

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT LYONS

INTRODUCTION AND INTERVIEWS BY SCOTT STRAUS



Intimate Enemy

Images and Voices of the Rwandan Genocide

ZONE BOOKS



IN 1994, an interim government in Rwanda orchestrated one of the world's worst mass crimes: a hundred-day extermination campaign that took half a million lives. At the time, Rwanda's genocide went largely unnoticed by the outside world. Today there is growing interest in Rwanda, as many discover the horror that took place and seek to understand how and why violence of this character and magnitude could have happened in our time.

Intimate Enemy is a rare entrée into the logic, language, and imagery of Rwanda's violence. The book presents perpetrator testimony and photographs of both perpetrators and survivors. The images and words are raw and unanalyzed in these pages, leaving the reader to make sense of the killers and their would-be victims.

Intimate Enemy challenges our assumptions about the genocide and those who perpetrated it. The book also provokes us to consider how to represent and imagine violence on the scale of Rwanda's.



This excerpt is from an interview with a Hutu farmer from Gikongoro Prefecture. He owned a “cabaret” — a local bar in a rural area of Rwanda. He was thirty-three years old and the father of five children at the time of the genocide; he had had five years of primary school education. Here he describes how he killed his brother, a crime for which he was sentenced to ten years in prison.

After the crash of the president’s plane, the next day, the Tutsis started to flee to the parishes and commercial centers. I was at the parish. My cabaret was right next to the parish, and I found Tutsis there. I asked my neighbors, “Why are you coming here?” They did not reply. I gave them things to drink and eat. After arriving, the Tutsis at the parish formed a group of young people to retrieve their cattle and belongings. The group went to get this material. However, several days later, the youth in this group refused to return. Among them was a reservist who had a firearm. . . . My older brother had a Tutsi wife. She was there [at the church] with their children. When he went there, the head of the parish asked for food and beer. He went to get them at a center. [In rural Rwanda, a center is a commercial focal point, often located at a crossroads, and usually where rural markets are held. For this and other terms, see the glossary on pp. 179–81.] But while he was at the center, the burgomaster came and said, “Where are you going with those things?” When my brother explained that the priest had asked for food for the refugees, the burgomaster found the killers and took them to kill my older brother. The group did this. But my brother was not dead; he was in agony. The priest came to see what had happened. The priest then went back to the church to get a car to bring my older brother to a health center. I went to see him there. When I arrived, the burgomaster said, “You, you have brought food for the Tutsis. So that you

do not begin again, you take a machete and you have to decapitate your brother.” I refused. The burgomaster asked the reservist to force me to decapitate my brother and said if I refused the reservist would kill me. The reservist took me and gave me a machete. He put a gun behind my head and said, “If you do not cut, I will fire.” So I cut. That is my crime.

The following excerpt is from an interview with an army reservist from Kigali-Rural Prefecture who was twenty-seven years old and single in 1994. The interviewee, who was a CDR party member, had confessed to killing ten people and received a life sentence for his crimes.

WHY DID YOU JOIN THE CDR? When I left the military, I always was in communication with some Hutus, including a leader of the CDR. I saw that the CDR party was for the Hutus and that the CDR party would defeat the PL, which was the Tutsi party. It was like that. I also had some interests. I was given 5,000 FRW to promote the party and recruit new members. If the party won, I could have received other benefits too. BEFORE 1994, DID YOU HAVE ANY TUTSI NEIGHBORS? Yes. AND HOW WERE THE RELATIONS BETWEEN YOU? Before 1990, we were friends. WHAT CHANGED? I saw ID cards and tattoos saying “Vive Rwigema” [Fred Rwigema was a RPF rebel commander, killed in 1990] on women’s thighs and for men on the back of the shoulders. I saw that the Tutsi were accomplices.... I was part of a special military police unit around Kigali. We also found ID cards. The cards made in Rwanda were A3, but those made in Uganda were A4. We noticed that many Tutsis in the city had A4 cards and these tattoos. I asked myself how so many could be so informed. These were the signs that made me no longer trust the Tutsis. ALL TUTSIS? All Tutsis. I thought everyone was the same way.... HOW DID THE 1994 MASSACRES BEGIN IN YOUR AREA? I will tell you my confession. I killed people, ten people. I was commanded that the Tutsis were found at [a certain mountain]. I also entered a house and killed one by one. I was with four civilians.... WHERE DID YOU GET YOUR WEAPON? From the military camp. WHAT WAS THE OBJECTIVE? To exterminate the *ubwoko*. They were the ones who shot the president. The soldiers said it was the Tutsis who shot the president’s plane.... DID YOU THINK THE TUTSI WERE THE ENEMY? Yes, I thought that the

ubwoko was the enemy. We were angry about the death of the president. WERE YOU CONFUSED? We knew what we were doing. We installed roadblocks everywhere. There was no confusion. For us, we knew that the RPF had to have killed the president. No one else could have done it. The soldiers installed the roadblocks to check all persons who didn’t have identity cards and who had to be *inyenzi*, and we were sure they had killed the president. WHAT WAS THE GOAL OF THIS? It was to kill the Tutsi *ubwoko*. IF ONE KILLED THE TUTSIS, THEN WHAT? I thought that we would hunt down the Tutsis and then the Hutus would remain, alone. WERE YOU IN CONTACT WITH CIVILIAN AUTHORITIES? The top commander called the burgomaster and the *conseillers* to a meeting. They said we had to round up the peasants.... WHY INVOLVE THE PEASANTS? The peasants were the intelligence. SAY MORE ABOUT THE MEETING. I was told to be sure that the *conseillers* and the burgomaster were at this meeting. We were told to put up roadblocks at the centers and on the roads that were frequently used. Everyone who did not have an ID card would be considered an *inyenzi* enemy and killed. DID THE CIVILIAN AUTHORITIES ACCEPT THIS? The burgomasters and *conseillers* accepted. DID YOU HOPE TO GAIN ANYTHING DURING THE GENOCIDE? After the killings on the mountain, I went to loot the houses that were empty. HOW DID YOU EXPLAIN TO YOURSELF THE KILLING OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN? And if the children were not killed, would the ethnic group be exterminated?... We had to kill accomplices so that they would not increase their forces. After the extermination, the army would continue to fight, along with other peasants.

The following excerpt is from an interview with a farmer and carpenter from Kigali-Rural Prefecture. Illiterate, not a member of a political party, the interviewee was thirty-five years old at the time of the genocide. In his telling of events, he describes a remarkable moment when a local official required civilians to line up and hit a dead man—to make sure that everyone had participated in the violence. The interviewee was sentenced to fifteen years in prison.

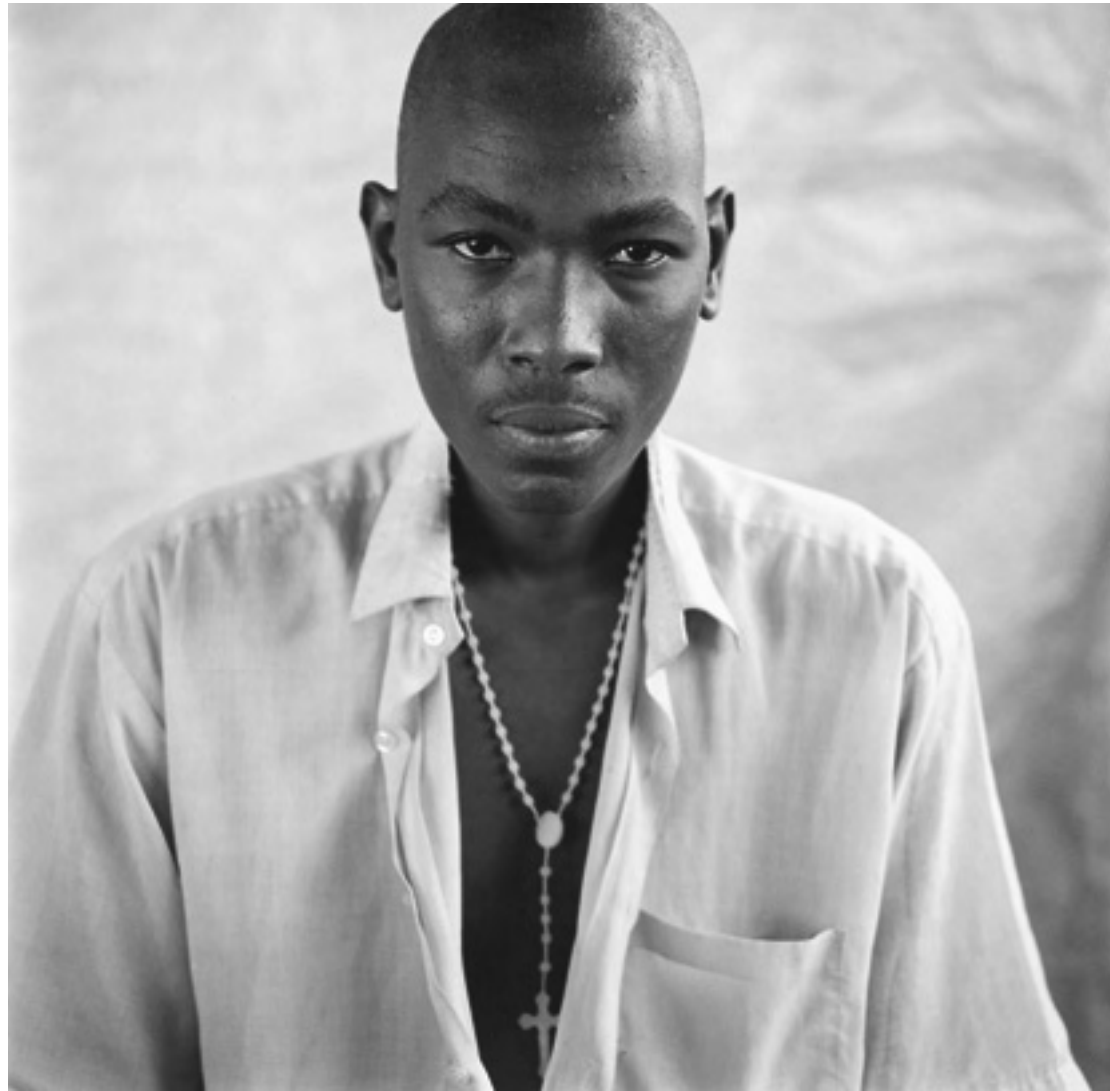
HOW DID THE 1994 MASSACRES BEGIN IN YOUR AREA? There were not many massacres in our area, not like elsewhere. We heard that the head of state was dead, that his plane had crashed. People were killed after that. AND YOU, WHAT

HAPPENED? Even if we are in prison, there are many who did not participate. I was at the house. I was farming. A member of the *cellule* committee came to my place; he said to me, “Let’s go! We have to leave together.” I asked, “Where are we going?” He said, “Come first, then I’ll show you. It’s not up to you to ask where we are going.” When I refused, he said, “If you continue to refuse, we’ll beat you.” So I agreed. I went with him. When he took me, he stopped by other houses, where he got other people. When we arrived at a place, there was someone who came to see someone who had hidden somewhere. There were some among us who went to look for this person in the house of a family, where he was hidden. I stayed with the others. The person was taken. This person was asked where he came from. He told us his origin. Instead of giving his ID card, he said, “I am Rwandan. I don’t have an ID card.” At the time, there was a law that said that those who didn’t have ID cards were *inyenzi*. This member of the *cellule* mentioned this law. The *cellule* member said, “Since you don’t have a card you must be killed.” Some refused. Some said that because he did not have his ID card, he shouldn’t be killed. We the peasants said that. The authorities said the law had to be respected. The member said, “If you refuse, I will kill him.” He told the man to lie down on the ground. He hit him twice at the back of the neck and once on the back, and he died. When the member saw he had done a crime, he wanted us to do the same thing. He said, “You too, you have to do something. Everyone must hit him twice with a stick.” And we said, “Do we have to hit an already dead person?” He said, “If you don’t do it, I’ll kill you too.” You know that someone who touches blood becomes like a crazy man. So he took a person and said, “You have to hit him, and if you don’t do it, I’ll kill you.” So I did it, but he was already dead. The others did the same thing. Then he said, “Go back home, since you have obeyed.”

The following excerpt is from an interview with a tailor and farmer from Kigali-Rural Prefecture. At the time of the genocide, the interviewee was thirty-four years old, a local MDR leader, and married to a Tutsi woman, with whom he had seven children. His level of education was slightly above average. In the excerpt below, he describes how he became a local leader of the violence. He has confessed but not yet been sentenced.

I’ll tell you what I know. The plane crashed on April 6; it was a Wednesday. Thursday morning, extraordinary things were said in our sector. I was in the party administration in the sector, so I could observe the changes better than other peasants. Thursday there was a change. I consider it brutality, or ignorance. My colleagues in the PL in general were Tutsi youths and their families. The PL did not have many members. In the past, when they had wanted to hold a meeting, they invited me and my members to participate to augment their numbers.... [That day] the Tutsis separated themselves in the sector. The youth and the men drank a lot and danced, like it was a festival. In their dance, they said they had won, and they chanted, “*Ikinani cyahanutse*” [indicating, in a slightly derogatory way, that President Habyarimana’s plane had crashed]. This created a bad image. It did not show unity. That same day, the communal police canceled the market that was supposed to be held, and in the evening roadblocks were established. There were roadblocks in every sector, at the intersections. In the beginning, the objective was to prevent the enemy from entering. That is to say, we fell into the trap of saying “enemy,” which later provoked killings.... WHAT HAPPENED NEXT? After that, it was bad. Starting on Sunday, we saw killings, looting, burning, and the destruction of homes in the neighboring commune.... Later, when I got to where I had my shop, I found the *conseiller*. There was a peasant who asked him a question. The peasant said, “You have to help us in our *cellule*.” The peasant said that some neighbors had attacked, someone had been killed, and they were still looting, destroying, and eating cows. The *conseiller* said nothing. We were there. Two vehicles arrived from the communal office. There were youth in them—in this period all people who went into the killings were considered *interahamwe*, so these youths were called *interahamwe*. They got out at the market, and they began to attack the shops. They did not touch the shops belonging to people in the MRND. They hit only the shops of people in the opposition. This is how the machines and the cloth I used were looted. One vehicle went to the *conseiller*’s place, and when I saw that, a lot of things changed. I saw that they had looted all my things. I reflected, and I thought that this would continue and always affect me. I changed my plan. I approached the *conseiller*. I asked him to help me and not to touch my parents-in-law because I had just learned Tutsis were being killed. He gave me conditions. He asked me to stay very close to the family because he could not find excuses to give to his collaborators.... On Tuesday evening, the *conseiller* said that the decision had been made to







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TRIBUNAL JUDGE, BUTARE COURT OF FIRST INSTANCE, 2000



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CHANTAL KAYITESI, AVEGA OFFICE, 1998

President of AVEGA, an organization of widows of the genocide Survivor



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JEAN DE DIEU TWAGIRAMUNGU, GIKONDO PRISON, 1998

b. 1979, Rutongo
Arrested May 26, 1995

Confessing to his crimes in April 1998, he said he had killed a girl with a machete on April 10, 1994. He says he was forced to kill the girl by the interahamwe, who also beat him.



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BEATRICE MUNTUNGIRE, BUTARE PRISON, 1999

b. 1955
Farmer
Arrested April 11, 1995

She is an alleged génocidaire but awaits formal charges. Neighbors have said that she participated in the genocide and was involved in the death of her husband. She has denied all the allegations, especially those connected with her husband's death. She says, "I believe that I am in prison because of jealousy, that someone wants to steal my crops and land."



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SURVIVOR, BUTARE, 1998



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ANCILLE MUKAMINEGA, KIGALI CENTRAL PRISON, 1998

b. 1958, Binga
Farmer
Arrested February 1998
Confessed Category II *génocidaire*

She killed her own children. She has said that a group of killers, catching her and her children as they attempted to flee, told her that she could kill the children or the group would kill them on their return. She broke into her parents' house and found poison, which she used to kill her three children.



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ESTHER MUJAWAYO, AVEGA OFFICE, KIGALI, 1998

Founding member of AVEGA



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BONIFACE MBONYIZIMA, GIKONDO PRISON, MINORS' SECTION, 1998

b. 1986
Arrested May 1998
Confessed *génocidaire*

He was accused of killing an old woman from his village, a neighbor. The only eyewitness was the victim's son. He confessed to his crime because he "heard that those who confessed would be released."

Prison officials estimated that there are over twenty-one hundred detainees who were under the age of criminal responsibility (fourteen years of age, according to Rwandan law) during their involvement in the genocide. Some have no relatives anymore, and many of those who have families have been abandoned for fear of the possible consequences of harboring criminals, their children.



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INNOCENT MUSABYIMANA, GITARAMA PRISON, 1999

b. 1978
Farmer
Arrested February 9, 1995
Confessed Category II *génocidaire*

He confessed on August 14, 1998, that he had killed a three-year-old child. He says, "I confessed because I was sorry for what I did, it was wrong." He acknowledged that he did not know the child but knew the mother, who was his neighbor.

Photographer Robert Lyons is the author of two notable books on Africa. *Another Africa* is an exploration, with writer Chinua Achebe, of the real Africa behind the stereotypes commonly held by Westerners; *Egyptian Time* is a collection of photographs of Egypt and its people accompanied by Egyptian writer Naguib Mahfouz's short story "The Cradle."

Scott Straus is Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. He is the author of two other books on Africa and violence, including *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda* (forthcoming), and the translator of Jean-Pierre Chrétien's *Great Lakes of Africa: Two Thousand Years of History*. Formerly a Nairobi-based journalist, he was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for his 1996 reporting on the war in Congo.

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