were told to participate while repeatedly being reminded of the potential danger they faced if they did not. As Kimani has put it, "It was fait accompli. Kill or be killed."³²

But perhaps what may have been even more convincing than the allegations of atrocities was realizing that they were, in fact, coming true. Leading up to the assassination of the president, RTLM repeatedly produced broadcasts that predicted that attempts would be made to overthrow and kill the President, that of course held the RPF responsible. For example, on April 3rd, 1993, one broadcaster said:

We understand the RPF is bent on creating divisions in our country, to cause unrest and kill people...That is how the RPF and its supporters, some of the parties which support it, the few parties which support it, and Rukokma's MDR, tried to call a meeting of the armed forces high-ranking officers exclusively from the same region, the South, at Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana's home during the night of 1 to 2 April 1994, in order to discuss ways and means to overthrow, and even, assassinate His Excellency the President Juvenal Habyarimana.³³

So when the President's plane was in fact shot down on April 6, 1994, it may not have been too hard for many Hutus to come to the conclusion that the fears that they were being fed with regards to Tutsi and RPF atrocities were legitimate and were being realized. It is not surprising, therefore, that the genocide started almost immediately after the President's assassination,³⁴ in

³¹ Kimani, "RTLM: the Medium that Became a Tool for Mass Murder," 122.

³² Kimani, "RTLM: the Medium that Became a Tool for Mass Murder," 123.

³³ "RTLM Transcript: April 3, 1994," Montreal Institute of Genocide and Human Rights Studies, accessed June 3, 2014, http://migs.concordia.ca/links/documents/RTLM_03Apr94_eng_K016-4817-K016-4838.pdf.

³⁴ Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 57.

order to avenge for the power that the Hutu felt they were losing as was stated earlier, but also to prevent what the RTLM claimed were further Tutsi atrocities.

RTLM as a Logistical Tool of Genocide:

Aside from playing the role of a persuasive mechanism, RTLM broadcasts also played a logistical role in calling Hutus to commit genocide. After the Hutu President's assassination, RTLM broadcasters gave clear orders for Hutus to take part in the genocide. A simple reading of the transcripts of RTLM broadcasts that were issued after the assassination of the President reveals that frequent instructions were given for extermination of "the enemy". Kimani's content analysis further reveals the various directives that were given and the frequency of their occurrences. Her research concludes that popular directives included targeting of Tutsis for murder or extermination; calls to kill or harm RPF soldiers; identification of individuals as supporters or accomplices of the RPF; and specific instructions to kill such accomplices. Hutu women were also called to actively participate in roadblocks and to fight the enemy, and statements were also issued to target Belgian United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) staff.³⁵

However, the logistical role of the broadcasts in the genocide went beyond simply issuing instructions that targeted and called for the killing of various specific individuals. Instructions were also given at times to tell listeners where, when and how to kill. For example, an RTLM broadcaster announced on May 17, 1994:

And you people who live down there near Rugunga, even though it is raining, go out. You will see *Inkotanyi*'s straw-huts in the marsh where horses are kept. It is clear then that this place shelters *Inkotanyi* [RPF soldiers]. I think that those who have guns should immediately go to these *Inkotanyi* before they

³⁵ Kimani, "RTLM: the Medium that Became a Tool for Mass Murder," 120.

listen to Radio RTLM and flee. Stand near this place and encircle them and kill them because they are there.³⁶

An important point to be noted here is that the instructions that were given to commit acts of genocide were not given at random, but rather strategically. For example, during a broadcast on May 17, 1994, broadcasters spoke of a boy who was captured from the armed wing of the RPF by the Hutu paramilitary organization called *Interahamwe*. RTLM broadcasters told listeners that the boy should not be killed, but rather, "He must retire from *Inkotanyi* to be *Interahamwe* and he will continue telling us a lot of things about *Inkotanyi* and this will help us to defeat them because he knows a lot of things."³⁷ The end goal of defeating the RPF and preventing them from forming government and having influence in Rwanda was always kept in mind.

In summary, Rwandan media, more specifically, RTLM, was actively involved in the perpetration of genocide in Rwanda. It demonized Tutsis in general and the RPF in particular and persuaded its Hutu listeners to adhere to concepts of ethnic solidarity and ethnic majoritarianism. In doing so, it created a power struggle, likely because of which Hutus fought tooth and nail to maintain a Hutu-led republic after the assassination of Hutu President Habyarimana. RTLM further persuaded its listeners that Tutsi atrocities were frequent occurrences and Hutus ought to actively take part in preventing them. Lastly, RTLM played a logistical role in the genocide after the assassination of President Habyarimana as it gave strategic instructions on how, when and where to perpetrate acts of genocide.

Local Factors and Listeners' Perspectives

A strong counter-argument to the analysis that has been conducted thus far remains to be addressed. The analysis assumes that listeners understood and acted upon the content as it was

³⁶ "RTLM Transcript: May 16-17, 1994" Montreal Institute of Genocide and Human Rights Studies, accessed June 2, 2014, http://migs.concordia.ca/links/documents/RTLM_16-17May94_eng_tape0002.pdf.

³⁷ "RTLM Transcript: May 16-17, 1994."

disseminated without doing any critical thinking and evaluation of their own. However, not all Hutus did in fact take part in the genocide and there were even those such as Paul Rusesabagina who risked his life to shelter more than 1200 Tutsis and moderate Hutus who were seeking refuge from the genocide.³⁸ To make matters worse, the assumption also takes for granted the context in which the media operated and how RTLM broadcasts interacted with other local factors. This section will first and foremost seek to address the framework in which RTLM operated and how that may have influenced the listeners' understanding of the information that they were being given. The section will then discuss the perspectives of RTLM's audience by examining interviews of various genocide perpetrators before drawing any final conclusions about the causal link between the inflammatory content of RTLM broadcasts and the genocide that occurred.

Local Factors

Firstly, it is highly important to recognize that RTLM did not operate in a vacuum. RTLM broadcasts were not responsible for introducing the language and ideology of hatred into Rwandan society. As Kimani has argued, such language and ideology of ethnic conflict and polarization had already come to exist in Rwanda by the time RTLM had started broadcasting in 1993. In fact, Kimani has argued, RTLM came at the very end of the conflict and drew its commentary, arguments and interpretation of issues from an already existing framework.³⁹ As George Lakoff has further illustrated, frameworks refer to mental structures that shape one's view of the world and influence one's goals, plans, actions, and how one comes to define good or bad

³⁸ "Hotel manager-turned-hero Paul Rusesabagina," PBS, accessed June 14, 2014, <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/tavis/miley/interviews/paul-rusesabagina/>.

³⁹ Kimani, "RTLM: the Medium that Became a Tool for Mass Murder," 110.

outcomes. They draw from already existing societal norms, common practices and popular rhetoric and determine how individuals reason and what constitutes common sense.⁴⁰

An example of the pre-existing genocide framework that had introduced the rhetoric of genocide even before RTLM started to do so was the magazine *Kangura*, which as was noted earlier, had a smaller audience than RTLM but nevertheless attempted to spread as much hate propaganda against the Tutsis as possible.⁴¹ Certain words from *Kangura*, which was a Kinyarwanda- and French-language magazine, were initially introduced over its four years of publication from 1990 to 1994 and then went on to be further marketed by RTLM and become the vocabulary of the genocide that was to follow. As the language expert Matthias Ruzindana's testimony at the ICTR revealed, *Kangura* popularized words in the language of Kinyarwanda such as *kurimbura* and *gutsemba* (to massacre), *gutsembatsemba* (to exterminate), *kumara* (to eat up), *gutizika* and *gusakumba* (to clean), among others. It also popularized words related to "working," such as *gukore* (to work), *ibikorwa* (the work), *ibikoreho* (the working), *abakozi* (the workers) and *umuganda* (communal work), all within the context of the genocide. In other words, *Kangura* had already set up a trend for others to follow. By the time RTLM came around, the language and the tools with which to convince the population to undertake violence had already been introduced. RTLM did nothing more than repeat and further add to the language of genocide (through its direct calls of extermination), and reach a greater number of people than *Kangura* or other media had access to.⁴²

Furthermore, as was stated earlier, in the last months right before the genocide, RTLM started to compare the events of 1994, in which attempts were being made to resist further RPF

⁴⁰ George Lakoff, *Don't Think of an Elephant! Know Your Values and Frame the Debate*, (Vermont: Chelsea Green Publishing, 2004), 2.

⁴¹ Higiyo, "Rwandan Private Print Media on the Eve of the Genocide," 81.

⁴² Kimani, "RTLM: the Medium that Became a Tool for Mass Murder," 110-111.

infiltration, to the events of 1959, when similar power struggles had caused the RPF to go into exile in neighbouring countries.⁴³ In this way, RTLM was evoking a narrative with which Hutus were already familiar and which made them fear the consequences of not taking strong action as they had in the past to create a Hutu-led republic.

Additionally, after President Habyarimana's assassination, RTLM broadcasters along with government officials sent out mutually reinforcing statements targeting alleged members of the RPF or its militant wing and anyone believed to be supporting it. The broadcasters as well as government officials further reinforced each others' statements by calling on all able-bodied individuals to take part in the genocide.⁴⁴ As Des Forges has further noted, after the genocide started, Radio Rwanda, the country's national radio station, also delivered messages that were similar in tone to that of RTLM. This occurred as Radio Rwanda's director, Jean Marie Higiho, fled the country after receiving death threats by RTLM broadcasters and was replaced by Jean-Baptiste Bamwanga, a journalist who had been fired from Radio Rwanda in 1992 for having taken part in inciting the massacre of Tutsis in Bugesera. After Bamwanga became director, Des Forges has noted, RTLM and Radio Rwanda collaborated to deliver a single message about the need to eliminate the Tutsi enemy.⁴⁵

As Maria Armoudian has argued, such repetition of a particular frame is significant in that it can have the effect of creating a generally accepted, sometimes distorted understanding of "common sense." That distorted understanding of common sense, in turn, blocks more comprehensive understandings of reality from becoming part of the public discourse, making the distorted version of reality appear fixed and real.⁴⁶ As Armoudian has further argued, while

⁴³ Li, "Echoes of Violence: Considerations on Radio and Genocide in Rwanda," 94.

⁴⁴ Kimani, "RTLM: the Medium that Became a Tool for Mass Murder," 109-113.

⁴⁵ Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 84.

⁴⁶ Armoudian, *Kill the Messenger*, 285-286.

media are not all-powerful, their power increases if their frames go uncountered and unchallenged. By way of repetition and domination of the public stage, one-sided views can become widespread to the effect that they appear to be true and unquestionable.

And while there are always some people who are able to think critically and challenge the public discourse, without mass media by their side to communicate their views, their ability to divert public opinion can become reduced and change can become improbable.⁴⁷ This was exactly the case in Rwanda, as no other popular media source existed to counter the RTLM propaganda. Although Radio Muhabura, which was the official radio station of the RPF, did exist to offer an alternative frame of thinking, it did not reach Rwandans all over the country unlike RTLM.⁴⁸ Therefore, by playing on the rhetoric of past ethnic conflicts, using language that had already been introduced by Kangura, and disseminating instructions to kill which served as reinforcements of the government's and Radio Rwanda's messages, with no counter framework at hand, it can be argued that RTLM's incitement to violence became easily marketable and sold to the public.

What's more, interviews with former perpetrators of genocide conducted by Jean Hatzfeld further confirm that RTLM's genocide propaganda did not operate in a vacuum but rather it operated within the existing framework that was understood by all. For example, Elie Mizinge, who was fifty years old when he actively participated in the Rwandan genocide and who had first hand experienced the fall out of the Tutsi monarchy in 1959,⁴⁹ said in his interview:

I think the genocide germinated in 1959, when we killed lots of Tutsis without being punished, and we never repressed it after that. The intimidators and the peasants with hoes found themselves in agreement...As with farm work, we

⁴⁷ Armoudian, *Kill the Messenger*, 287.

⁴⁸ Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 79-80.

⁴⁹ Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 247.

waited for the right season. The death of our president was the signal for the final chaos. But as with a harvest, the seed was planted before.⁵⁰

Ignace Rukiramacumu, another interviewee who had taken part in the genocide and was sixty two years old at the time, also having lived through the fall of the Tutsi monarchy in 1959,⁵¹ said in this interview:

I think the possibility of genocide fell out as it did because it was lying for wait--for time's signal, like the plane crash to nudge it at the last moment. There was never any need to talk about it among ourselves. The thoughtfulness of the authorities ripened it naturally, and then it was proposed to us. As it was their only proposal and it promised to be final, we seized the opportunity. We knew full well what had to be done, and we set to doing it without flinching , because it seemed like the perfect solution.⁵²

As these interviews reveal, the propaganda that was put forth by RTLM and the instructions that it gave to kill added fuel to the fire, so to speak. It did not introduce the concept of genocide on its own as the genocide had long been in the making, but rather it further promoted it. But then of course comes the question that if RTLM did not play a primary role in the genocide--that is that if it worked from within the existing framework--would the genocide still have occurred in the absence of RTLM broadcasts? To what extent were RTLM broadcasts necessary for the perpetration of genocide?

Darryl Li has raised an interesting point in order to answer the aforementioned questions. Li has noted that from the point of view of many Rwandans, it was not just that the radio broadcaster emphasized "work" in the context of the genocide that appealed to them. But rather, what resonated with most Rwandans instead was that such messages were part of the hourly bulletin. In other words, RTLM did not just further channel pre-existing fear into attacks against

⁵⁰ Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 56.

⁵¹ Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 251.

⁵² Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 58-59.

Tutsis, but rather, through its regular informational updates, operational details and propaganda-filled monologues, it contributed to the routinization of the genocide.⁵³

An excerpt from an interview conducted by Li of a genocide survivor serves as a good example. According to the survivor, local Hutu would gather at the close by government office, then spend the day performing the mundane tasks of genocide as they came across and killed Tutsis. Many would listen to RTLM at roadblocks, in homes and in bars during breaks. Sometimes they would even listen outdoors in groups as large as 100, particularly paying attention to details regarding the next day's activities. Li asked another man whether this took place every day, to which he replied, "Of course. It was work. It was to know what to do."⁵⁴ Li has noted that even those who did not kill created their schedules in part around RTLM and used its broadcasts to pre-empt the details and schedules of "work." Li's interviews revealed that knowing when certain teams would be called up allowed some Hutus to evade roadblock duty by hiding or faking illness.⁵⁵

A common theme that ran through the interviews conducted by Hatzfeld also revealed the routinization of genocide activities, as perpetrators built their schedules around the genocide and referred to it as part of their daily "work" or "job". For example, Adalbert Munzigura, who was involved in acts of genocide said:

We overflowed with life for this new job. We were not afraid of wearing ourselves out running into the swamps. And if we turned lucky at work, we became happy. We abandoned the crops, the hoes, and the like. We talked no more about the farming. Worries let go of us.⁵⁶

Leopard Twagirayezu similarly said:

⁵³ Li, "Echoes of Violence: Considerations on Radio and Genocide in Rwanda," 101.

⁵⁴ Li, "Echoes of Violence: Considerations on Radio and Genocide in Rwanda," 101.

⁵⁵ Li, "Echoes of Violence: Considerations on Radio and Genocide in Rwanda," 101.

⁵⁶ Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 60.

Killing was less wearisome than farming. We could lag around for hours without getting penalized. We could shelter from the sun and chat without feeling idle. The workday didn't last as long as in the fields. We returned at three o'clock to have time for pillaging. We fell asleep evening safe from care, no longer worried about drought. We forgot our torments as farmers. We gorged on vitamin-rich foods.⁵⁷

All in all, the individual interviews seem to confirm that the genocide became part of the perpetrator's daily routine to the point that it replaced their farming activities and it in fact became a source of their living. RTLM's role was thus substantial as it played a crucial role in the routinization of genocide activities. Listeners followed and paid attention to instructions given by RTLM in order to schedule and conduct their "work" effectively.

What is less clear, however, is the extent to which RTLM contributed to the instigation of the genocide itself. As has been concluded earlier, RTLM operated within an existing framework in which ethnic tensions were already running high and hate propaganda had long been disseminated through other media sources such as Kangura. Therefore, while RTLM likely served as a persuasive as well as logistical tool to further promote the genocide and further prompt perpetrators to commit atrocities on a daily basis, it cannot be said to have instigated the genocide on its own.

Listeners' Perspectives

But even after having addressed the framework through which RTLM operated and the local factors with which it interacted, in order to rule out its own particular role, much is still left to be said about RTLM's audience and their understanding of what they were being told. The role that has been assigned to RTLM thus far is built on the assumption that listeners understood and operated without agency and critical thinking and evaluation. As Li has noted, in the face of such widespread participation in routinized and intimate killings, it seems difficult to rely on existing

⁵⁷ Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 62.

explanations without somehow assuming that Rwandans were vulnerable to outside manipulation and control. But this runs counter to the fact that the genocide came after a period of multipartyism, which saw unprecedented political openness and opposition to the state.⁵⁸ As such, it is critical at this point to address how audiences received the hate propaganda and the instructions to kill that they heard from RTLM before coming to a definitive conclusion about RTLM's role in the genocide.

Charles Mironko has conducted interviews with genocide confessors that worked as peasants at the time of the genocide, focusing on their interpretation of RTLM broadcasts. His research indicates that there was a particular difference in the way elites, professionals and townspeople understood RTLM broadcasts and the way in the which rural dwellers understood the broadcasts. Mironko has noted that many of the Rwandan peasants that he interviewed initially exhibited ignorance to RTLM's messages.⁵⁹ Some peasants claimed to be unaware of RTLM's role in disseminating hate and instructing Hutus to kill Tutsis. Others claimed that they did not listen to RTLM at all, either because they did not own radios or because they did not think of themselves as the target audience of the radio station RTLM. In general, radio technology was presented by the perpetrators as something that was foreign to the rural peasantry and required special training or political credentials to comprehend its messages.⁶⁰

However, Mironko has pointed out, by displaying ignorance and inability to understand RTLM's message, these perpetrators may just have been positioning themselves as bystanders or even victims of the power struggle between Hutu political elites in Kigali and the RPF. Indeed, as Mironko was further able to prove, after the initial claims of ignorance of RTLM's broadcasts,

⁵⁸ Li, "Echoes of Violence: Considerations on Radio and Genocide in Rwanda," 90.

⁵⁹ Charles Mironko, "The Effect of RTLM's Rhetoric of Ethnic Hatred in Rural Rwanda," in *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, ed. Allan Thompson (London: Pluto Press, 2007), 129.

⁶⁰ Mironko, "The Effect of RTLM's Rhetoric of Ethnic Hatred in Rural Rwanda," 129.

its mission and its intended audience, a closer analysis of the perpetrators' interviews suggests that they indeed had a clear understanding of what was being expected of them.⁶¹

In particular, when the topic of President Habyarimana's assassination was brought up, Mironko noted that every single interviewee was able to recall that RTLM had announced that Habyarimana's plane had been shot down by the RPF and that everyone in the country was told to stay where they were. Interviewees further recalled that RTLM went on to preach fear of and hatred toward Tutsis and encouraged listeners to take revenge for the killing of the "head of the nation." Mironko also noted that almost all interviewees recalled that RTLM broadcasters said that the only way to defend the nation in general, and safeguard one's own safety and security was to pre-emptively destroy not only the RPF, but also every Tutsi in sight.⁶²

However, as Mironko has noted, this is not to say that the Hutu peasants that he interviewed were not critical of the messages that they received, at least initially. After all, many of the interviewees expressed ambivalence over RTLM's message that "cultivators" (referring to peasants) referred to all Hutus and the only legitimate Rwandans. One interviewee recalled:

In fact, the way everything came up, we were not...we appeared like people who did not know beforehand. We were all united together. We even started to fight what is known as *Interahamwe*. We were defeated later because *Interahamwe* had guns. At that point, they started convincing us that Tutsi are our enemies...When RTLM broadcast that Tutsi have finished off Hutu, then we started being afraid.⁶³

Furthermore, Mironko has speculated that even RTLM broadcasters became aware of the lack of ethnic division among rural peasants and that it may have been for this reason that they appealed directly to those who were less willing to kill their neighbours by invoking rhetoric that

⁶¹ Mironko, "The Effect of RTLM's Rhetoric of Ethnic Hatred in Rural Rwanda," 130-131.

⁶² Mironko, "The Effect of RTLM's Rhetoric of Ethnic Hatred in Rural Rwanda," 132.

⁶³ Mironko, "The Effect of RTLM's Rhetoric of Ethnic Hatred in Rural Rwanda," 133.

took the form of agrarian metaphors. One interviewee recalled: "The radio told us to clear the bushes. There was no person who did not hear that!"⁶⁴

All in all, it is quite clear from Mironko's interviews that even as the peasants that he interviewed were in fact involved in the genocide, not all of them were influenced by RTLM right away. Almost all of them acted as if the broadcasts were only meant to be understood by the educated urban elite, and it was only until further probing that it became clear that they, too, had heard and understood its message. They seemed particularly perturbed by the messages of ethnic division when recounting RTLM's messages in that regard and recalled hearing and understanding the government's use of agrarian metaphors to persuade them to kill. Moreover, some recalled also having been influenced by authoritative figures such as *Interahamwe* militias and the government's armed forces in order to kill, aside from the RTLM's broadcasts alone. In other words, media messaging was almost a negotiation process between its listeners (at least those who were from among the peasants) and the broadcasters, as the latter was always trying to convince the former.

Also, as was noted in the Background section, only 56 percent of the population above the age of six was capable of reading and writing. Buying a newspaper at the time was also quite expensive for those in rural areas. As such, the radio was considered a much more accessible media source for a huge part of the population that could not read nor write and for those who made up the poor segment of the population. This in turn proves that resistance or opposition to the radio's message (as was noted in many of the peasants' responses) did not simply lie in the radio's inaccessibility, and it also certainly did not lie in listeners' preference for the broadcasts of Radio Muhabura, the station run by RPF, as it was strictly forbidden and all interviewees

⁶⁴ Mironko, "The Effect of RTLM's Rhetoric of Ethnic Hatred in Rural Rwanda," 133.

expressed this in separate interviews.⁶⁵ But rather, the opposition to RTLM truly did lie in the listeners' own resolve to actively reflect and oppose the propaganda that they were being fed and the outright instructions to kill that they were being given. Although all participants in the interview had eventually either been convinced by the radio or by other sources, or a combination of both, they were nevertheless active decoders of the media messages, who were able to reject and resist what they were being told.

Furthermore, Jean Hatzfeld's interviews of some genocide perpetrators also reveal that people reported reasons beyond RTLM's messages for getting involved in the genocide. The following excerpts from the interviews serve as good examples that coercion was an important element of getting involved in the genocide:

Alphonse: For someone caught cheating, it could be serious. He had to pay a fine determined by the leader. A big fine for big trickery or repeated trickery--a cash fine, for example two thousand francs or even more. A fine just of drink or of sheet metal--that could be negotiated.⁶⁶

Marie Chantal: The farmers were not rich enough, like the well-to-do city people, to buy themselves relief from the killing. Some doctors and teachers in Kigali paid servants or their employees so as not to dirty themselves.⁶⁷

Ignace: One evening they condemned a Hutu woman to death and cut her in public, to demonstrate a bad example. She had insolently demanded the cows of her Tutsi husband, who had just been slaughtered. Aside from that, no one in Kibungu was cut for punishment or even hit.⁶⁸

Moreover, perpetrators also recorded interviews in which they expressed having personal motives such as pillaging and looting for taking part in the genocide:

Panrace: After work we would tally up the profit. The money the Tutsis had tried to take with them under their clothes into death. The money of those who had offered it willingly, in hopes of not suffering. The money from goods collected on the way home, and the sheet metal or utensils you could sell in the

⁶⁵ Mironko, "The Effect of RTLM's Rhetoric of Ethnic Hatred in Rural Rwanda," 130.

⁶⁶ Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 72.

⁶⁷ Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 74.

⁶⁸ Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 73-74.

free-for-all, even at laughable prices. We hid rolls of franc notes in our pockets...Some farmers even hid Tutsis they knew for a certain price. After the Tutsis had coughed up all their savings, the farmers abandoned them to the arms of death, without paying them back, of course.⁶⁹

Jean-Baptiste: If the *Inkotanyi* had not taken over the country and put us to fight, we would have killed one another after the death of the last Tutsi--that's how hooked we were by the madness of dividing up their land. We could no longer stop ourselves from wielding the machete, it brought us so much profit...Greed had corrupted us.⁷⁰

These interviews along with those that revealed an element of coercion indicate that even though mass participation took place, not all were convinced by the media's messages alone and actively reflected on the choices available to them before participating in the genocide. And then of course lies the example of Paul Rusesabagina, the Hutu manager of the Hotel Mille Collines in Kigali who not only resisted participation in the genocide but went on to save hundreds of lives through his resourceful use of contacts in the regime, money and alcohol, all while risking his own life.⁷¹ This, if anything, is clear proof that RTLM did not manage to convince all of its listeners.

So what do these instances of resistance or citing personal reasons and fear of punishment for participation in the genocide mean for the role of RTLM broadcasts? Even as RTLM operated in a framework in which genocide was actively promoted not only by RTLM itself, but also by government forces, extremist Hutu militia, as well as the magazine *Kangura*, so much so that the rhetoric of genocide came to dominate the public discourse, and daily life came to be defined according to the imperatives of the project of extermination, various paths of action carved out by circumstance and will remained open. In other words, RTLM further contributed to a framework in which the rhetoric of genocide became the norm and consumed the daily life

⁶⁹ Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 84.

⁷⁰ Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 85.

⁷¹ Li, "Echoes of Violence: Considerations on Radio and Genocide in Rwanda," 104.

of individuals. As was noted earlier, almost all of the perpetrators interviewed by Hatzfeld used the rhetoric of "work" when referring to the act of genocide.⁷² However, it is hard to say that RTLM on its own moulded every individual's motives for participation or that it restricted the options that were available to individuals in regards to opposing or supporting the genocide. The option to oppose the rhetoric of genocide was always available, even if it did not coincide with the dominating discourse and societal norms.

Moving Forward--How to Prevent Manipulation of Media in the Future?

Romeo Dallaire, who was the head of UNAMIR, has said that one of the greatest handicaps to the UN mission was its initial ignorance of radio broadcasts. Dallaire has stated that it was as a result of this ignorance that UNAMIR missed the vital early-warning signs of the violence that was to come. He has further stated that another lesson that was learned in Rwanda was that UNAMIR was unequipped in the media war and that it desperately needed its own media outlet to explain its own mandate and to present a counter-argument to the lies that RTLM was spreading. Lastly, Dallaire has said that another one of UNAMIR's tragedies was its failure to shut down RTLM, which "had become the voice of the devil in Rwanda."⁷³ Some very important and extremely relevant questions thus emerge from the study of RTLM's role in the Rwandan genocide: Why are some media more prone to abuse and how can that be avoided? To what extent should the international community tolerate incitement to violence and how can it intervene when media is used as a medium through which genocide is further enacted and experienced, as it was in Rwanda?

Mat Frohardt and Jonathan Temin offer important insight into the first question. Using past conflicts as a point of reference, they identify indicators within media structure and content that

⁷² Jean Hatzfeld, *Machete Season*, 60-63.

⁷³ Romeo Dallaire, "The Media Dichotomy," in *The Media and the Rwanda Genocide*, ed. Allan Thompson (London: Pluto Press, 2007), 16-18.

may be used to inform policy makers about which societies are particularly vulnerable to media abuse. These indicators are listed and further analyzed in what follows below.

Structural Indicators

Media Outlets:

First and foremost, in order for the media structure to remain strong in the face of abuse, Frohardt and Temin have argued that the reach, accessibility and plurality of media outlets must not face restrictions, otherwise, the media outlets' influence over society will also become restricted. Ensuring plurality of media outlets is particularly important in order to ensure that few media outlets do not dominate the media scene. As Frohardt and Temin have further noted, the degree of plurality ought not to apply to the number of outlets alone, but also to the number of voices emanating from those outlets. Furthermore, an important variable with regards to media outlets is whether they are state- or privately-owned or a balanced mixture of the two. If most outlets are owned by the state, it is probable that there remains little or no check on media behaviour.⁷⁴

Media Professionals:

Media professionals do not only refer to journalists, but also editors, station managers and owners. Three indicators in this category that can be used to deter abuse include journalist capacity, journalist isolation, the political, ethnic, religious and regional composition of the media corps, as well as the degree of diversity in the ownership of media outlets. Journalist capacity refers to journalists' ability to perform their job with a reasonable degree of professional integrity and skill, all while disseminating information gathered from credible sources. The level of journalist capacity is critical as more capable journalists are able to prevent abuse of media

⁷⁴ Jonathan Temin and Mark Frohardt, *Use and Abuse of Media in Vulnerable Societies* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2003), 3.

outlets. Journalist isolation refers to the degree to which journalists are isolated, physically and metaphorically, from their domestic and international colleagues.⁷⁵ The lesser the degree of isolation, the more easily the journalists will be able to counter abuse as they will enjoy a network of support and feel part of a larger community of journalists that adhere to a common standard. The political, ethnic, religious and regional composition of the journalist corps refers to whether media outlets are dominated by people affiliated with a particular political party, of a certain ethnicity or religion, or from a particular region. The lesser the over representation of one particular group, the less likely it will be that any one group will exert disproportionate control over media content and promote their own narrow interests. Similarly, diversity in the ownership of media outlets is important, as ultimately it is the owners who exert the most influence over content.⁷⁶

Government Institutions Concerned with Media

The degree to which a country's laws allow for media independence and freedom, and the degree to which those laws are enforced determine the space in which media are allowed to operate and how susceptible that space is to abuse. A particularly useful indicator of an independent and free media environment includes the media's legal environment. Important means of supporting this legal environment include legislation protecting journalists and media outlets from abuse and guaranteeing their freedom to operate without fear of government interference; and legislation, such as libel and slander laws, protecting private individuals from being the victim of unjustified insults appearing in the media.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Temin and Frohardt, *Use and Abuse of Media in Vulnerable Societies*, 4.

⁷⁶ Temin and Frohardt, *Use and Abuse of Media in Vulnerable Societies*, 4.

⁷⁷ Temin and Frohardt, *Use and Abuse of Media in Vulnerable Societies*, 5.

Content Indicators

Frohardt and Temin have listed two types of content that indicate whether the media is susceptible to abuse: those that are intended to instill fear in a population, and those intended to create a sense among the population that conflict is inevitable. In regards to the first type of media content, when reporting is used to spread fear, people are more open to the idea of taking pre-emptive violent action to defend themselves. Four common strategies that are used to dispel fear include: focus on past atrocities and history of ethnic animosity; manipulation of myths, stereotypes and identities to dehumanize; overemphasis on certain grievances or inequities; and a shift towards consistently negative reporting. The latter refers to reporting that sets a pessimistic tone and can give the impression that the situation in a country is so dire that extreme measures are needed to halt and undo the country's decline.⁷⁸

The second category of media content that have been identified by Frohardt and Temin as promoting conflict are content that create inevitability and resignation. Such content build the perception among media consumers that conflict will inevitably happen. Once this belief becomes widespread, efforts to prevent conflict tend to be seen as pointless, making them increasingly unlikely to succeed.⁷⁹

All in all, monitoring these indicators can go a long way in indicating how susceptible the media is to abuse, particularly in vulnerable societies that are already prone to conflict. All of these indicators were present in Rwanda as RTLM dominated the media scene, and was allowed to spew hatred and propaganda without any other significant media outlet to oppose its message. Media professionals also lacked credibility and integrity and ran on a particular agenda of hate and extermination of the Tutsi population. With regards to the legal environment in which

⁷⁸ Temin and Frohardt, *Use and Abuse of Media in Vulnerable Societies*, 6.

⁷⁹ Temin and Frohardt, *Use and Abuse of Media in Vulnerable Societies*, 7.

RTLM operated, it should be noted that journalists were not protected under the law. It was for this reason that Jean Marie Higiyo, the director of Radio Rwanda under whom the station adopted a non-partisan tone, fled the country after receiving death threats from RTLM broadcasters, as was noted earlier. Afterwards, Radio Rwanda also took on an extremist tone.⁸⁰ Furthermore, Radio Muhabura's signal also did not reach all throughout the country, meaning that the RPF's radio station was subject to strong government control.⁸¹ This indicates that the legal environment in which Rwandan media operated was obviously weak. Content indicators were also present as RTLM both spread fear of Tutsi atrocities and built the perception that conflict is inevitable, as we saw above. While it is hard to say whether the genocide itself could have been prevented if these indicators were monitored and acted upon, it is likely that the genocide would have not been as widespread and atrocities would not have occurred on such a mass-scale, as the rhetoric of genocide would not have been allowed to become the norm.

But then arises the question: what are the options available to the international community should these indicators clearly signal that the media is prone to manipulation and has the potential to worsen ongoing conflicts? Should the international community intervene to prevent local media from inciting violence? Moreover, what is the legal basis in human rights law for such an intervention, and how does that measure up to the principle of freedom of speech? At present, international law has not clearly defined the legal and political conditions in which the international community can take action to suppress hate media in a society that is vulnerable to conflict. As John Nguyet Erni has argued, the term "media/information intervention" as coined by Jamie Metzel remains a relatively novel concept.⁸² Although an exhaustive study of the

⁸⁰ Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 84.

⁸¹ Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 79-80.

⁸² John Nguyet Erni, "War, Incendiary Media and International Human Rights Law," *Media, Culture and Society* 31 (2009): 869.

concept and legality of media intervention cannot be carried out as it is not the purpose of this paper, it will nevertheless be briefly examined in this section in order to determine the options available to curtail media abuse in a country which is vulnerable to conflict.

As Erni has explained, media/information intervention ideally refers to the ideology as well as the means of getting involved in a humanitarian crisis where there is evidence of media manipulation directed towards inciting hatred and violence towards individuals.⁸³ In regards to methods, it can take place in pre-conflict, mid-conflict and post-conflict times. Strategies including broadcasting counter information, dropping leaflets to present counter arguments to the propaganda and hatred, and jamming broadcasts that spew hatred and incite violence, would be most effective in pre-conflict and mid-conflict times. During the post-conflict time, reconstruction work may include a robust media development programme that encompasses: human rights training and education of journalists, enhancement of independent local media outlets, setting up interim media commissions, establishing stronger hate speech laws and other codes of conduct to ensure quality balanced programming, creating programmes that promote inter-ethnic dialogue and harmony, protecting journalists from intimidation and other violent threats, and creating a monitoring role for the media during the transition to a democratically elected stable government.⁸⁴

But the concept of media intervention also carries serious implication for rights related to freedom of speech as well as the concept of state sovereignty and the jus cogens norm of non-interventionism that are grounded in international law.⁸⁵ Article 2 (7) of the UN Charter states: "Nothing in the present charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which

⁸³ Erni, "War, Incendiary Media and International Human Rights Law," 872.

⁸⁴ Erni, "War, Incendiary Media and International Human Rights Law," 872-873.

⁸⁵ Erni, "War, Incendiary Media and International Human Rights Law," 869.

are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state."⁸⁶ This principle of state sovereignty is further enshrined in the 1965 United Nations General Assembly Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States and the Protection of their Independence and Sovereignty as well as the 1970 General Assembly Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.⁸⁷ In what follows below, it will be argued that the media intervention model serves as an exception to the aforementioned free speech and non-interventionism principles as permitted by various human rights instruments.

First and foremost, the principles of state sovereignty, non-interventionism and freedom of speech are not absolute and the UN Charter itself has provided exceptions for humanitarian interventions to take place. Under Article 41 in Chapter VII of the UN Charter for example, the Security Council is able to determine measures in order to maintain peace and security, including: "complete or partial interruption of economic relations and of rail, sea, postal, telegraphic, radio, and other means of communication, and the severance of diplomatic relations."⁸⁸ As Jamie Metzl has argued, in this way, prior to, and especially during conflicts, media intervention can take place in the form of peace broadcasting and in extreme cases, jamming radio and television broadcasts. As Jamie Metzl has further explained, peace broadcasting refers to "any non-incendiary transmissions broadcast from an intervening state

⁸⁶ "Charter of the United Nations," United Nations, accessed June 14, 2014, <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter1.shtml>.

⁸⁷ "Audiovisual Library of International Law," United Nations, accessed June 14, 2014, http://legal.un.org/avl/ha/ga_2131-xx/ga_2131-xx.html.

⁸⁸ "Charter of the United Nations," United Nations, accessed June 14, 2014, <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter7.shtml>.

directly into a target state as part of the intervening state's attempt to prevent or stop a human rights crisis."⁸⁹

Furthermore, media intervention, particularly in the form of peace broadcasting, also finds legal justification in other international treaties. Article 19(2) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) grants the right to freely receive information regardless of frontiers.⁹⁰ In this way, individuals and international organizations cannot be prohibited from providing humanitarian assistance in the form of peace broadcasting in a state where hate propaganda has become the norm, resulting in communal violence. Similarly, related strategies, such as printing newspapers and leaflets in a foreign state and distributing them among the residents of a target country to dispel hate propaganda, along with providing professional training of journalists can also be deemed legitimate under Article 19(2) of the ICCPR that allows for exception to the non-intervention principle. Furthermore, Article 20(1) of the ICCPR provides broad legal justification for media intervention on the basis of preventing mass suffering. Article 20(1) of the ICCPR states that "any propaganda for war shall be prohibited by law", while section (2) states that "any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law."⁹¹

Lastly, the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide provides further and perhaps the strongest legal support for media intervention. Article III (c) states that the "direct and public incitement to commit genocide" is a punishable crime. (It was

⁸⁹ Jamie F. Metzl, "Information Intervention: When Switching Channels Isn't Enough," *Foreign Affairs* 76(1997): 3.

⁹⁰ "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights," Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, accessed June 15, 2014, <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>.

⁹¹ "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights."

this provision that was also used in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide to try and convict media personalities in the ICTR.)⁹²

All in all, the exception to the non-intervention principle found in the UN Charter along with the various international treaties and conventions listed above that prohibit incitement to violence are clear proofs that media intervention does have a strong legal backing in international law. In times of human rights crisis where media is used as a tool that is operating within a greater framework to promote conflict and commit atrocities as it was in Rwanda, the Security Council, along with a delegated international commission of human rights and media experts thus ought to consider intervening to halt publications or broadcasts that incite hatred and violence towards a particular community. Or at the very least, they ought to consider intervening to produce and disseminate peace broadcasts so as to prevent hate media from further seizing control over public opinion and promoting a one-sided biased view of the conflict.

What's more, as Metzl has pointed out, media intervention serves as one of a larger set of intermediate actions between neglect and armed intervention. It, therefore, has greater potential to effectively engage all members of the international community to take action against human rights atrocities as opposed to increasing the debate on militarized interventions.⁹³ And although it was established earlier that the media is just one tool acting as part of a larger framework to promote genocide among a country's population, media monitoring and intervention can nevertheless have the effect of reducing the atrocities of genocide, if not completely curtailing them. It should be kept in mind, however, that if the media is not operating within a greater framework to incite violence, it is unlikely that media intervention will serve any useful purpose as the incitement to violence will not even be part of the dominant discourse and society's

⁹² "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide," United Nations, accessed June 14, 2014, <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%2078/volume-78-I-1021-English.pdf>.

⁹³ Metzl, "Information Intervention: When Switching Channels Isn't Enough," 6.

understanding of "common sense" to begin with. In short, one of the greatest lessons of studying the media's role in the Rwandan genocide is that the international community should, at the very least, recognize the importance of media monitoring and intervention when determining the options that are available to it to reduce human rights atrocities in countries that are at risk of internal conflicts.

Conclusion

To conclude, radio, particularly the radio station RTLM played an important role in the Rwandan genocide. First of all, the radio played a significant role in the Rwandan media scene as only 56 percent of the population that was above the age of six was capable of reading and writing. Moreover, Jean Marie Higiroy, who was appointed the director of the Rwandan Information Office further stated that having access to print media was far more expensive and thus limited.⁹⁴ It was in this light that Romeo Dallaire, who served as the head of UNAMIR has stated: "The country is known as a radio country. In some villages, radio was like the voice of God."⁹⁵

Furthermore, the radio station RTLM particularly played an important role as the signals of its rival station, Radio Muhabura did not reach all parts of the country.⁹⁶ As well, Radio Rwanda, which was Rwanda's national radio station, did not manage to create as strong a following as RTLM, even though it had agreed to take a non-partisan approach under the direction of Jean Marie Higiroy prior to the genocide. To make matters worse, once the genocide did start and Higiroy no longer served as the head of the Information Office, Radio Rwanda simply reinforced

⁹⁴ Higiroy, "Rwandan Private Print Media on the Eve of the Genocide," 81.

⁹⁵ Dallaire, "The Media Dichotomy," 16-18.

⁹⁶ Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 77-79.

RTLM's message of extermination of the Tutsi population.⁹⁷ It was in this light, therefore, that RTLM was able to make its extremist voice heard by the Rwandan public by and large.

RTLM projected its extremist voice in two particular ways: it served as a persuasive as well as logistical mechanism for the recruitment and perpetration of genocide. It served as a persuasive mechanism as terms such as "*Inyenzi*,"⁹⁸ "wicked persons," "sorcerers"⁹⁹ and "thirst for power and blood"¹⁰⁰ were associated with Tutsis which had the effect of de-humanizing them and portraying them as "the other." This was further followed by the increasing rhetoric on determining democratic rule based on ethnic differences as opposed to differences in party platforms, as the Tutsis were seen as a community with whom the Hutu could not carry out the project of nation building.

Transcripts from RTLM broadcasts further revealed that the concept of ethnic majoritarianism was particularly promoted as the Hutu made up the majority of the population and it was therefore argued that Rwanda ought to remain a Hutu-led republic.¹⁰¹ As a result, a power struggle was formed and the killing of Hutu President Habyarimana was portrayed as a demolition of Hutu power. Moreover, Hutus were constantly fed the propaganda that Tutsis were planning great atrocities against them and they, therefore, had to take action in order to repel such atrocities. Lastly, RTLM further played a logistical role in the genocide as it gave specific and strategic instructions on who to capture and attack, and how, when and where to do it.¹⁰²

However, when considering the role of radio in the genocide, it is just as important as conducting the content analysis, if not more, to consider how RTLM's broadcasts interacted with

⁹⁷ Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story*, 82-84.

⁹⁸ Higiyo, "Rwandan Private Print Media on the Eve of the Genocide," 84.

⁹⁹ "RTLM Transcript: June 20, 1994."

¹⁰⁰ "RTLM Transcript: March 23, 1994."

¹⁰¹ Li, "Echoes of Violence: Considerations on Radio and Genocide in Rwanda," 94.

¹⁰² Kimani, "RTLM: the Medium that Became a Tool for Mass Murder," 117-120.

other local factors and what impact that had on the genocide. Firstly, RTLM invoked a narrative that was already familiar to many Hutus--that is, the narrative of how the Tutsi monarchy had ruled over Rwanda up until 1959, and how that might be the case again unless RPF and Tutsis were prevented from regaining power.¹⁰³ Secondly, RTLM built on the hate propaganda that had already been introduced by Kangura and just spread it farther through its greater access to all corners of society.¹⁰⁴ Lastly, RTLM's messages were further reinforced by the government as well as Radio Rwanda, which, after the death of President Habyarimana, also gave specific instructions to Hutus to cooperate with the *Interahamwe* militia.¹⁰⁵ In this way, RTLM operated in an already existing framework to normalize the genocide; however, it did not introduce it.

Another important aspect to consider before drawing a link between RTLM and the genocide is the perspective of listeners and how they interpreted the information that they were being given. Interviews with genocide perpetrators revealed that not all accepted RTLM's messages right away as is often assumed when studying the role of radio in the Rwandan genocide. But rather, listeners actively reflected on their options to take part in the genocide. Some participated for personal reasons such as pillaging and looting, meanwhile others participated out of coercion and fear of punishment by the government. And then there were some who resisted RTLM's message altogether.¹⁰⁶ This in turn meant that while genocide had become the norm as a result of the persuasive and logistical role that RTLM played, along with the local context in which RTLM operated that also popularized the rhetoric of genocide (as many interviewees also testified by referring to genocide as "work")¹⁰⁷, the option was always

¹⁰³ Li, "Echoes of Violence: Considerations on Radio and Genocide in Rwanda," 94.

¹⁰⁴ Kimani, "RTLM: the Medium that Became a Tool for Mass Murder," 110-111.

¹⁰⁵ Kimani, "RTLM: the Medium that Became a Tool for Mass Murder," 120.

¹⁰⁶ Mironko, "The Effect of RTLM's Rhetoric of Ethnic Hatred in Rural Rwanda," 130.

¹⁰⁷ Li, "Echoes of Violence: Considerations on Radio and Genocide in Rwanda," 101.

available to listeners to disagree. It was just made harder to follow in a society where genocide had become a part of the daily routine.

Therefore, an important lesson that arises from the experience of the use of radio in the Rwandan genocide is the importance of media monitoring in countries that are at risk of internal conflict. Romeo Dallaire has also noted that one of the biggest failures of UNAMIR in the lead-up to the genocide was its inability to grasp early-warning signs of genocide as hate propaganda was being spewed by RTLM.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, in countries where local factors along with the media are actively working to promote genocide, media intervention in the form of disseminating peace broadcasts or jamming the local media channels ought to be taken into consideration by the international community. International human rights frameworks also allow for this option. The world experienced the worst that media has to offer in 1994; it should not have to do that again.

¹⁰⁸ Dallaire, "The Media Dichotomy," 16-18.

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