

1 The Problem

The Role of Hate in the World

When the killings started, our family was not aware that Tutsi were the target. Therefore, we had no time to plan our escape. Trouble began in another part of our sector [area], in Nyagasambu, but soon spread to our cellule [town]. People were chased by the interhamwe who had been brought in from Bugesera. They assembled everyone in a group. When it came to our family, Hutu residents from both cellules tried to pass us off as Hutu by saying that ‘there was no tutsiship in our family.’ Those neighbors who we thought were trying to defend us told us to escape to a neighboring village. We left. We realized later that they were not trying to defend us. There was pressure on them to kill us and they did not want to kill us themselves. So they sent us to be killed to another village . . .

My brother Theoneste went to the nearest village. But the people there refused to kill him. . . . The next day he came home and went straightaway to a roadblock surrounded by interhamwe. He told them to kill him themselves and end the story there. These interhamwe brought him back to the house. They told us that he had to be killed in order to prove that the whole family were not agents of the FPR (Rwandan Patriotic Front). They left him in the house, knowing that he would not try to escape. During this time messages were coming in every hour, urging our family to kill Theoneste. The whole family was threatened with death unless we killed Theoneste. He begged us to kill him, saying that the only alternative was death for the whole family and a very cruel death for him. . . .

After these four days, about twenty interhamwe, armed with machetes, hoes, spears, and bows and arrows came to the house. They stood over me and said: ‘Kill him!’ Theoneste got up and spoke to me. ‘I fear being killed by a machete; so please go ahead and kill me but use a small hoe.’ He himself brought the hoe and handed it to me. I hit him on the head. I kept hitting him on the head but he would not die. It was agonizing. Finally I took the machete he dreaded in order to finish him off quickly. The interhamwe were there during the whole time, supervising what they called ‘work’. When Theoneste was dead, they left. The next day I buried him. And I escaped immediately afterwards. (*Rwanda: Death, Despair and Defiance/African Rights*, 1994, pp. 344–345)

This example makes particularly clear the hate that drove at least some of the perpetrators in the Rwanda genocide. It is hard enough to see others being killed, but to force a family member to kill his brother is not just the expression of instrumental aggression in order to achieve some goals. It comprises many more sentiments and the desire to do as much harm to the victims as possible.

The example also makes clear the complexity of the context in which hate operates. In Rwanda, many Hutus and Tutsis came to hate each other. Indeed, for most people, it would be difficult not to hate members of a group that are systematically exterminating your own group, including members of your family, or forcing you to be part of the extermination. But many other factors come into play – social pressure to act in certain ways, emotional reasoning, fear for one’s own life if one disobeys an order from a powerful other, and false beliefs systematically implanted by cynical leaders. Thus, the example shows that one cannot understand hate in a vacuum. One cannot isolate hate in the way one might attempt to isolate aspects of memory in an experiment on nonsense syllables. One can study hate only in the complex contexts in which it occurs.

The incident described above transpired in the spring of 1994, during the sequence of events now referred to as the Rwandan Genocide. Within a few months, more than 500,000 people were killed, both Tutsis and moderate Hutus (*Rwanda Civil War*, n.d.). Remarkably, the majority of the Hutu population was actively engaged in the genocide, using mainly primitive weapons such as machetes, axes, knives, or guns.

For humans to be capable of such violence many psychological processes must be at work; but hatred is surely one of the major ones that facilitates mass killings of this sort. Said Lauren Renzaho, fifty years old at the time of the genocide and father of ten children: “Of course we hated them. The plan to kill them was ready. It had been finished. The hatred was deeply imbedded so anyone who saw a Tutsi killed them. That is why we left our homes and went from one area to another” (*Panorama Transcript*, 2004). Nick Danziger, a journalist who visited Rwanda with a BBC Panorama team, also stated in one of his reports that he found few, if any, regrets and little remorse in those who have been imprisoned for allegedly participating in the genocide (Danziger, 2004). The propaganda broadcast on the radio contributed to the gravity of the situation, inciting feelings of hatred and insinuating that it might be an important contribution toward the creation of a better Rwanda if Hutus killed the remaining Tutsis (Des Forges, 1999). After all, the Rwandan genocide happened largely in full view of the world. Governments of other nations could have intervened, but did not.

Hate was not only an underlying factor in the Rwandan genocide, as demonstrated in the previous paragraphs, but is at the heart of many of the world's most serious problems. But this hate is not natural in the sense of being inborn so individuals cannot act in an alternative way, but rather, it is cynically fomented by individuals in power so as to maintain their power, or by individuals not in power, so as to gain it. As described earlier, in Rwanda the radio station RTML broadcast incitements for Hutus to slaughter their Tutsi neighbors, a ploy that ultimately was meant to secure Hutu power over Rwanda. Similarly, the Nazi party cultivated feelings of hate and exclusion toward Jews, Communists, Roma (Gypsies), and other marginalized groups in order to maintain and increase its power. Shortly after Hitler's takeover and the elections of the Reichstag in March 1933, the Ministry of Education (Volksaufklärung) and Propaganda was founded under the leadership of Joseph Goebbels. In the aftermath, the media were tightly regulated, as was music, theater, art, and literature. As in Rwanda, an important means for the spread of national socialist slogans was the radio, which was even called by Goebbels "das allermodernste und das allerwichtigste Massenbeeinflussungsinstrument" [the most modern and most important means of manipulation of the masses; translation by the author (Diller, 1980)].

The Rwandan genocide is reminiscent, in some ways, of events during World War II – of the atrocities committed by the Nazis against Jews, Roma (Gypsies), Communists, and other groups that were seen as inferior races. Such people were thought to stand in the way of the establishment of a Nazi nation characterized by economic independence and the sole reign of a supposedly purer "race" – healthier, stronger, and smarter than the other peoples populating the globe. Here, too, was some struggle for power. The Nazis wanted to enlarge their sphere of influence to create superior living conditions for Aryans at the cost of other people who were "unfit" for this new nation. After the genocide perpetrated by the Nazis in World War II, the expression "Never again" became a familiar refrain. Perhaps there were aspects of the Nazi horrors that would not be repeated; but as one can see simply by following the news, the massacres and genocides are far from over. The last decade of the twentieth century saw record numbers of massacres and genocides. These were not random killings or sudden bursts of irrationality on the part of mobs. Rather, they were carefully planned and orchestrated killings that, at times, approached the efficiency of the Nazi death machine.

Disconcertingly, the genocide described earlier, and the massive hatred that accompanied it, is not particularly uncommon. As of this writing, there is an ongoing genocide in the region of West Darfur in Sudan, where government forces and Arab "Janjaweed" militias are attacking the African peoples of the

Fur, Masalit, and Zaghawa, all of whom inhabit this region of the Sudan. The Janjaweed, supported by the Sudanese military, burn the villages of the Fur, Masalit, and Zaghawa, poison their water wells, rape their women, kill men, women, and children, and force mass migrations out of the region to make room for Arab tribes. This conflict, too, has its roots in territorial power struggles. It escalated in February 2003, when two rebel groups of Fur, Masalit, and Zaghawa people called for power-sharing in Arab-ruled Sudan and the termination of economic marginalization. As of yet, the international community has failed to intervene in anything but a symbolic manner, although this set of massacres – presumably, a genocide – has been going on since February 2003. The Sudanese government has granted adequate humanitarian access to the area (Human Rights Watch, May 2004).

It is clear that genocides continue to be a serious global problem. And if one has a look at the reasons underlying these incidents, one can find some astounding parallels. Let us consider another example. Perhaps few people actually thought that genocide was likely to occur again in “civilized” Europe after the dreadful experiences of World War II. They were wrong. In 1980, after the death of Yugoslavian President Josip Tito, the power of the Yugoslavian communist central government began to fade. The country threatened to fall apart. Under the guidance of Slobodan Milosevic, Serbia set an ultra-nationalistic course that included plans for expansion of the Serbian state and, ultimately, destruction of supposedly inferior peoples. By means of military pressure, Milosevic tried to maintain Serbia’s dominant role in Balkan politics and to safeguard the Serbian minorities in the remaining states of Croatia, Slovenia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Things fell apart at the end of the 1980s. By 1992, the European Community recognized Slovenia and Croatia as sovereign republics, which ultimately resulted in the collapse of Yugoslavia. A national referendum in February 1992 called for Bosnian independence. The third largest of the six republics of the former Yugoslavia was inhabited by Muslims, Serbs, and Croats, none of which had an absolute majority. The conflict also comprised some religious aspects as all three groups, not only the Muslims, define themselves strongly through their religious affiliation, with the majority of Serbs being Orthodox and the majority of Croats being Catholics. So belonging to one religion was tantamount to belonging to a certain nationality and therefore a particular political course of action. Shortly after the referendum, war erupted between the Bosnian Serbs, who wanted to remain a part of Yugoslavia, and Bosnian Muslims and Croats. Most of the violence was directed against civilians, and Muslims were subjected to *ethnic purging*, the “ridding [of] an area of a national group regarded as undesirable in order to create an ethnically

homogeneous region” (Allcock, Milivojevic, & Horton, 1998, p. 90). Within weeks or even days, the relationships of once-peaceful neighbors changed:

Our neighbors – we were like a family. Our flats were like one home. They had two kids. We lived together. We vacationed together. Spent holidays together. Overnight, they changed. (Weine, 1999, p. 15)

They say we have a mixed marriage. What does this ‘mixed’ mean? I’ll tell you what it means. It means that one is human and one is an animal. That is what it means to them now. It was never that way before. (Weine, 1999, p. 19)

By the end of 1992, about half of the Bosnian population – around two million people – were homeless (Silber & Little, 1996, p. 278). People were deprived not only of their property and their homes, but of their liberty as well. Thousands were arrested and held in squalid detention camps. Some 20,000 Muslim women were raped by Serbian soldiers as part of their campaign of terror (MacDonald, 2002). Community leaders – influential businesspeople, intellectuals, and politicians – were systematically assassinated. One Bosnian Muslim described camp life as follows:

In Omarska they battered and interrogated people. [. . .] The camp was on the Banja Luka–Bosanski Novi railroad. There was also a mine with screening towers 20 meters high. Inside the towers there were bins (10 × 6 square meters) each containing some 300 people. These bins were used for screening ore. Each bin had four floors and there were 8,000 people in six rooms. We could not sleep but maybe doze on somebody’s shoulder. There was no light. At last, after three days, we got one loaf of bread to share among six people. We urinated inside the same room we occupied. My two brothers were there and one of them died on the second floor. I did not dare look at him and I did not know that he died until I came to Trnopolje and was told so by some people. Approximately thirty-five or forty people died in six days. We got bread once every three days. Later we even got some beans. They would come to the door, and we would form a circle and take our food in a piece of cardboard or a milk pack that we found there. Every day they would give us as much water as we could catch in a piece of cardboard. On several occasions they put a hose through a steel mash platform which separated each floor. The camp was divided into three sections: A, B, and C. No one survived in the C section. [. . .] We arrived in Trnopolje camp at 5:00 P.M. It was as if we were free at last. We were happy for being able to lie on the concrete.” (“Anonymous Eyewitness Account, Statement VI,” 1993, p. 45)

In the Balkans, as in Rwanda, and as of now in Sudan, the world did not intervene in time to avoid the worst. World reaction was weak and attested to the reluctance of the West to engage in the conflict. In May 1992, a British newspaper even wrote that “none of the institutions supposed to regulate

the post-communist world – the United Nations, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the European Community itself – is up to the task in the Balkans” (“Leading article: A common policy of Balkans bungling,” 1992). Military intervention was not considered a desirable alternative, probably, in part, because Bosnia had no raw materials, such as petroleum, that were of particular importance to the West. Indeed, it wasn’t even well known except as the scene of the ’84 Winter Olympics, and the location where Austrian heir apparent Franz Ferdinand and his wife were assassinated in a sequence of events that eventually gave rise to World War I. In short, the country just seemed too remote to be worth the trouble of an intervention (Gallagher, 2003). Therefore, lightly armed UN troops were ordered to deliver only humanitarian aid.

Again, one wonders how things could change so drastically in such a short time. How could such intense hatred develop? Even with a centuries-long history of ethnic differences and potential for conflict, the Serbs, Croats, and Muslims had nevertheless lived together peacefully for hundreds of years. They had developed no intense hatred toward each other. However, that changed with the collapse of the former Yugoslavia, which left the three ethnic groups holding equal claims to power over Bosnia-Herzegovina. According to one Croat eyewitness, the majority of the Serbian population actually enjoyed the atrocities that were inflicted on the Croats and Muslims. And one Serbian fighter was reported to have bragged that he drank a great deal of blood during the massacres in the town of Briševo (“Anonymous Eyewitness Account, Statement X,” 1993). It is not only in Bosnia that feelings of hate have lived – they can be seen in genocides around the world. The one pattern that consistently appears is that while engaged in their power struggles, individuals develop an intense hate and often use every means available to foment hate in their fellow citizens in order to gain the support they need to achieve their goals.

The problem of how and when to intervene is a complex one. Saddam Hussein in Iraq led a regime that tyrannized diverse people based on fear, repression, and extreme violence against those identified as enemies of the regime. The United States, Great Britain, and other countries intervened, for what have proved to be complex reasons. A largely unexpected result, at least for many people, is that many Shiites and Sunnis have come to hate each other at levels beyond what seems to have been the case before, and many in both groups have come to hate the interveners – now viewed by many as oppressors – at levels also not seen before. A recent article in *Time* magazine stated that “Hatred has gone mainstream, spreading first to the victims and their families – the hundreds of thousands of Iraqis who have lost loved ones,

jobs, homes, occasionally entire neighborhoods – and then into the wider society” (Ghosh, 2007, p. 30). A disincentive for intervention in the case of tyrannical regimes is that, in allegedly trying to help, one may come to create more problems than one has solved. Indeed, one may become the object of hate that formerly was directed elsewhere. Of course, one may blame the clumsiness and gross mishandling of the Iraqi intervention for the situation that eventuated in Iraq. But in intervening, especially militarily, it is often difficult to predict exactly what outcomes will emerge. Wars are, by their nature, unpredictable.

There are many factors other than hate underlying massacres, genocides, and acts of terrorism. Hatred may not be the only reason one group decides to exterminate another group. Evil intentions, such as taking possession of the other’s land or goods, may also play a role. Indeed, we argue in this book that hate is often a result, not a cause, of such intentions – that after-the-fact hate, propped up by false propaganda, often is used to justify the intentions. A hateful attitude toward the victims conveniently makes it easier to kill them instead of seeing them as former friends and neighbors, or even as human beings. So hate may be used as a rationalization for violence. But more likely, self-perception theory operates. Self-perception theory argues that people come to understand themselves by observing their own behavior and the events in which it is embedded, and then drawing inferences about their attitudes and feelings from their actions (Bem, 1967). For those who act in ways that are hateful, their feelings come to match their actions. Thus, when people find themselves in a situation where they are hurting someone else, they may start wondering about the reasons for their behavior, and then conclude that they must actually hate the victim in order to act this way. Moreover, he or she must have deserved his fate, because why else would anyone do harm to him or her otherwise?

There may also be instances, however, in which people’s attitudes do not match their behavior. They may find themselves discriminating against or even hurting someone else although they so far did not evaluate the target in a particularly negative way. What people then are experiencing is called cognitive dissonance (Festinger & Carlsmith, 1959), meaning that there is a discrepancy between their behavior and their attitudes. This dissonance is an uncomfortable state, and people strive to reduce this discomfort. They can do this in two ways – either by changing their attitude or by changing their behavior to make sure the two match again. But even if people rationalize their hate, it is still hate. Most probably, the relationship between hate and violence is bidirectional, with hate stoking violence, which stokes further hate on both sides, which stokes further violence, and so forth.

In addition to its various massacres and genocides, the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century have seen a renewal of terrorism on a grand scale. The danger that emanates from terrorism poses a threat not only to the target population but also to the entire world. Arguably, no problem facing behavioral scientists today is more important, at least if the amount of suffering and the number of deaths caused by the problem is a basis for assigning importance. Moreover, the events of 9/11 made clear that terrorism is not just a problem for people in distant lands (Brown, 2002; Kinzie, Boehnlein, Riley, & Sparr, 2002) – it can strike anywhere.

Terrorism is not a new problem either. It has been a daily threat for many years in countries throughout the world. In many ways, the United States has been plagued by terrorism for decades, but these acts are more commonly labeled *hate crimes*. Such hate crimes are often the product of existing social injustices, as opposed to threats from outside the country. What acts of terrorism and hate crimes have in common is that they are motivated, at least in part, by hatred against one or more target groups of people as a result of one group's fear of losing its place in the power structure or another group's striving to achieve more power. A well-known example of hate-driven violence in the United States can be found in the activities of the Ku Klux Klan.

The Ku Klux Klan was established around December 1865, in Pulaski, Tennessee. The name of the Klan derives from the Greek word *Kuklos*, which means circle. Its founders were six young men who fought in the Civil War as Confederate officers. After the war, perhaps out of boredom, they decided to form a club, mainly for their own amusement (Quarles, 1999). The activities characteristic of the beginnings of the Klan were less threatening than the activities that later emerged, with the young men putting on masks and disguises and riding on horseback through the countryside at night. Their nocturnal activities created fear among the local Black population, which was often superstitious and believed the equestrians to be the ghosts of dead Confederate soldiers who had come back to take their revenge (Gado, n.d.-c).

During the volatile and difficult period of Reconstruction, the Klan enlarged its membership. The war had changed Southern society, leaving cities and farmland in ruins and people without any means of income. Additionally, with the abolition of slavery, there were about four million former slaves who had no land and neither jobs nor education. White people feared the competition of their former slaves in times when economic survival was already difficult. It was during this time that the Klan began to harass Black citizens in an attempt to put "Negroes in their proper places" (Lowe, 1967,

p. 11) and, the members claimed, “restore law and order” (Quarles, 1999, p. 63). According to the records of North Carolina Governor William W. Holden, in the years 1869–1871 alone there were hundreds of cases of scourging, mutilations, and murder of citizens in North Carolina and Mississippi, two of them recounted here:

“The Sheriff of Jones County and Colonel of Militia, [was] shot and killed from behind a blind, in the open day, on the public highway. His death was decreed by a Kuklux camp in the adjoining county of Lenoir. He was hated because he was a Northern man and a Republican.”

“A colored boy in Orange County [was] taken at midnight from his father, while they were burning charcoal, and hanged. The charge was that he had made some improper and foolish remark about the White ladies. His body hung ten days until the vultures partly consumed it, and no one during that time dared to take him down.” (Holden, 1871)

People were assaulted and murdered for no reason other than the color of their skin, for allegedly having insulted Whites, or just for belonging to the “wrong” political party. Emotions were stirred up even more by so-called Klan Kludds, Chaplains of the Klan who, above all, preached racial hatred (Lowe, 1967). The violence was not limited to the nineteenth century. It continues to this day, with particularly active periods in the first decade of the twentieth century, and again after World War II.

For example, on September 15, 1963, a Baptist church in the city of Birmingham, Alabama, was bombed, resulting in the death of four Black girls. The bomb went off in the basement of the church where a couple of little girls stayed after having been dismissed from Sunday school class. At the time of the bombing, they were just about to don their satin choir robes. It was the fourth bombing in less than a month, and the fiftieth in two decades (Sims, 1996). Even Alabama Governor George Wallace, a sedulous supporter of segregation, said of the attack: “It was a dastardly act by a demented fool who has universal hate in his heart” (Gado, n.d.-b). FBI investigations resulted in the identification of four individuals responsible for the bombing: Robert Chambliss, Bobby Frank Cherry, Herman Frank Cash, and Thomas Blanton Jr. All four were known members of the Ku Klux Klan. However, no formal charges were brought against them for the next fourteen years. It was only in 1977 that justice was served, when an indictment was issued against Robert Chambliss and he was sentenced to life in prison. Afterward, the case was closed. It was reopened in 1997 when the FBI claimed to have new information that would be helpful in charging the remaining suspects. Cash had died in the meantime; but Cherry and Blanton were arrested in May 2000. In the

trial, several witnesses pointed out Blanton's pathological hatred of Blacks, and U.S. attorney Robert Posey asserted that "Blanton was a man of hate. [He] didn't care who he killed as long as he killed someone and as long as that person was Black." Cherry was sentenced to life in prison, and Blanton was sentenced to four life terms in prison (Gado, n.d.-a).

Members of the Klan, whose membership extends throughout the United States, also reacted to the Birmingham bombing. During a hate rally in Florida in the aftermath of the Birmingham events, Klan leader Charles Lunch shouted: "So if there's four less niggers tonight, then I say good for whoever planted the bomb. We're all better off" (Sims, 1996, p. 135). The hatred on the part of at least some of the members of the Klan is evident not only in the atrocities committed but also in their reactions to the crimes, which showed a lack of any compassion or sympathy for the victims and their families. What mattered to them seemed to be the simple fact that the number of the hated group had once again declined.

Thus far we have discussed hate between cultures or ethnic groups. But hate can also develop in personal relationships, even in intimate relationships, where love can turn into hate. The pattern of power struggles repeats itself in interpersonal relationships just as it does in intergroup conflict. Seeing a close friend or partner develop independence through the building of new relationships or otherwise may result in fear of abandonment that can transform into hate. People sometimes even have problems letting go of a former loved one after they have separated. They may feel threatened by the other person, who is starting to create new relationships, and they may resent the loss of control over that person.

One of the most famous American examples of love apparently gone wrong is the case of O. J. Simpson. It is widely believed that Simpson murdered his ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ronald Goldman on June 12, 1994, although a jury did not find Simpson guilty of murder. A civil trial did, however, find Simpson liable for the deaths of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman.

It seems that this final act in the relationship between O. J. Simpson and his wife was only the culmination of a long series of events that may finally have led to Brown's murder. Assaults on her had been common throughout their marriage and did not end with the couple's divorce in 1992. At Simpson's murder trial, the prosecution had a list of sixty-two cases of mistreatment, both physical and mental, that started as early as 1977. Brown called the police several times, sometimes even fearing for her life. After their separation, Simpson seemed to have problems adjusting to a life without his former wife. He was troubled by his seeing her form new relationships with other